

**CITY OF NEW BERN  
BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING  
NOVEMBER 23, 2021 – 6:00 P.M.  
CITY HALL COURTROOM  
300 POLLOCK STREET**

- 1. Meeting opened by Mayor Dana E. Outlaw. Prayer by Alderwoman Jameesha Harris. Pledge of Allegiance.**

- 2. Roll Call.**

Present: Mayor Dana Outlaw, Alderman Sabrina Bengel, Alderwoman Jameesha Harris Alderman Robert Aster, Alderman Johnnie Ray Kinsey, Alderman Barbara Best (via telephone), and Alderman Jeffrey Odham. Absent: None. A quorum was present.

Also Present: Foster Hughes, City Manager; Marvin Williams, Assistant City Manager; Jaimee Bullock-Mosley, Assistant City Attorney; and Brenda Blanco, City Clerk.

**Consent Agenda**

- 3. Approve Minutes.**

Minutes from the November 09, 2021 regular meeting were provided for review and approval.

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to approve Item 3 of the Consent Agenda, seconded by Alderman Bengel. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

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- 4. Presentation on Wreaths Across America.**

Kevin Yates made a brief presentation on Wreaths Across America, a wreath-laying ceremony to take place at the National Cemetery in New Bern on December 18, 2021. He requested the City's assistance once again with providing dumpsters, escort, and busing services. The possibility of adding this to the list of city-sponsored events was briefly mentioned.

- 5. Recognition of Graduates of New Bern 101.**

The first session of New Bern 101, a 7-week program to introduce participants to local government, kicked off in October. Participants visited each department of

the City to learn about the departments' responsibilities, services provided, various programs, and to tour facilities and meet staff. The final week of the program concludes this evening with participants attending the Governing Board meeting to observe the matters before the Board and the Board's consideration of action. Participants who attended all sessions were recognized and presented with a certificate of completion.

**6. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving a Holiday Gift Card for City Employees.**

At the November 09, 2021 Board meeting, a suggestion was made to give City employees a gift card for the 2021 holidays in recognition of their service. Potential denominations of \$25 and \$50 were suggested at that time.

Alderman Aster made a motion to adopt a resolution approving a \$50 holiday gift card for employees, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

Aldermen Aster and Best commented about the loyalty and dedication of City employees and how they deserved the gift. Alderman Best said she hoped in the future the City could give employees more. Alderman Bengel asked that each year an established amount be placed in the budget for the gift cards, so the Board does not have to consider the topic annually.

**7. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving an Amendment to the Contract to Audit Accounts for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2021.**

On May 11, 2021, the Board adopted a resolution approving an audit contract with Thomas, Price, Scott, Adams, and Co. P.A. for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2021. The terms of the contract provided the audit report was due by October 30, 2021. The amendment extends the due date to January 31, 2022. The extension is necessary due to delays caused by significant staff turnover, and the amended contract proposes a plan to prevent future late submissions of the audit.

Alderman Bengel made a motion to adopt a resolution approving an amendment to the contract to audit accounts for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2021, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

**8. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving a Pole Attachment Agreement with MetroNet.**

To help facilitate MetroNet's fiber network for broadband service, a pole attachment agreement was proposed to allow MetroNet to attach fiber and hardware to the City's utility poles. Charlie Bauschard, Director of Public Utilities, explained this was basically a standard agreement and that the City had several pole attachment agreements with other vendors. MetroNet previously reviewed the agreement and indicated their satisfaction with the terms. Mr. Bauschard outlined the anticipated course for service installation.

Alderman Odham made a motion to adopt a resolution approving a pole attachment agreement with MetroNet, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

**9. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving an Additional Streetlight for Carolina Street.**

Alphonso Nelson of 2313 Carolina Street requested additional streetlighting. Staff evaluated the request and determined the area did not meet the City's light standard and recommended the addition of one light on Carolina Street. The installation of the streetlight will cost \$766.69, and the monthly utility charge for service will be \$8.44.

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to adopt a resolution approving an additional streetlight for Carolina Street, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

**10. Consider Adopting a Resolution Authorizing the Submission of an Application for the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant.**

The Fire Department sought authorization to apply for a FEMA Assistance to Firefighter's grant. If awarded, grant funds would be utilized to purchase updated Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus ("SCBA") at an estimated cost of \$316,153.95. The grant request is for \$284,539.55, and a 10% match in the amount of \$31,615.40 would be required. This cost does not include the testing equipment, but Fire Chief Bobby Boyd commented that the old equipment may be retrofitted. The deadline to apply for the grant is December 17, 2021.

Alderman Aster made a motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the submission of an application for the FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grant, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

**11. Consider Adopting an Ordinance to Amend Article VI of Chapter 70 to Designate a Portion of Tax Parcel 8-008-202 as an Additional Free Parking Lot.**

The proposed ordinance amends Article VI of Chapter 70 to designate an additional free parking lot on a portion of Tax Parcel ID 8-008-202, which is the former site of the Days Hotel. The portion of the property closest to Pollock Street would be utilized for parking. If the property is developed in the future, the Board would have the discretion to revert the parking lot for private use. For safety and security, Alderman Odham suggested the lighting in the parking lot be evaluated. He also recommended that the surrounding businesses be notified of the Board's action to designate the parking lot, as well as the potential that such use may be rescinded in the future.

Alderman Bengel made a motion to adopt an ordinance to amend Article VI of Chapter 70 to designate a portion of Tax Parcel 8-008-202 as an additional free parking lot, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

**12. Consider Adopting an Ordinance to Amend Article II. Fire Prevention Code of Chapter 30 "Fire Prevention and Protection".**

The Craven County Board of Education desires to install above-ground fuel storage tanks as part of its daily operations at the Craven County Schools Facility Services building located at 950 Hwy. 55 West. Pursuant to Section 30-40 of Article II "Fire Prevention Code" of Chapter 30 "Fire Prevention and Protection", the ordinance must be amended to add this site as an approved district for above-ground fuel storage.

Alderman Best stated she and some of the residents were slightly hesitant about having flammables in their neighborhood. Fire Marshal Danny Hill explained this site would be very similar to the above-ground storage tanks at the City's water plant on Hwy. 55 West. The Board of Education will place the tanks behind their facilities, enclose it in a fenced area, and will have a retention wall or double-walled tanks. The tanks will be used by the school maintenance staff, not the buses.

Alderman Best made a motion to adopt an ordinance to amend Article II. Fire Prevention Code of Chapter 30 "Fire Prevention and Protection", seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

**13. Appointment(s).**

No appointments were made.

**14. Attorney's Report.**

The Assistant City Attorney had nothing to report.

**15. City Manager's Report.**

- Mr. Hughes expressed the need to conduct a workshop on the American Rescue Plan Funding. Alderman Bengel suggested the workshop be held the first week of January and that guidance be provided on the State budget that just passed. She further recommended that the Board review information recently released by the NC League of Municipalities and include that as part of the workshop discussion. After discussing several dates, it was elected to have the City Clerk circulate a doodle poll.
- The annual tree-lighting ceremony is scheduled for November 26<sup>th</sup> followed immediately by Beary Merry events. On November 27<sup>th</sup> at 4:45 p.m., the Aeroshell Aerobatic show will return for the second year. The 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Flotilla will be held on December 4<sup>th</sup>, as will the Christmas parade. Information on all events can be found online at [www.visitnewbern.com](http://www.visitnewbern.com).

Mayor Outlaw inquired about the elevator project and Martin Marietta Park. Mr. Hughes announced the Historic Preservation Commission issued a Certificate of Appropriateness ("COA") for the elevator last week. An update on the park was also provided by Mr. Hughes. Once all signage is in place, a grand opening will be scheduled for the park.

## **16. New Business.**

### Alderman Bengel

Noting she was thankful to live in New Bern and represent the City in her elected position, Alderman Bengel wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

### Alderwoman Harris

Gratitude was expressed to the City for the flowers sent after the death of her mother. Alderwoman Harris also thanked staff and colleagues who reached out to her during that time.

A happy and safe Thanksgiving was wished to everyone.

A shout out was given to Habitat for Humanity and everyone who participated in Community Relations Day. Barbara Lee was honored during the event.

A status report was sought on the Stanley White Recreation Center. Mr. Hughes stated responses are due to the Request for Qualifications ("RFQ") on December 03, 2021. Once those are received, staff will evaluate the responses and bring information before the Board at the first meeting in January.

### Alderman Aster

The City Attorney was asked to research and report back on a rule that would prevent remote participation in a closed session. Alderman Aster felt attendance during a closed session should be in person only, although he was okay with remote participation in a regular meeting.

Prayers were sought for the family of longtime New Bernian, Grier Crawford, who passed away this week.

### Alderman Kinsey

Wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving were voiced.

### Alderman Best

Thanks was expressed to those who participated in Community Relations Day and were a part of honoring Barbara Lee, the first person to be recognized under the annual event.

Happy Thanksgiving to everyone.

### Alderman Odham

Small Business Saturday will take place November 27<sup>th</sup>. Giving Tuesday is November 30<sup>th</sup>, and Pancakes for PIE is scheduled for December 4<sup>th</sup> at Morgan's. Alderman Bengel commented that New Bern survives off nonprofits, and she encouraged giving on Giving Tuesday.

**17. Closed Session.**

A closed session was not needed.

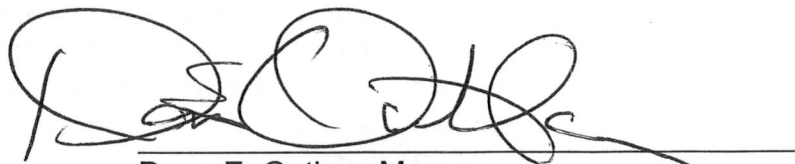
**18. Adjourn.**

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0, time being 7:09 p.m.

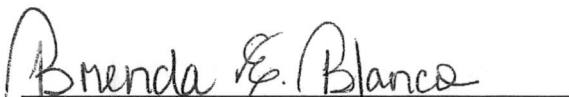
The attached documents are incorporated herewith and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

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

Minutes approved: December 14, 2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dana E. Outlaw', written over a horizontal line.

Dana E. Outlaw, Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brenda E. Blanco', written over a horizontal line.  
Brenda E. Blanco, City Clerk