

**City of New Bern  
Board of Aldermen Meeting  
June 22, 2021 – 6:00 P.M.  
West New Bern Recreation Center  
1225 Pinetree Drive**

- 1. Meeting opened by Mayor Dana E. Outlaw. Prayer by Pastor Robert Johnson of Ebenezer Presbyterian Church. Pledge of Allegiance.**
- 2. Roll Call.**

Present: Mayor Dana Outlaw, Alderman Sabrina Bengel, Alderwoman Jameesha Harris, Alderman Robert Aster, Alderman Johnnie Ray Kinsey, and Alderman Jeffrey Odham. Absent: Alderman Barbara Best. A quorum was present.

Also Present: Foster Hughes, Interim City Manager; Michael Scott Davis, City Attorney; and Brenda Blanco, City Clerk.

**Consent Agenda**

- 3. Consider Adopting a Resolution Closing the 200-300 blocks of Belle Oaks Drive for a Belle Oaks Neighborhood Block Party.**

The Belle Oaks Property Owners Association requested the 200-300 blocks of Belle Oaks Drive be closed to vehicular traffic on July 4, 2021 from 5 p.m. until 10 p.m. for a neighborhood block party. A rain date of July 5, 2021 was requested.

- 4. Consider Adopting a Resolution Closing the 1600 Block of Lincoln Street for the Fisher Family Reunion.**

Reginald Fisher requested the 1600 block of Lincoln Street be closed on July 3, 2021 from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. for a Fisher Family Reunion. A rain date of July 4, 2021 was requested.

- 5. Approve Minutes.**

Minutes from the June 08, 2021 regular meeting were provided for review and approval.

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to approve Items 3-4 of the Consent Agenda, seconded by Alderman Bengel. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

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Mayor Outlaw announced a lot of hard work had been put in place over the last few months to search for an Executive Director for the New Bern Housing Authority. He then turned the floor over to Alderman Bengel, who recognized and welcomed Tiffany Askew, the new Director. Alderman Bengel also thanked Tharesa Lee for serving in the capacity of Interim Executive Director. After sharing information about Ms. Askew's background and qualifications, a round of applause was given for Ms. Askew. Ms. Askew thanked the Board for the reception and stated she looked forward to improving New Bern's housing and making it the best in the state and country. Mayor Outlaw then presented Ms. Askew with a City lapel pin. He recognized Ethel Sampson, who was in attendance, and had served as chair of the Housing Authority for 32 years.

Alderman Bengel made a motion to recess for a brief reception, seconded by Alderman Kinsey, time being 6:11 p.m. The meeting resumed at 6:25 p.m.

**6. Consider Adopting Fiscal Year 2020-21 Final Budget Ordinance Amendment.**

A final budget ordinance is adopted annually to ensure that all projected expenditures have sufficient budget and to realign the revenues to equal the appropriations. Notably, this amendment recognizes a transfer of \$100,000 from the Employee Benefits Fund to the OPEB Fund; the grants fund acknowledges grants rolled from FY2019-20 in the amount of \$749,438 and establishes a budget for the NC Office of Archives and History grant of \$25,000 to support the New Bern Preservation Foundation's King Solomon Lodge project; a transfer of \$115,500 is made from the General Fund to the City Hall Building Fund; and finally, the MPO Plan Grant recognizes a total grant allocation of \$206,290 and match of \$41,258.

Kim Ostrom, Accounting Manager, explained unspent funds would be moved to fund balance once FY2020-21 is closed out. She also answered additional questions from the Board.

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to adopt the FY2020-21 final budget ordinance amendment, seconded by Alderman Odham. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

**7. Consider Adopting an Ordinance Amending the Entitlement Cities Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") Fund.**

The City receives annual funding as a designated CDBG Entitlement City. The award for FY2020-21 is \$264,866, and the ordinance amendment recognizes the funds.

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to adopt an ordinance amending the Entitlement Cities Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") Fund, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

**8. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving a Lease Agreement with Promise Place for 408 Hancock Street.**

This item was tabled from the June 08, 2021 meeting to allow Alderwoman Harris an opportunity to confirm Promise Place's desire to renew the lease. The subject property is the site of the old Firemen's Museum, and the lease term is for a period of one year at a rate of \$1.00. Promise Place desires to continue to use the facility to warehouse items that are available for distribution to citizens. Mr. Hughes noted other parties had expressed interest in utilizing the building for a meeting space. Alderman Bengel stated she would like to see other organizations resume use of the property for meetings, classes, functions, etc., instead of the building being used as a warehouse.

Mr. Hughes described the items that were currently stored by Promise Place. Alderwoman Harris asked about the possibility of allowing Promise Place to utilize the back area of the structure for storage. Mr. Davis confirmed that if there were multiple users of the property, then the lease should not be renewed with Promise Place. The Board took no action on the resolution to approve the lease. Alderman Aster and Mayor Outlaw stated they felt the building should be sold if there was no real use for it.

There was brief discussion about the "McCotter House" at 908 Bloomfield Street. Mr. Davis announced the deed restrictions had been lifted, and the property could be conveyed to the Redevelopment Commission, if desired. This item will be placed on the next agenda.

**9. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving a Lease Agreement with Habitat for Humanity of Greater New Bern for 920 George Street.**

This item was also tabled from the June 08, 2021 agenda. Habitat for Humanity of Craven County NC requested renewal of the lease agreement for a portion of the property located at 920 George Street. The proposed lease term is for a 6-month period that will expire on December 30, 2021, at a rate of \$1.00. Alderman Bengel stated she had communicated with Religious Community Services, and they indicated six months would give them time to work through the title and paperwork.

Alderman Bengel made a motion to adopt a resolution approving a lease agreement with Habitat for Humanity of Greater New Bern for 920 George Street, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

**10. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving a Lease Agreement with State Employees Credit Union for the ATM in the Parking Lot at 302 Craven Street.**

A lease with the State Employee's Credit Union ("SECU") was approved at the June 08, 2021 meeting for the ATM located in the City's parking lot at 302 Craven Street. SECU requested additional language be added to the lease to, in part, specify that the City maintains the parking lot surrounding the ATM machine and to allow for

notice of and a 10-day cure period for any default. The lease term remains at a period of 12 months beginning July 1, 2021, and at a rate of \$225.00 a month.

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to adopt a resolution approving a lease agreement with State Employees Credit Union for the ATM in the parking lot at 302 Craven Street, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

**11. Consider Adopting a Resolution for the Donation of the Structure Located at 602 Gaston Boulevard to the Redevelopment Commission.**

The proposed resolution directs the City Clerk to post a notice of the Governing Board's intent to donate the structure located at 602 Gaston Boulevard on the City's website. At its July 13, 2021 meeting, the Board will consider a resolution approving the donation to the Redevelopment Commission. The structure is subsequently to be relocated and used for a public purpose.

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to adopt a resolution to notice the intended donation of the structure located at 602 Gaston Boulevard to the Redevelopment Commission, seconded by Alderman Bengel. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

Note: Items 12 and 13 were voted on collaboratively as indicated under Item 13.

**12. Consider Adopting a Resolution to Initiate the Upset Bid Process for 125 Hillmont Road.**

Hilliard Thompson submitted an offer of \$7,500 to purchase the vacant, nearly 1/2-acre lot at 125 Hillmont Road. The offer represents 50% of the \$15,000 tax value. The property was acquired by the City and County in May 2019 through tax foreclosure. The unpaid taxes at that time were \$6,349.65. If the property is sold for the initial bid, the City is projected to receive \$3,244.62 and the County is projected to receive \$4,255.28 from the proceeds.

**13. Consider Adopting a Resolution to Initiate the Upset Bid Process for 597 Hwy. 55 West.**

Hilliard Thompson submitted an offer of \$3,375 to purchase the vacant, 0.14-acre lot at 597 NC Hwy. 55W. The tax value of the land is \$6,750, and the offer represents 50% of that value. The tax records indicate a value of \$19,570 for a mobile home or structure, but staff confirmed the property is vacant. The property was acquired by the City and County in September 2017 through tax foreclosure. The unpaid taxes at that time were \$4,851.10. If the property is sold for the initial bid, the City is projected to receive \$140.50, and the County is projected to receive \$3,234.50 from the proceeds.

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to adopt resolutions to initiate the upset bid process for 125 Hillmont Road and 597 Hwy. 55 West, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 6-0.

**14. Appointment(s).**

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to reappoint Margie Dunn to the Planning and Zoning Board, seconded by Alderman Bengel. The motion carried unanimously 6-0. Ms. Dunn will serve a three-year term to expire on June 30, 2024.

Alderman Aster made a motion to appoint Sabrina Bengel to the Eastern Carolina Council of Government's Board, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. The motion carried unanimously 6-0. Alderman Bengel will serve out the remainder of Alderman Kinsey's 2021 term.

Alderman Kinsey made a motion to reappoint Vernon Guion to the Community Development Advisory Committee, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. The motion carried unanimously 6-0. Mr. Guion will serve another three-year term to expire on June 30, 2024.

**15. Attorney's Report.**

The City Attorney had nothing to report.

**16. City Manager's Report.**

- Mr. Hughes announced Adam Pitts would be playing Friday evening at the Footloose on the Neuse concert series. He also reported on July 4<sup>th</sup> activities and announced fireworks would start at 9:15 p.m.
- Governing Board meetings will return to City Hall beginning with the July 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**17. New Business.**

Alderman Aster

Notification was received today that the City had been awarded \$192,000 for the mitigation of City Hall. Additionally, almost \$900,000 was in the check write for CAT Z reimbursable management costs.

Alderwoman Harris

Met with Public Works today to discuss the Pembroke community. George Chiles, Interim Director of Public Works, will give a presentation at the July 13<sup>th</sup> meeting on plans for Pembroke.

Juneteenth is now a national holiday. A request will be coming before the board to make that a City-observed holiday.

Alderman Bengel

City Hall renovations have taken longer than expected. A dedication celebration is scheduled for the July 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. The families of Leander Morgan and Ella Bengel were invited to attend, as well as the public. The second floor now houses the Mayor's office, as well as an office for aldermen.

An awesome ceremony was held this past weekend to dedicate the new history signs. Alderman Bengel reported on the collaboration to make that project happen.

**18. Closed Session.**

Alderman Odham made a motion to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS §143-310.11(a)(3) to discuss Martinez vs. the City of New Bern and NCGS §143-310.11(a)(6) to discuss a personnel matter, seconded by Alderman Bengel. The motion carried unanimously 6-0, time being 6:52 p.m.

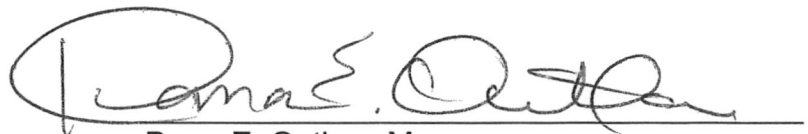
**19. Adjourn.**

Alderman Aster made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. The motion carried unanimously 6-0, time being 8:26 p.m.

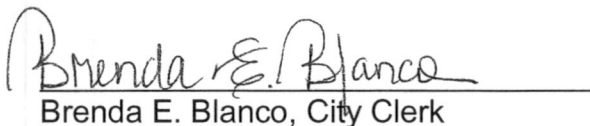
The attached documents are incorporated herewith and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

NOTE: For additional details and information on the Board of Aldermen meetings, please visit the City of New Bern's website at [www.newbernc.gov](http://www.newbernc.gov). Video and audio recordings of the meeting have been archived.

Minutes approved: July 13, 2021



Dana E. Outlaw, Mayor



Brenda E. Blanco, City Clerk