

MINUTES
TOWN OF SUNSET BEACH
Retreat Workshop
March 19th, 2008
9:00 a.m.

Members Present

Ronald Klein, Mayor
Len Steiner, Mayor Pro-Tem
Lou DeVita
Bob Bobinski
Ron Watts
Wilson Sherrill

Others Present

Gary Parker, Town Administrator
Mike Isenberg, Town Attorney
Larry Crim, Asst'. Administrator
Kimberly Cochran, Town Clerk
Donna Rogers, Finance Director
Police Chief Lisa Massey
Fire Chief Chris Barbee
Jeff Curtis, Building Inspector

9:00 am

1. Call to Order

Mayor Klein called the meeting.

Town Administrator Gary Parker stated that he had initiated this retreat today to review major issues in the year ahead and future years. He felt maybe Council would like to consider these meetings yearly as it's not feasible to do these at regular and budget meetings. They required in depth planning in a focused and thoughtful manner. It was lean this year but in the future they would have more time to prepare with a longer lead time.

Council thanked Parker for his time and effort and stated they were impressed with his detail and dedication to work.

The BB-1 presentation scheduled on power point was postponed to later in the meeting.

1. Boat Ramp- Parker said they had been working on this for quite some time but it was not quite as successful as they had hoped. They had developed positive feelings about this because of the contact with differing state agencies that came on site and met with them (thirteen people in all). There consensus was that it was “very promising” with excellent potential. Even one of the members from the Corp. of Engineers said it looked like it would be an improvement, but the bottom line was their staff was required to deny the permit. This was a primary nursery area, as was most of Brunswick County.

The town could pursue an appeal for a variance with the CRC. Parker stated he was an environmentalist but after the bridge being there so many years the damage had eliminated the nursery area. A boat ramp certainly couldn't cause any more damage than had already been done. In essence, the State said the chance was 50/50. It was in Council's lap as to whether they wished to pursue purchasing an area for a ramp. It had been a goal of the Town, County and State for years and there were precious few opportunities to purchase land for water access. There was also a possibility of receiving a one-third grant.

2. Executive Session -After much discussion by Council about water access, Motion by Steiner to go into closed session to instruct staff concerning the position to be taken on behalf of the Council in negotiating the price and other material terms of a proposed contract for the acquisition of real property. Seconded by DeVita. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Sherrill to return to open session, Seconded by Steiner. Motion carried.

3. Bridge Project – There was some discussion of whether to have sidewalks/biking easements on the new bridge. Steiner nor Parker thought it was a good idea as they didn't think pedestrians would feel safe walking that close to traffic. No decision was reached. Council would review again at a later date. After more discussion, Watts asked when the boat ramp would be closed. Crim stated it would be when the temporary causeway was built which was scheduled for this fall. He would keep them all posted prior to this happening. It would be put on the website as well. DeVita suggested that all town projects have a milestone schedule posted at Town Hall and on the web.

4. Bike Trails/Pedestrian Walkways – Parker started out by saying the more we did to encourage the bike and walking paths, the friendlier it made the community. Jeff Curtis, Building Inspector, commented that it was in the ordinances and had been since COG helped institute this ordinance several years ago. All new businesses along Hwy #179 were required to put in sidewalks that will eventually connect all the way down to the bridge. There was discussion of having owners put these in now but Council decided it wasn't reasonable to require this before construction and sewer. It would be money out the window. Curtis stated that we couldn't force owners of vacant land to do this anyway. Bobinski asked if Jeff had the original bike layout Linda had shared with the Council. After more minor discussion of looking at it further, Council moved on to the next item.

5. Road Improvements – Parker introduced the idea of a possible thoroughfare plan. One that would connect various neighborhoods rather than isolating them. Most of Council felt the cul-de-sac neighborhoods were highly desirable by owners as it conveyed a feeling of safety and gave a “family” atmosphere. They discussed the pros and cons of private streets and cul-de-sacs and the main concern seemed to be congestion at the ingresses and egresses. They would be reviewing possible street connectivity in newly proposed subdivisions but Council felt a top priority was Angel's Trace Road and asked Parker to pursue acquiring this road. The benefits were great to the town as a whole.

6. Beach Public Facilities- Discussion of more parking and better facilities. Curtis explained that anything in a “V” zone would have to be stilted. They could not build now in the gazebo parking lot as it was not a “lot” but an extension of Sunset Blvd. No decision was reached on this item.

7. Budget Process – Steiner asked if the budget packets would continue to have last year and current year figures on them. Donna Rogers, Finance Director, confirmed it would. Parker felt it should have more information on it such as prior year history. He would be pursuing changing the software as it didn't quite meet the needs of the town. There was discussion of setting budget meeting dates. DeVita stated he would be overseas from May 14th to June 9th. Council agreed to have July's meeting on Monday, June 30th and adopt the budget then.

8. Canal Dredging – In the packet was information from a group of citizens who requested the dredging be done again in the canals. Mr. Charles Melvin had initiated the process by sending the town a list of these owners. The Corp's suggestion was that it take place every ten years or so and he (Melvin) mistakenly thought it took about three years to get it done the last time. There was discussion of the dredging not being able to be done near marsh grasses which made a lot of people unhappy. CAMA stated publicly later that to keep the grasses from taking over and to get the best benefit from dredging was to do it every 3 years or so. Council instructed Parker to go ahead and gather pertinent information and send petitions.

Item **13- Recycling** moved up prior to adjournment for lunch.

13- Recycling- Watts expressed the need for a recycling center. Council discussed the results from the recycling bins we had in the past....people were throwing appliances, mattresses, etc. It was really being abused and had become too costly to keep up. They still felt though that there was a great need for one. There was discussion of being a test site for the county. Council asked Parker to pursue finding out more information about this.

Non-Agenda item: DeVita asked Police Chief Massey if she knew about the war memorial a resident had been working on for years. She stated she knew very little as it was something the prior Chief had been working on. Her understanding was that it may be placed in the circle up at Dock St. Village. DeVita stated he would get with Chief Massey later to discuss.

Adjourn for lunch at 11:55 am.
Reconvene at 12:45pm.

Town Clerk showed the power point presentation (was scheduled to be shown at the beginning of the meeting) to Council of the proposed beach accessway (BB-1) done by Earthgraphics, Inc. last year. It showed how town homes could be placed in the current zone quite nicely with sidewalks and landscaping.

9. Annexation –Parker read his prepared summary on the premise of annexation and its benefits to the communities. See statement incorporated by reference and made part of these minutes. Watts said that over the years they had unfortunately left two big "holes", Sunset Ridge and Angel's Trace. Curtis said Sunset Ridge unfortunately did not meet the requirements at the time so it couldn't be annexed. Steiner said he had worked with the owner of Angel's Trace whom gave his various reasons for not annexing into the town. This left Council with the feeling the only way to annex would be through state legislation. They discussed the procedures such as Resolutions of Consideration and then Resolution of Intent which the town had always used; and the other method in which Parker stated, the town could go straight to a Resolution of Intent. We now had a Resolution of Consideration for the other side of Medcalf and a Resolution of Consideration for the east side of Sunset Beach and the area on Schyuler Drive. He wanted to know if Council wished to proceed with all annexations, including the right side of Beach Dr. this side of the river, toward Calabash . Council instructed Parker to proceed with the annexations and to start with the right side of Beach Dr. toward Calabash immediately. After brief discussion the Council suggested a meeting with Calabash officials be held.

10. Future Growth – There was discussion of whether Council was happy with the direction the town was headed.....the housing type and commercial businesses. After some discussion, most all Council agreed the town was in a good place and its commercial growth was adequate with what the town needed.

11. Financing Capital Projects – Donna Rogers, Finance Director, informed Council she had resubmitted the RFP's to the banks for the new ladder truck. The interest rates she was getting from various banks ran from 4.38% down to 2.53% depending on the length of years financed. Mike Isenberg had confirmed with her the paperwork from another state to piggyback the ladder truck was sufficient to purchase. Her recommendation was to finance the 485,000 as anything 500,000 and over had to have Local Government Commission approval. She confirmed the ladder truck was 785,000 and the Fire Chief needed another 80,000 to equip it. It was up to Council to decide how long they wished to finance at April's meeting. Council agreed and told Rogers to get the resolutions together for them.

12. Fire Station #2 - See report attached by Chief Barbee, which is incorporated by reference and made part of these minutes. Chief Barbee explained the need for a second fire substation between Leak St. and old Georgown rd.. There was much discussion of this and where it should be placed. There was minor discussion of what type of building the fire dept. would need which would basically be two bay areas with beds but very little office area. Council instructed the Chief to get information on any land purchase that might be possible.

14. Sewer Project – Parker stated the county had stressed the West Brunswick plant cost would be increasing...Council stated firmly that Sunset Beach owed nothing toward their capacity. The Town gave them the water system (28 million) in exchange for capacity in the plant. The County would NOT be receiving any increases from the Town of Sunset Beach. There was more discussion of the sewer project in progress, possible cost to citizens and the county's interest rates. Curtis said Council needed to look at people possibly converting their tank space (after it was defunct) into living space. It was possible now if something wasn't put into place to prevent it. There was more discussion about these topics with no decisions reached. All would be reviewed at a later date. There was extended discussion of the lack of specific assessment payment information available to the property owners. Council felt that this would be a major topic of interest expected at the County's April 24th meeting.

Adopted this the 7th day of April, 2008.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Sherrill. Seconded by Steiner. Motion carried.

Mayor Ron Klein

Kim Cochran, Town Clerk

