

**CITY OF NEW BERN
BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2023 – 6:00 P.M.
CITY HALL COURTROOM
300 POLLOCK STREET**

- 1. Meeting opened by Mayor Jeffrey Odham. Prayer by Alderman Best. Pledge of Allegiance.**

- 2. Roll Call.**

Present: Mayor Jeffrey Odham, Alderman Rick Prill, Alderman Hazel Royal, Alderman Robert Aster, Alderman Johnnie Ray Kinsey, Alderman Barbara Best, and Alderman Robert Brinson. Absent: None. A quorum was present.

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

Mayor Odham welcomed Boy Scout Troup 584. The scouts came forward and introduced themselves.

Mr. Hughes announced in addition to broadcasting City3TV on the City's website, Suddenlink channel 3, and Facebook, broadcasts are now available on ROKU TV. Users simply need to search City of New Bern to find programming. Jessica Rhue, the Director of Development Services, was introduced. Mrs. Rhue expressed excitement about her new position and said she looked forward to working with everyone. Lastly, Mr. Hughes announced the route for the Black History Month parade had been modified at the request of the applicant. The street closure is requested under Item 6 on the Consent Agenda. Copies of a map depicting the new route and a modified resolution were available for review at each official's seat.

- 3. Approve Agenda.**

Alderman Prill made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Alderman Royal. The motion carried unanimously 7-0.

- 4. Request and Petition of Citizens.**

Jim Fischer of 1004 Beacon Hill Road learned about the request for an extension of the noise ordinance for 4115 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Noting the backup alarms utilized by concrete trucks, Mr. Fischer stated he was opposed to the extension as he did not want to hear the alarms and other noise at all hours of the night.

Lela Ruth Cooper of 1022 Colleton Way said a previous Director of Public Works had indicated Duffyfield would be cleaned up monthly, but that has not happened. She asked for a major cleanup to be scheduled for the spring. She suggested Public Works, the Redevelopment Commission, church groups, and others participate. Alderman Kinsey pointed out the Phoenix Group recently had a scheduled cleanup in the area, and he asked the City Manager to share with Ms. Cooper the contact information for the group so she would be aware of its next planned cleanup.

Peter Frey of 1414 Neuse Boulevard said he became interested in property near his business, and upon inquiry learned the Redevelopment Commission was interested in auctioning the property. He submitted an offer and made a presentation before the Commission about his proposed use, which was well received. At the second meeting, his offer was completely rejected. He thought the worse that could happen would be that he was outbid. He did not know he would just be turned away. He has submitted follow-up bids, but has not yet heard from those. He questioned if whoever is getting the property had to go through the same steps and process as he did, whether their offer would be advertised as a bid, and if he would be able to submit a bid in that process. Mayor Odham stated he would speak with staff the following day, and someone would follow up with Mr. Frey in the next day or two.

Consent Agenda

5. Consider Adopting a Resolution to Close Specific Streets for the Ghent Neighborhood Mardi Gras Parade and Block Party.

The Ghent Neighborhood Association requested the 1400-1900 blocks of Spencer Avenue be closed to vehicular traffic on February 18, 2023 from 12:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. for the neighborhood's annual Mardi Gras parade. It was also requested the 1700-1900 blocks of Spencer Avenue be closed to vehicular traffic from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. for a block party.

6. Consider Adopting a Resolution to Close Specific Streets for Vision Forward's Black History Month Parade.

Victor Taylor with Vision Forward submitted a request to close the 400-600 blocks of Fort Totten Drive, 1300-1600 blocks of Trent Boulevard, 400 block of First Street, 700-1200 blocks of Broad Street, and 400-600 blocks of George Street for a Black History Month Parade. After the agenda was published, it was discovered the organization had not sought permission from the NC Department of Transportation ("NCDOT") for the closure of First Street. Thus, the route has been restructured, and the organization is seeking the closure of the 500-700 blocks of Third Avenue, 700-1200 blocks of Broad Street, and 400-600 blocks of George Street from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. on February 18, 2023. In the event of inclement weather, a rain date of February 25, 2023 was requested.

7. Consider Adopting a Resolution to Call for a Public Hearing to Amend the Ordinance for the Schedule of Fees and Charges Relative to Parking Rates.

At the Board's retreat in November, a discussion was held about downtown parking and the City's leased parking lots. The current monthly rate for limited leased parking Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. is \$20 per space and unlimited leased parking is \$30 per space. There has been no increase in these rates since at least 2011. Staff recommends adjusting the limited rate to \$35 monthly and unlimited to \$45 monthly. The increase would be effective April 01, 2023. A public hearing was sought for January 24, 2023 to receive input on the proposed increases.

8. Approve Minutes.

Minutes from the October 25, 2022, November 08, 2022, and November 22, 2022 closed sessions and December 13, 2022 regular meeting were provided for review and approval.

Alderman Best made a motion to approve Items 5-8 of the Consent Agenda with some corrections to Item 6 that the Black History Month parade will not start on Trent Road but will start on Third Avenue going down Broad, seconded by Alderman Royal. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

9. Conduct a Public Hearing on the Rezoning of 910 and 914 Bloomfield Street; and
a) Consider Adopting a Statement of Zoning Consistency or Inconsistency; and
b) Consider Adopting an Ordinance to Rezone 910 and 914 Bloomfield Street from R-6 Residential to C-4 Neighborhood Business District.

The Redevelopment Commission requested to rezone two parcels totaling 0.252 +/- acres from R-6 Residential to C-4 Neighborhood Business District. The parcels are located at 910 and 914 Bloomfield Street. The Planning and Zoning Board unanimously approved the request at its November 01, 2022 meeting. Seth Laughlin, Land and Community Development Administrator, shared a PowerPoint reviewing the applicable uses of a C-4 district. He noted staff had no objection to the change.

Mayor Odham opened the public hearing, but no one came forward to speak. Alderman Best made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Alderman Brinson. The motion carried unanimously 7-0.

Alderman Best made a motion to adopt a statement of zoning consistency, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried 6-1 with Alderman Kinsey voting against it.

Alderman Best made a motion to adopt an ordinance to rezone 910 and 914 Bloomfield Street from R-6 Residential to C-4 Neighborhood Business District, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

10. Presentation by Redevelopment Commission on Proposed Housing Project.

Alderman Aster announced in September he began to think of ways to use his American Rescue Plan (“ARP”) funds. Knowing New Bern has a need for housing, he spoke with the City Manager about an idea to use his designated ARP funds for housing. He later met with staff and some members of the Redevelopment Commission on October 25th to share the idea. The group met again on November 11th, at which time the Director of the Redevelopment Commission (“RDC”) identified property on the corner of Jones and Walt Bellamy Streets as a potential site for the project. Alderman Aster felt it was a great location for the project and proceeded to pursue the Jones Street property. If the project is finalized, the homes would be built and turned over to the Redevelopment Commission who would act as landlord. Rent from the residences would be used to redevelop and remodel other homes in the district. Alderman Aster thought he had communicated with everyone on the Governing Board about his idea.

Kip Peregoy and Beth Walker, Commissioners on the Redevelopment Commission, made a presentation on the proposed project. The Commission purchased the property at 203 and 207 Jones Street in 2021 for \$38,000. At that time, the property contained a one-story structure on the corner lot. The structure was evaluated and determined to have significant issues that the RDC did not feel it could effectively or efficiently address costwise. The home was demolished after undergoing asbestos abatement. The RDC’s housing work group began to tinker with plans to put housing on the corner lot, but it had no funds with which to proceed. In October of 2022, Alderman Aster came forth with his proposal to fund housing on the property. Meetings continued to review plans that would yield the highest and best use of the property.

Referring to the comments made earlier by Mr. Frey, Alderman Kinsey questioned whether Alderman Aster went through the same (bidding) process as Mr. Frey. In response, Mr. Peregoy stated Alderman Aster did not have to go through the process since the land is owned by the RDC and there would be no sale of the property. Alderman Kinsey asked for the City Attorney to weigh in. Mr. Davis confirmed with Mr. Peregoy that the property is not on a list of RDC surplus property available for sale. The City has previously developed a surplus property list and established a minimum bid. Citizens can submit a bid for those properties. If a parcel is not on the surplus list, there is no obligation for the bid to be submitted to the Board. The RDC does not have a surplus property list. Ms. Walker said there is a process in place for citizens who are interested in a property to make a presentation before the Commission. Following the presentation, the housing work group will review the proposal and present their findings and recommendations at the RDC’s meeting the following month. After

reviewing Mr. Frey's offer, the working group felt his offer was not the highest and best use of the property.

Ms. Walker shared visuals showing a proposed development of four housing units on the site. The development would consist of two two-bedroom units and two one-bedroom units. As the owner, the Commission would hire a management company to oversee the rental of the property. Alderman Kinsey asked if the property would be taxable. It was confirmed it would not be taxable if the property remained in the RDC's possession, but it would if owned by Mr. Frey. Alderman Aster commented the rent generated from the four units would likely exceed any tax revenue that could be generated from a single home, and the rental income could be used to upfit other homes in need of rehabilitation. Alderman Kinsey said this was the first time he had heard of this idea, and Alderman Aster said it was not as he had called Alderman Kinsey to talk with him about it. Alderman Kinsey did not remember that. Alderman Best said she had inquired in an earlier meeting if the property produces revenue whether that would mean it becomes taxable, similar to parsonages that are rented. Mr. Davis was not sure, but indicated he would check. His instinct was that it may not be taxable since it would be for low to moderate-income families.

After the visual presentation, Alderman Aster said the next step would be to allocate the ARP funds and look at zoning compliance to see if the project could be built as envisioned or if the code needs amending. Mr. Peregoy was unaware of any needed changes and said the development of the three lots would allow the plan as proposed. Mr. Laughlin said the RDC boundary has an overlay that establishes its own standards, and he felt sure three or four units could be on the lots. Alderman Aster was hopeful with respect to starting construction right away, finishing the homes by summertime, and establishing partnerships with general contractors and building supply stores. He asked for the Board to approve seed money of approximately \$75,000 to go toward the project to cover architectural plans, etc. When it is better known what the construction costs will be, Alderman Aster will ask for additional funds to be moved to the Redevelopment Commission. Mr. Hughes said if direction were given then a budget amendment could be presented at the next meeting to appropriate ARP funds to the RDC for this housing project.

Alderman Aster made a motion to give direction for staff to bring a budget amendment back on a future agenda, seconded by Alderman Brinson. During the discussion that followed, Alderman Royal said she was fully supportive of housing, but was somewhat in the dark about this proposal. She attended a Redevelopment Commission meeting that was not "above board" as far as her being informed. When she posed questions at that meeting, Ms. Walker told her that she had not been on the Board long enough and was unaware of some of the things that had transpired, which was an insult to Alderman Royal's intelligence. As things move forward, she agrees housing is needed, but feels there is a need for transparency. As Mr. Frey indicated and as she said, when questions are posed people should not be denied answers and should be given an opportunity for their questions to be addressed. She suggested the entire Board be kept in

the loop going forward, which would allow everyone to have input. Before moving forward, she expressed a desire to meet to obtain clarity and understanding of the proposal. The issue she takes with this topic is relative to disclosure and the right for everyone to be heard and understood. She further took issue with how the project unfolded and how she was told she was not privy to the information. Going forward, it is her hope that history does not repeat itself and that citizens are respected and given an opportunity to be heard. Noting she cannot make a decision without being informed, it was also her hope that the Board does not find itself again in this position without clarity. When items are put on an agenda, the Board needs information. She expects full disclosure from the RDC and any other board or commission over which the Governing Board has jurisdiction. In closure, Alderman Royal stated she had questions and needed answers.

Alderman Kinsey said he had not seen the RDC do anything in its four years. He asked if anyone had ever walked in Duffyfield and knew what it was like. He suggested the residents of that community be asked for their thoughts. People “here” have big houses, while those in Duffyfield have holes in their floors.

Alderman Aster expressed appreciation for Alderman Kinsey’s comments, but noted this is a vacant lot that could be converted to provide four homes right away. He said he had not walked the streets of Duffyfield in a long, long time and that he did not live there as Alderman Kinsey does. Alderman Kinsey asked Alderman Aster how he knew where he lived?

Alderman Best said she was part of the initial process when the prior Board formed the RDC. She said it was incorrect to state the RDC had done nothing in its four-year existence. During that time, the RDC has set up guidelines. She did agree that housing is a dire need. She said she has worked as hard as she could for Duffyfield trying to get sidewalks and work on their streets. There is a lot of work that needs to be done in that area. She asked for all members of the Board to work with her to get that area cleaned up. It is time to do something for that area, and the Board should split up and walk the area to see what needs to be done.

Alderman Brinson explained he seconded Alderman Aster’s motion because he did not see the discussion or vote as an “up or down” (for or against) vote on Alderman Aster’s project. It costs nothing to ask staff to put a proposal on an agenda for two weeks from now. At that time, it would be an “up or down” vote. This provides two weeks for the Board to have additional discussions to gather the understanding it doesn’t have.

Alderman Kinsey asked how much money the RDC had in the bank. Mr. Hughes said the Board allocated \$350,000 in ARP funds for the McCotter House/wellness center. Mrs. Ostrom said the RDC’s fund balance would be \$347,327 after the \$55,000 transfer on tonight’s agenda. Their professional services line item has \$12,600 left from the budgeted amount and \$30,700 in the land structures line. Mr. Hughes noted there are also Community Development Block Grant (“CDBG”) funds that have been allocated toward projects. Alderman Kinsey did not want

anyone to think he is against housing; he is for action. He asked what structures exist to show the RDC has done something.

Alderman Prill said he did not think anyone would disagree that affordable housing is a need in the community. The concept of a small home development is something he supports. He was aware of the proposed concept, only because he had previously inquired about the City's intent or planning for tiny/small homes. Alderman Aster has indicated his desire to try to develop a small home concept in New Bern. However, Alderman Prill said he had concerns because he has not yet seen any cost details to develop the lots and construct the homes. He will have trouble voting for something like this unless numbers are put to paper, even if they are just estimates, as he wonders where additional funding would come from should the Alderman Aster's ARP funds be insufficient to complete the project. He is unaware as to whether the RDC is financially able to cover any funding needed. He has also made known to the RDC the concerns he has about the Commission putting itself in a landlord position. A portion of any rental income should be set aside for repairs and maintenance. If a property management company is retained to manage the rentals, the rental income may not be as great as some think it would be. If this project moves forward, Alderman Prill expressed hope that in the next couple of weeks someone will start crunching numbers so all the Board can see the estimated cost of the concept. Even with donated materials and services, it will come down to the overall cost. It is unknown if the ARP funding will be sufficient to bring this project to fruition.

Alderman Aster announced the plans were turned over to a general contractor for pricing, and the estimate was somewhere around \$500,000. He said he had more than that available in ARP funds and "money will not be an issue". It is unknown what the units will rent for, but Alderman Aster felt the rent on the four units would cover repair and maintenance and provide funding to move forward on rehabbing additional homes. He said he was sorry if Alderman Royal felt she was disrespected; however, he hoped that could be straightened out. Aside from that, the project needs to go forward per Alderman Aster as there are people wanting to rent in the \$300 per month range. To do what it takes to make the Board happy and start the project, Alderman Aster offered to send updates, add other officials to email chains, and allow others to attend meetings about the project.

Alderman Aster said his motion was to move forward with \$75,000 seed money so the City could start paying for some of the services the City has to have, which by the way is included in the project price he gave, so the RDC could get the project up and rolling.

Mayor Odham said the discussion is about Alderman Aster building affordable housing with his allocation of ARP funds. All ARP requests were previously approved unanimously. Recounting Alderman Kinsey talked about the overall goals and accomplishments of the RDC, the Mayor felt Alderman Kinsey needed an update and stated no one had been more critical of the RDC than him, until he heard the comments of Alderman Kinsey. Mayor Odham had a meeting with the RDC and shared concerns about what the Commission had accomplished in four

years. Some property acquisition has taken place, structures demoed, and multiple cleanups. The RDC has not built anything, but has acquired some property. He concurred with Alderman Royal's concerns and felt there was a need to do better and have better communication. He agreed with all concerns Alderman Prill expressed. The Mayor said he was supportive of taking the next step to have a discussion at the next meeting.

Alderman Brinson asked for a point of order as to the motion that was actually made. At the Mayor's request, Ms. Blanco read the motion as stated was to give staff direction to bring a budget amendment back on a future agenda. Alderman Aster said that was not his motion. Ms. Blanco stated that was the motion as stated, although there had been discussion about an amount. Alderman Aster said he made the motion to give \$75,000 seed money to the RDC. Ms. Blanco clarified that was in the discussion before and after the motion, but it was not verbally stated in the motion that was on the floor, and Alderman Brinson commented "right". Alderman Brinson then said that is why he asked for confirmation of the motion because what he seconded was to give staff direction to come back with a budget amendment. Alderman Kinsey reiterated his desire to "see the plan".

Upon a roll-call vote, the motion on the floor as stated carried unanimously 7-0.

Mayor Odham announced Stephanie Lovick and Julian Tripp had resigned from the RDC. Noting in the past there had been a race to make motions to fill vacancies, he suggested on the Board's next agenda that each official be given an opportunity to nominate one or two people and then the Board vote on the nominees. Alderman Best stated she was pleased and in agreement with that suggestion as she had an issue with how the commissioners were previously selected.

11. Consider Adopting a Resolution to Sale 2706 McKinley Avenue.

After receiving an offer of \$2,500.00 from Stephonie Coward-Leary for the purchase of 2706 McKinley Avenue, the Board adopted a resolution to initiate the upset bid process. The bid was advertised, but no additional bids received. If the property is sold for the initial offer, the City will receive \$232.90, and the County will receive \$2,267.10.

The tax value of the 0.12-acre lot is \$4,500.00. The property was acquired jointly by the City and County through tax foreclosure in June of 2017. At that time, the City was owed \$475.06 in liens, taxes, interest, penalties, fees, and costs. The County was owed \$2,744.06 in taxes, interest, penalties, fees, and costs.

Alderman Royal made a motion to adopt a resolution to sale 2706 McKinley Avenue, seconded by Alderman Best. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

(Alderman Best momentarily stepped out of the room at 7:16 p.m.)

12. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving Extended Constructions Hours for CapeFear Construction at 4115 Dr. MLK Jr. Boulevard.

CapeFear Construction is building a 252-unit apartment complex at 4115 Dr. MLK Jr. Boulevard known as The Proximity New Bern. City ordinances confine construction noise to the hours of 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., but provides that an exemption can be provided with approval of the Governing Board. CapeFear requested an exemption for the period of February 01, 2023 through July 01, 2023 to allow for deliveries of concrete, running of generators, and other construction-related activities. Wes Esarove, the Construction Manager and a resident of New Bern, provided additional details about the request. Concrete pouring would begin on designated days starting at 3 a.m. and would be no more than one day per week, weather permitting. Concrete trucks and generator light towers will be used. Concrete trucks will utilize a nighttime mode that will muffle the backup alarm. The alarm will not be heard beyond the property site.

(Alderman Best returned to the room at 7:18 p.m.)

All trucks will enter and exit the site at the MLK entrance, avoiding Greenleaf Cemetery Road. On the south side of the property, there are protective wetlands and two ponds that create a buffer between the construction site and Haywood Farms Road. The distance is roughly 300 feet from the farthest building to the residences on Haywood Farms Road. The closest building pad near Greenleaf Cemetery is around 150 feet. Mr. Esarove stated he would be present and coordinate all morning activities and concrete pours. He will utilize a decibel reader to ensure noise is below 55 decibels at Edwards Way and Haywood Farms Road. The amount of concrete poured for these buildings requires that the pouring start earlier in the morning, so crews are not working 14 to 15-hour days. It also keeps the contractor from competing for concrete trucks during the day. The anticipated extended hours may only be needed for nine weeks and not the full five months. Alderman Prill pointed out the minimal speed of the trucks will yield a lower noise level than if they were on the open highway. Mr. Esarove said the trucks would not utilize Greenleaf Cemetery Road. Alderman Brinson pointed out if the trucks arrive from 3-7 a.m. they will not impact the area traffic, which is already a concern to some. Thus, his consideration is not just with respect to noise, but also the traffic impact. It was noted the Board previously granted extended construction hours for the Harris Teeter complex, Carolina Avenue apartments, and the U-Haul site.

Alderman Brinson said the proposed resolution in the agenda package basically gives a carte blanche 24-hour exemption from February to July. He advocated for and intended to make a more restrictive motion to provide extended hours from basically 3-7 a.m. for only nine instances once per week. Alderman Royal asked what concessions could be made if there are issues and complaints. Mr. Esarove said the noise would be reduced as low as possible from the beginning of the work. He commented 55 decibels is equivalent to a car stereo. The heavy, earth-moving equipment that is on site now stands three stories tall and are visible from

some residents' front porches. Concrete trucks are half that size and may be seen from front porches, but will be really difficult to hear. Mr. Hughes pointed out if complaints are received, the extended hours can be stopped at any time. Alderman Prill noted he too had concerns about the open-ended resolution and wanted a more restrictive waiver.

Alderman Brinson made a motion to adopt a resolution granting an exception to CapeFear to the City's noise ordinance essentially allowing them from 3 a.m. to 7 a.m. Monday through Friday, February 1st to July 1st for the purpose of pouring concrete and its supporting operations with the further understanding that the exemption should be utilized once per week for nine separate weeks within that window, seconded by Alderman Prill. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0. Mr. Esarove was comfortable with the revision if he could pick the day of the week for the concrete pour.

13. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving a Memorandum of Understanding with CarolinaEast Health System for EMS Housing and Ambulance Storage.

CarolinaEast Health System developed a contingency plan to provide for the strategic location and storage of ambulances and personnel in the event of an emergency that necessitates the evacuation of the center's emergency medical services ("EMS") facility. The proposed memorandum of understanding provides the City will house EMS personnel and store ambulances at its Fire-Rescue locations on Neuse Boulevard and Elizabeth Avenue, to the extent of its ability.

Noting he sits on the Board of Directors for CarolinaEast, Mayor Odham asked the City Attorney to clarify that he does not have a conflict and can vote on this issue. Mr. Davis confirmed the Mayor could vote since the item does not involve a contract that would benefit the Mayor or his family in any way.

Alderman Prill made a motion to adopt a resolution approving a Memorandum of Understanding with CarolinaEast Health System for EMS housing and ambulance storage, seconded by Alderman Royal. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

14. Consider Adopting an Ordinance for the Demolition of 1111 Cedar Street.

Matt Boswell, Chief Building Inspector, noted staff has been working on this property for a couple of years. A letter of minimum housing deficiencies was sent to the owner of 1111 Cedar Street on April 21, 2020. Heirs subsequently expressed a desire to sell the property, but the home sustained major structural damage in a fire and never sold. A complaint was filed on May 09, 2022 alleging the structure unfit for human habitation. A hearing was scheduled for June 02, 2022, but none of the heirs attended. To date, there has been no further contact from the heirs, permits have not been obtained for the necessary repairs, and the structure remains noncompliant. Public Works estimates the cost of demolition at \$10,909.50. Pictures of the property and a complete list of chronological events

were provided to the Board. If the ordinance is adopted, two smaller accessory buildings on the property will be demolished along with the main residential structure.

Alderman Royal made a motion to adopt an ordinance for the demolition of 1111 Cedar Street, seconded by Alderman Best. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

15. Consider Adopting a Budget Ordinance Amendment for FY2022-23.

This budget amendment will appropriate \$55,000 from the Redevelopment Commission's fund balance to its redevelopment fund as requested and approved by the Commission on December 14, 2022. The funds will be used for expenses related to the rehabilitation of 911 Eubanks Street, asbestos work at 908 Bloomfield Street (McCotter House), the purchase of 910 and 914 Bloomfield Street, and lastly the demolition of 908, 910 and 914 Bloomfield Street.

Alderman Prill made a motion to adopt a budget ordinance amendment for FY2022-23, seconded by Alderman Best. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

16. Appointment(s).

Alderman Kinsey made a motion to appoint Marc Wartner to Seat 4 on the Historic Preservation Commission, seconded by Alderman Best. The motion carried unanimously 7-0. Mr. Wartner will fill the remainder of Tony Bryant's term, which expires on June 30, 2024.

Alderman Best made a motion to appoint Gregory Rusch to Seat 5 on the Historic Preservation Commission, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. The motion carried unanimously 7-0. Mr. Rusch will fill the remainder of Annette Stone's term, which expires on June 30, 2023.

17. Attorney's Report.

The City Attorney had nothing to report.

18. City Manager's Report.

Mr. Hughes said the Union Point Park stormwater improvements project will begin on January 16th. A fence replacement project is currently in progress along the riverwalk from the convention center to the railroad tracks, and the project should be completed in about 10 days. Staff has been notified NCDOT has already installed signs reducing speed from 45 mph to 35 mph on Glenburnie Road from Highway 70 to MLK Boulevard.

Information was routed to the Board seeking input on goals and objectives for the next three years. Responses were requested by January 20th. This topic will be discussed at an upcoming workshop.

ROKU, the streaming device announced earlier in the meeting, was briefly demonstrated.

19. New Business.

Alderman Brinson

Wreaths Across America will hold a wreath retirement ceremony this Saturday at 9 a.m. at New Bern National Cemetery.

American Legion Post 539 will finish cleaning and cataloging the veterans' graves at Evergreen Cemetery on February 4th at 2 p.m.

Thanks to staff for the great job on Christmas displays and the New Year's Eve event.

The City Manager was asked if a tally was available for the ice-skating rink. Mr. Hughes replied it generated just under \$17,000, which is great for the first year.

Alderman Best

Turning off Glenburnie Road by Burger King there is a big hole as you enter the parking lot. Mr. Hughes said that is likely private property, but staff can reach out to the owners.

Alderman Royal

Happy New Year to all. Every end marks a new beginning, so never underestimate the power to take your life into a new direction. The secret to change is to focus your energy not on fighting the old but welcoming the new.

Ward 2 will host a town hall meeting on February 6th at 6 p.m. at West New Bern Recreation Center.

Alderman Prill

There is a 2-foot or so sunken depression in the area behind the DoubleTree Hotel near the retaining wall. Alderman Prill expressed concern about an electric or cable box that is nearby, and he asked the City Manager to check on this.

Mayor Odham

A desire has been expressed for the Board to hold a workshop. Noting the budget work session is slated for May, the City Clerk was asked to circulate a poll for February dates.

The Mayor said he is often approached about the subject of a social district and that he had received emails in opposition of a social district. For clarity and to set the record straight, he noted this Governing Board has never considered, discussed, or debated a social district in New Bern. There is also no current proposal before the Board for deliberation. The majority of the feedback he has received is not in favor of such a district. Alderman Prill said he had an opportunity to talk with several people about the topic. For the most part, those he spoke with are anti-social district. He has suggested they stop talking about

what they don't want and instead talk about what they do want; thus, changing their narrative and mindset to something positive.

20. Closed Session.

A closed session was not needed.

21. Adjourn.

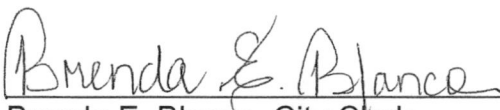
Alderman Royal made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. The motion carried unanimously 7-0, time being 7:54 p.m.

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. Video and audio recordings of the meeting have been archived.

Minutes approved: January 24, 2023



Jeffrey T. Odham, Mayor

Brenda E. Blanco, City Clerk