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3 **MINUTES OF THE BOARD RETREAT**  
4 **OF THE EMERALD ISLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
5 **THURSDAY, JANUARY 5, 2023 – 8:30 A.M.**  
6 **ISLANDER HOTEL & RESORT, 102 ISLANDER DRIVE**  
7

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9 **1. Call to Order**

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11 The board retreat of the Emerald Isle Board of Commissioners was called to order by Mayor  
12 Jason Holland at 8:30 a.m. at the Islander Hotel & Resort.

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, Jamie Vogel and Jim Normile.

18  
19 Also, present during the meeting: Town Manager Matt Zapp, Town Clerk/Public Information  
20 Officer Anna Smith, Finance Director Laura Rotchford, Parks and Recreation Director Candace  
21 Dooley, Public Works Director Joe Smith, Assistant Public Works Director Chad Strawser, Chief  
22 of Police Michael Panzarella, Assistant Chief of Police Chad Edwards, Fire Chief Bill Walker,  
23 Deputy Chief William Matthias, and Planning Director Michelle Eitner.

24  
25 **3. Adoption of Agenda**

26  
27 ***Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Messer to adopt the Agenda. The Board voted***  
28 ***unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.***

29  
30 Following the motion, Town Manager Zapp shared a motivational minute video by Earl  
31 Nightingdale on how to be happy before success.

32  
33 He asked the Board to consider what they want to do accomplish in 2023, and how to  
34 effectively get to that goal line.

35  
36 **4. Planning Department Discussion**

37  
38 Planning Director Michelle Eitner reviewed the current Unified Development Ordinance  
39 Amendment and Code Updates plan, by showing a timeline for this year on when various  
40 phases would be presented to the Board and voted on. She reviewed a few topics the Board  
41 could expect to see in future UDO proposals.

42  
43 The Board made some suggestions on what they would like to see in Phase II of the updates,

1 including the satellite merchants policy updated for food trucks. Commissioner Normile asked for  
2 a table of options related to this topic for consideration.

3  
4 Commissioner Finch asked about driveway materials when installing a new lot, the potential for  
5 a vegetative buffer between lots, and potentially increasing fines when an individual begins a  
6 project without a permit. Zapp stated when this happens, the permit fee is doubled. Eitner said  
7 this has happened around five times since she started with the Town in 2022.

8  
9 Commissioner Finch clarified he is mainly concerned when vegetation is removed without a  
10 permit. Zapp suggested Eitner present this information to the UDO Committee, and then it can  
11 be brought to the Board for consideration.

12  
13 The group briefly discussed sediment control on developing lots and silt fencing.

14  
15 Commissioner Vogel asked about elevators and cargo lifts on residential houses. Eitner said she  
16 would talk with the County's Building Inspector, to ensure the elevator rules are current in the  
17 UDO update.

18  
19 Based on Eitner's recommendation that the last of the UDO updates would be presented and  
20 ready to vote on in Summer 2023, the Board agreed by consensus to move forward with this  
21 timeline. Zapp said it would go on the Progressive Goals List.

## 22 23 **5. Status of FEMA-Related Repairs & Purchases**

24  
25 Zapp said a narrative explaining the FEMA-related grant money was included in a narrative  
26 report within the agenda. Based on remaining excess funding from FEMA following Hurricane  
27 Florence Repairs, the Town has \$9,827,948.21 for proposed use for expenditures authorized in  
28 FEMA Recovery Policy FP 103-009-7.

29  
30 Of this amount, \$1,481,245 is earmarked for stormwater improvements; \$3,488,208 will be  
31 used for emergency equipment and vehicles; and \$4,858,495 will be used for resilient  
32 structures and building materials. The following list of proposed expenditures were approved  
33 by the Board on March 8, 2022. Zapp gave a brief status update on each project:

- 34  
35
- 36 • Cedar Street Culvert – Archers Creek
  - 37 • Bogue Inlet Culvert – Archers Creek
  - 38 • Old Ferry Culvert – Archers Creek
  - 39 • Lands End Area Dune Infiltration System
  - 40 • Dual Band Radios – Police, Fire & EMS
  - 41 • Ambulances including stretchers (2)
  - 42 • Smeal Fire Engine #2, plus radios/equipment
  - Smeal Fire Engine #3, plus radios/equipment

- 1 • Jet Skis (4) each with trailers
- 2 • Parks 4x4 Dump Truck
- 3 • Tractor
- 4 • Generators – Permanent Install – Stormwater Pumps
- 5 • 150kw Generator at Community Center
- 6 • Replace 10 Beach Access Walkways
- 7 • Debris Removal Site Improvements – Peletier
- 8 • Three Phase Power – (3) Stormwater Pump Locations
- 9 • Rebuild Fire Station No. 2

10

11 Zapp said there is a BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) grant potential  
12 through RFEMA they would like to turn in by the deadline at the end of the week. This could be  
13 used for stormwater projects, said Zapp. If awarded, the grant would be \$2.6 Million, with a  
14 local contribution of only \$260,000.

15

16 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Taylor to approve the request to apply for the BRIC grant***  
17 ***for \$2.6 Million. The Board voted unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.***

18

19 Following the conclusion of this session, the Board took a break at 9:55 a.m. The group  
20 reconvened at 10:10 a.m.

21

22

## 23 **6. Beach HEROES**

24

25 Deputy Fire Chief William Matthais gave a short presentation on the Beach HEROES beach  
26 safety messaging.

27

28 He said 20+ USLA certified lifeguards will be on the beach this season, starting April 1. He  
29 reviewed the changes in the lifeguard shifts last year that helped with having an extended  
30 patrol.

31

32 He said there was increased beach safety education last year, including joint beach safety  
33 videos with the neighboring towns along Bogue Banks, QR code stickers, and more social media  
34 PSAs.

35

36 The HEROES program was developed – Holes must be filled, Emergency Lane open, Rip Current  
37 education, Obey safety flags, Etiquette, Swim Together.

38

39 This year we will have a full page ad in the Crystal Coast Visitors Guide with a trackable QR  
40 Code. In addition, and beach safety jingle is being created for radio and other uses.

41

1 Deputy Chief Matthias requested to purchase solar powered blinking warning signs to indicate  
2 red flags and dangerous rip currents. The goal is to place them at the base of the bridge, at the  
3 East and West ocean regional accesses and down Coast Guard Road or near the pier. The Board  
4 gave consensus to order four signs ahead of the 2023 season.

5  
6 **7. Board Initiatives**  
7

8 Commissioner Normile led discussion on six proposed long-term initiatives for the Board to  
9 consider.

- 10 • NCDOT Turning Lane/ STIP: Commissioner Normile said in the NCDOT STIP (State  
11 Transportation Improvement Plan) 2020-20209 there are intersection improvements  
12 slated for the Coast Guard Road/Hwy. 58 Intersection; the Mangrove Dr./Hwy. 58  
13 Intersection; and Loon Street/Hwy. 58 Roundabout. He asked if there should be some  
14 transportation improvements like additional extended turn lanes requested throughout  
15 Town before the 2028-29 timeframe listed in the STIP.

16 The Board discussed what these improvements may look like and how they would be funded.  
17 An exploratory committee composed of Mayor Holland, Commissioner Normile and  
18 Commissioner Taylor was formed to look into options.

- 19  
20 • Shoreline Adaption and Resiliency Program: Commissioner Normile said Artie Dunn has  
21 placed a tidal gauge at the NC Wildlife Resources Boat Ramp. Once they receive an  
22 elevation certificate, the gauge will go active and measure how much the water ebbs  
23 and flows on a normal basis, and how much water is pushed down during a nor'easter  
24 or hurricane. He explained the intent is to measure potential erosion along the  
25 soundside. He urged the Board to consider a longterm management program for  
26 soundside resilience and noted there are grant dollars available, once a program is  
27 slated.

28 Other Board members expressed their interest and said this could be good for soundside  
29 property owners and boaters alike.

- 30  
31 • Carry In/Carry Out: Commissioner Normile said this concept was first brought forward  
32 for consideration in July 2022, and would involve removing trash cans from the beach  
33 strand and encouraging the public to utilize trash cans placed at the beach access  
34 entrance points. He noted other locations, like Carolina Beach, who have had success  
35 with this program. He said this would save Public Works time on traversing the beach to  
36 pick up trash.

37 Public Works Director Joe Smith confirmed during the busy season, it will take 5-6 Public Works  
38 employees to collect trash along the beach for six hours on Mondays. Rolling cans placed at the  
39 beach accesses would be picked up by Simmons & Simmons.

40  
41 The Board further discussed the pros and cons of this program, and agreed a strong educational  
42 marketing campaign will go a long way in informing the public.

1 In support of the campaign, the Board agreed to remove the trash cans along the beach strand,  
2 start an educational campaign, look into potential signage, invest in some smart compacting  
3 trash cans at the hot spots, and order extra 95-gallon trash cans for the 90 accesses, so there  
4 would be two trash cans and one recycle at each.

- 5  
6 • Hall of Fame: Commissioner Normile said this concept was first discussed in August  
7 2022, and could be easy to capture on the website in a digital format to recognize  
8 influential people who have helped shape Emerald Isle to the community it is. He said  
9 there is a potential for a 60-second video with the honoree or their family member. He  
10 suggested they move forward with this concept, but would need a selection team and  
11 by the end of the year make the first presentation of awards, with a proclamation for  
12 the honoree at the December Board meeting on an annual basis.

13 Commissioner Vogel said she likes the idea of it being a digital hall of fame and offered to serve  
14 on the selection committee. Commissioner Taylor also volunteered to be on the committee.  
15 They will join the mayor, a planning board member and a member of the community to round  
16 out the selection committee and will meet in September to select, and then present by end of  
17 year.

- 18  
19 • Emerald Isle Estuarine Reef Initiative: The Board discussed the idea of an artificial reef  
20 with fishing year round and used as an educational tool for children. He said it would  
21 take around \$60,000-\$80,000 to get this started. He said he believes it would be easy to  
22 raise the money, and could use municipal funds from Emerald Isle and Cape Carteret,  
23 since both towns would benefit. He said the conversation may be better served once  
24 the future of the boat ramp route is known.

25 Commissioner Vogel recommended putting it in the “parking lot” of ideas until the boat  
26 channel discussion is better formed.

27  
28 The Board agreed to revisit the conversation at a later date, once the Boat Channel SAV study is  
29 available.

- 30  
31 • Emerald Isle Woodlands Initiative: Commissioner Normile suggested instituting a long-  
32 range Urban Woodland Initiative that would increase tree and shrub resources and  
33 enhance the public’s knowledge of urban woodland conservation, along with native  
34 trees and shrubs. He said there would be grants available or funds could be raised for  
35 this initiative.

36 Zapp and the rest of the Board agreed it is a great idea, but may not have the time resources to  
37 currently pursue it. The Board agreed to pause on this and potentially revisit at a later date.

38  
39 Commissioner Taylor then asked if they could plant tulips or daffodils along a portion of  
40 Highway 58, as had been done several years prior. Following a brief discussion, the Board  
41 agreed to allow staff to get pricing, a timeframe and evaluate a staff installation on this  
42 potential project.

1  
2 Commissioner Finch asked if the Town's Christmas decorations on lightpoles could be updated.  
3 Zapp asked Public Works to take inventory and get a price quote for replacing them. Mayor Pro-  
4 Tem Messer said he would like to see different Christmas decorations.

5  
6 A committee was formed to look at replacing or updating the Christmas lights. Public Works  
7 Director Joe Smith, Commissioner Steve Finch, Mayor Pro-Tem Floyd Messer, and Parks and  
8 Recreation Director Candace Dooley were asked to serve on a committee.

9  
10 Commissioner Finch asked for the potential of street lights at the intersections of Mangrove  
11 and Loon. Zapp said Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative could do a light analysis.

12  
13 **8. Board Summary – Discussion of Priorities and Goals**  
14

15 The Board and Zapp reviewed the various items discussed throughout the retreat and  
16 confirmed where they would be located on the Progressive Goals list for 2023-2025, and which  
17 ones would be tabled for now.

18 Zapp said they need to consider hiring a second person to help with media or subcontract some  
19 projects to assist Town Clerk/PIO Smith.

20  
21 **9. Conclude/Adjournment**  
22

23 Mayor Holland thanked the staff and Board for attending the retreat and noted it was well  
24 organized.

25  
26 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Finch to adjourn the meeting. The Board voted***  
27 ***unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 12:16 p.m.***

28  
29 Respectfully Submitted:

30  
31 Anna Smith  
32 Town Clerk/Public Information Officer.