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3 **MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 9, 2022 MEETING**
4 **OF THE EMERALD ISLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
5 **TUESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2022 – 6:00 P.M.**
6 **TOWN BOARD MEETING ROOM**
7
8

9 **1. Call to Order**

10
11 The regular monthly meeting of the Emerald Isle Board of Commissioners was called to order by
12 Mayor Jason Holland at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Board Meeting Room.
13

14 **2. Roll Call**

15
16 Present for the meeting: Mayor Jason Holland, Mayor Pro-Tem Floyd Messer, Commissioners
17 Mark Taylor, Steve Finch, Candace Dooley and Jamie Vogel.
18

19 Also, present during the regular meeting: Town Manager Matt Zapp, Town Attorney Richard
20 Stanley, Finance Director Laura Rotchford, Assistant Chief of Police Chad Edwards, Officer
21 Ethan Born, Sergeant Nick Gottuso, Program Supervisor Drew Conekin, and Planning Director
22 Michelle Eitner.
23

24 **3. Opening Prayer**

25
26 Joe Strouse, pastor of Encounter 61 in Emerald Isle, offered the opening prayer.
27

28 **4. Pledge of Allegiance**

29
30 Mayor Holland led the Pledge of Allegiance.
31

32 **5. Adoption of Agenda**

33
34 *Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Messer to adopt the agenda. The Board voted*
35 *unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.*
36

37 **6. Public Announcements**

38
39 Mayor Holland read a list of upcoming Town events.
40

41 **7. Employee Recognitions**

42
43 Assistant Chief of Police Chad Edwards said they had a few employees who were deserving to
44 be recognized and invited Sergeant Nick Gottuso and Officer Ethan Born to step forward.
45

1 Sergeant Gottuso received a plaque noting his 20 years of service to the Town. Assistant Chief
2 Edwards noted he has more years of overall law enforcement service, with 27 years so far in his
3 career.

4
5 Officer Born received his Intermediate Law Enforcement Certificate from Training and
6 Standards. This certificate is earned by completing almost 1,000 of law enforcement course
7 work, combined with formal education and years of experience, said Assistant Chief Edwards.

8
9 Parks and Recreation Program Supervisor Drew Conekin recognized the Summer Day Camp
10 Counselors for Parks and Recreation Candace Dooley, who was absent due to Covid-19. She
11 asked the director Wesley Pearson, and his four camp counselors to come forward. She said they
12 provided the 38 campers for each week, over eight weeks, provided a fun and educational
13 experience for those who participated.

14
15 She asked for an ovation for the counselors, and gave them each a small gift.

16
17
18 **8. Public Comment**

19
20 The public will have the opportunity to address the Board about any items of concern not on the agenda. The Mayor
21 and Board welcome and appreciate all comments from the public, and will take these comments into consideration
22 as they make decisions on Town issues and provide direction to Town staff. Public comment is a time for the Board
23 to listen to the public's concerns and ideas, and is not intended for a lengthy dialogue or question and answer
24 session.

25
26 The Mayor, Board, and Town staff are happy to meet with any citizen during normal business hours or at any other
27 mutually agreeable time to discuss Town issues and answer any questions.

28
29 Mayor Holland reminded the public in attendance this was three minutes per person, and they
30 have the opportunity to address any items not on the agenda.

31
32 Finance Director Laura Rotchford said she had a few people sign up to speak on what she
33 assumed was for McLean-Spell Park. An unidentified member of the audience asked if they
34 would have the opportunity to speak on the park following that agenda item, and Mayor Holland
35 said on this agenda there is not a public hearing to speak after that. He reminded the public there
36 were meetings and survey, and there will be a chance to give input in the future before anything
37 is determined for the future of the park. He also noted his door, and the board members' doors,
38 are always open for the public, but there is not a public hearing on the agenda tonight.

39
40 With no public comments for items not on the agenda, he moved forward to the next item.

41
42 **9. Consent Agenda**

- 43 1. Amendment to FY 2023 Adopted Pay Plan
44 2. Annual Authorization of Increase in Federal Micro-Purchase Threshold
45 3. Approve Pension (LGRS) Attestation Services Agreement – S. Preston Douglas & Associates,

1 LLP

2 4. Authorize Deposits when in Excess of \$500.00 per NCGS 159-32(a)

3 5. July 12, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

4
5
6 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Finch to approve the items on the Consent Agenda. The***
7 ***Board voted unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.***

8 **Clerks Note: Consent agenda items as noted above are incorporated herein by reference and hereby made a part of these**
9 **minutes.**

10
11 **10. Cape Emerald Agreement**

12
13 Town Manager Matt Zapp and Mayor Holland announced due to technical difficulties, the Zoom
14 meeting livestream had to be turned off, but the Facebook live stream was still running.

15
16 Zapp said they have been working on a solution for Cape Emerald drainage issues for two years.
17 He showed the existing pipe and said the Town has been working jointly with the Cape Emerald
18 Board of Directors to address issues. He said what was coming before the board was a two-party
19 agreement to relocate a new line just east to the existing one under their public walkway. He said
20 it was almost two years to date when Cape Emerald requested the emergency pipe and the Town
21 had allocated approximately \$85,000 toward this project.

22
23 Zapp said the next steps included approving the contract, securing a CAMA permit, bidding the
24 job and performing the work. He noted one permit already sunset in July 2022, so they will apply
25 for a new one. This work will be for a pipe that discharges directly to the sound.

26
27 He asked the Board to authorize Mayor Holland to execute the two-party contract to replace the
28 outfall drainage pipe currently serving the residents and property owners within Cape Emerald
29 Subdivision. He noted the proposed draft contract has been deemed acceptable by the Town's
30 attorney and the Cape Emerald Homeowner's Association Board of Directors.

31
32 There were no questions or concerns from the Board.

33
34 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Finch to allow Mayor Holland to execute the two-party***
35 ***contract to replace the outfall drainage pipe currently serving the residents and property***
36 ***owners within Cape Emerald Subdivision. The Board voted unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion***
37 ***carried.***

1 **11. Beach Driving Presentation**

2 Town Manager Matt Zapp said he was giving this presentation to fill in for Chief Panzarella,
3 who is one of several key department members out with Covid-19.

4 He said Beach Driving is part of giving back for people to enjoy the beach with vehicles
5 September 15 – April 30th, with the ten-day period around Easter as an exemption. He added
6 online permit applications are available, and permits can be picked up in-person starting
7 September 1.

8

9 No formal action was taken.

10

11 **12. UDO Update Schedule**

12

13 Town Planner Michelle Eitner presented an update on the Unified Development Ordinance
14 (UDO) schedule.

15

16 She said the draft was received Aug. 4, with the UDO Committee meeting August 11, and the
17 Planning Board on August 22. These boards will then look over the drafts through November,
18 and make changes as need be, before bringing the final draft to the Board of Commissioners on
19 December 13, with proposed final approval on January 10, 2023.

20

21 She said the Board will have a chance to look at the document as it builds together, before
22 coming for final approval in January 2023. She added the priority is to make sure they are
23 meeting legislative benchmarks, while making it easier to use. She noted that tree preservation
24 and stormwater are on the front of everyone's minds, but they need permitting and statutory
25 requirements for Board of Adjustment hearings, etc., are done properly.

26

27 The Board had no additional comments or questions, and no action was taken.

28

29 **13. Results of the McLean-Spell Park Survey**

30

31 *Town Manager Zapp spoke to the McLean-Spell Park survey results for Parks and Recreation*
32 *Director Candace Dooley, who was out with Covid-19.*

33

34 Mayor Holland thanked those in the room and online for their concerns on the McLean-Spell
35 Park topic and said they hear their concerns and input through the meetings, emails and phone
36 calls. He added they will have time to speak again on the park, but tonight's presentation was
37 just for the results of the survey.

1 Zapp said Greg and Erin from Summit Engineering were available at the meeting for additional
2 questions if need be. He added they printed full-color copies of the survey results for the Board
3 and public.

4

5 He reminded the crowd the Board began with an approval contract process with Summit
6 Engineering in April 2022, to assist with the survey process and this is one portion of that
7 process. The overall price tag was not to exceed \$50,000 and so far to date, have spent \$6, 750 of
8 expenses and invoices from Summit Engineering.

9 He said the Town conducted a public engagement process to ask what people wanted in a park
10 and collected socioeconomic information to ensure the community was accurately represented in
11 the process. In all, 1,238 respondents were recorded.

12

13 There were two virtual public meetings held via Zoom on Wednesday, July 6th, with 12-15
14 people on each session. Additionally, there was one in-person public meeting held on
15 Wednesday, July 13, with more than 40 people in attendance.

16 The survey as open from June 13-July 16, and 1,238 responses were recorded, mainly online. Of
17 these individuals, 78 percent identified as EI property owners and 68 percent as EI residents. Of
18 the Town residents, 76 percent said they live in the Town year-round, while 11 percent are here
19 6-12 months of the year and 13 percent from 2-6 months per year.

20 The responses were broken down by all respondents and residents-only, and Zapp went through
21 all of the questions and responses that were found on the survey.

22 He noted that preservation of the 30+ acres is exactly what the Board set out to do in 2017 and
23 would like to see, and they heard loudly that preservation of this area is what the public would
24 like them to do.

25 The handout that was presented to the Board and public included a map of the Town's park and
26 other nearby parks for comparison. It also included a demographic summary of the survey
27 respondents.

28

29 In conclusion, Zapp said Emerald Isle is literally a piece of paradise, and that residents have
30 quite a few amenities and are fortunate. He said there is some support for new facilities like
31 pickleball courts or dog parks because we are an active community, but there is a strong support
32 for keeping the mature trees, walking trails and shady forest of McLean-Spell Park intact.

33 The next steps for the Town Board is to encourage the consultant team to develop three concept
34 sketches based on community feedback. All of the data will be used by Summit Engineering.

35 Commissioner Normile said he appreciated all the comments and feedback. He said he created a
36 bulleted list to include: no bulldozing and land clearing. He also noted the PARTF Grant that
37 said it does not specify they must develop anything on this park, but must offer recreational

1 opportunities to the public. He suggested that Summit Engineering map a walking trail
2 throughout the park. He also recommended not putting a bathroom near this park, as there is one
3 by Blue Heron Park. Normile also mentioned the Dog Park Committee that previously raised
4 money toward this, and he would be interested if Summit could include this in a map drawing.

5
6 Commissioner Vogel said she appreciated all the public comment the Board has received
7 concerning the park. She said it is important to preserve the natural area for many reasons. She
8 said if within the scope of the grant, could maybe put bathrooms in there and maybe enhance
9 what they have today in the park. She once again thanked everyone who filled out the survey,
10 and said she is happy when people show up and voice their opinions.

11
12 Mayor Pro-Tem Messer said he also received several emails about the park. His interest is to see
13 the drawings Summit Engineering comes up with, and he hopes it matches what he has in mind,
14 and said if so, the public will be happy.

15
16 Commissioner Finch said the public knows where he stands already and he spoke to
17 approximately 150 individuals since they started talking about McLean-Spell Park. He compared
18 the park to a small child that needs taken care of and nurtured. He said they had seen several
19 ideas of what could be done, but in his idea, no trees would be cut down or disturbed. He
20 suggested naming the trails after some individuals, such as Rep. Pat McElraft, and to put in
21 benches and picnic tables. He concluded by saying they are headed in the right direction, and
22 thanked them for the turnout in response to this topic.

23 Commissioner Taylor said they've got a great opportunity out there and he believes they are all
24 thinking the same way. He reiterated his appreciation for all the feedback, emails and phone calls
25 they've received on the park. He suggested some bird houses and nesting areas along the park.
26 He agreed he would like to see the trails named and mapped out.

27 Commissioner Vogel added that Trevor Brownlow submitted a good idea, as far as mapping out
28 the trails as a living museum of specific trees.

29 Mayor Holland thanked the Board for their comments, and Zapp for his presentation.

30 No action was taken by the Board.

31
32 **14. Mid-Year Review of the Progressive Goals List**

33
34 Town Manager Zapp gave a presentation of the Progressive Goals List for 2022-2024. He said
35 this is a roadmap that helps the Board of Commissioners and communicates with the public, with
36 a short, mid and long-term goals list.

37 He gave a short overview of each item on the list, including:

- 1 1. FY Budget 22-23 that is successfully balanced, despite a nearly 9-percent inflation rate.
2 The budget has a 16.5-cent tax rate, which is the second lowest among beach towns in
3 North Carolina.
- 4 2. Continued Beach Safety Efforts: 30 flags up this year, up from 25 a year ago. Recruited
5 20 USLA (United States Lifesaving Association) Lifeguards. Added a fourth red jeep for
6 the Ocean Rescue team, through a leasing program that saves the Town money.
7 Lifeguards on the beach April through September, for an increase of nearly \$75,000, but
8 worth the extra effort. New beach safety videos at the bathhouses and other community
9 partners throughout the area.
- 10 3. Increase public awareness/communication efforts: Said there is a lot of noise and
11 competition for attention, but over the past two years have done more videos and careful
12 with the marketing and social media and website visitors.
- 13 4. Joint Fire/EMS Operations: This has been on the docket over two years and in July
14 launched the public announcement the intention to join these two departments in January
15 2023, with no existing employees losing their jobs. This will help put a second year-
16 round ambulance on next year. Also waiting for FEMA money to help completely rebuild
17 Station 2.
- 18 5. Improve/Repair Stormwater Infrastructure Deficiencies
- 19 6. Stormwater and Culvert Work: Cape Emerald Project and Reed Drive/Cedar Street
20 drainage improvements and Lee Avenue culvert replacement
- 21 7. EIPR beach access boardwalk reconstruction
- 22 8. EI Boat Ramp Dredging Project, with zero local taxpayer dollars.
- 23 9. Work with Bogue Banks Water Cooperation to locate a well site at McLean-Spell Park
- 24 10. UDO (Unified Development Ordinance) Update Process
- 25 11. Replace storm related equipment – two dump trucks/tractor/loader/etc.
- 26 12. EIPR Master Plan
- 27 13. Discuss components of a 2023 Capital Improvement Plan
- 28 14. Request to relocate the EI Boat launch navigational channel
- 29 15. Evaluate and consider the sale of current 2019 Enterprise Leased Fleet Vehicle.
- 30 16. Procurement of land (off island) to establish a yard debris site
- 31 17. Staff to research and present costs to illuminate 100 percent of the Crepe Myrtle trees at
32 EI gateway near the B. Cameron Langston Bridge (completed)
- 33 18. Recruit, hire and onboard for the IDPR Director role (completed)

34

35 Mayor Holland told Zapp excellent job on the progressive goals list.

36

37 **15. Comments from Town Clerk, Town Attorney and Manager**

38

39 Mayor Holland noted clerk Anna Smith was absent from the meeting.

40

41 No comments from Town Attorney Richard Stanley.

42

1 Zapp said no additional comments.
2
3

4 **16. Comments from the Board of Commissioners and Mayor**
5

6 Commissioner Taylor once again thanked the community for coming out to the meeting.
7

8 Commissioner Finch said the Town and Board are working diligently and there is a lot going on
9 behind closed doors. He thanked Zapp, Laura Rotchford and everyone else for doing a wonderful
10 job. He also noted the Little Pink Houses of Hope coming into Emerald Isle Baptist Church in
11 the coming week, for the first year, but the 10th year coming to Emerald Isle. Ten families
12 received vacations this year.
13

14 Mayor Pro-Tem Messer said looking at the progressive goals list, he wanted to thank the
15 employees and department heads. He said we have the best there is and if not for them, all of
16 these things would not happen.

18 Commissioner Vogel said she wanted to speak on communication, as she witnesses a lot of it
19 form the community. She encouraged everyone listening and said Town staff are people too, so
20 if you are communicating with someone on staff, please remain professional and kind because
21 Nice Matters.
22

23 Commissioner Normile thanked Summit Engineering for coming tonight and said they are trying
24 to garner information from the general public and also tapping the elected officials, trying to get
25 their input, and thanked them for being so professional. He also pointed out an item not on the
26 goals list, but when talking with the CEO of the Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative, they have
27 23 substations in the county, and Emerald Isle's is No. 3 for usage.
28

29 Mayor Holland congratulated the camp counselors and police officers recognized at the meeting.
30 He said thank you again for the progressive goals list and said he is blown away on a daily basis
31 on what it takes to run the Town. He said it takes a lot, and a big thank you to staff and elected
32 officials. Said between excellence staff, elected officials and public, they should be grateful.
33

34 **17. Adjourn**
35

36 *Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Messer to adjourn the meeting. The Board voted*
37 *unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.*
38

39 The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.
40

41 Respectfully Submitted:
42

43 Anna Smith
44 Town Clerk