

1 MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
2 OF THE EMERALD ISLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
3 TUESDAY, MAY 18, 2004 - 6:00 PM – TOWN HALL
4

5 The Special Meeting of the Emerald Isle Board of Commissioners was called to
6 order by Mayor Art Schools at 6:00 pm.
7

8 Present for the meeting: Mayor Art Schools, Commissioners Robert Isenhour,
9 Pat McElraft, Floyd Messer, and John Wootten.
10

11 Absent: Commissioner Nita Hedreen.
12

13 Others Present: Town Manager Frank Rush, Assistant Town Manager/Finance
14 Officer Mitsy Overman, Town Clerk Rhonda Ferebee, Police Chief Mark Wilson,
15 Public Works Director Artie Dunn, Parks & Recreation Director Alesia Sanderson,
16 Planning Director Kevin Reed, and Fire Chief Bill Walker.
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18 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Messer to excuse the absence of***
19 ***Commissioner Hedreen. The Board voted unanimously 4-0 in favor.***
20 ***Motion carried.***
21

22 ***(As noted further into the minutes, Commissioner Hedreen arrived at 6:32***
23 ***pm.)***
24

25 **4. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
26

27 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Wootten to adopt the agenda. The***
28 ***Board voted unanimously in favor. Motion carried.***
29

30 **5. DISCUSSION – COASTAL RESOURCES COMMISSION NOMINATIONS**
31

32 Town Manager Frank Rush discussed his attendance at the CRC Science Panel
33 meeting the previous day in Pine Knoll Shores. He discussed the issues
34 concerning the threshold for shell content. He noted they would have another
35 meeting in June when they hope to finalize their report.
36

37 Mayor Schools stated that the two people suggested for nomination to the
38 Coastal Resources Commission were Greg Rudolph or Ed Erickson.
39

40 ***Motion was made by Commissioner McElraft to nominate Greg “Rudi”***
41 ***Rudolph for the Coastal Resources Commission (CRC). The Board voted***
42 ***unanimously in favor. Motion carried.***
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3 **5. FY 04-05 RECOMMENDED BUDGET PRESENTATIONS/ Q&A**
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5 **a) General Comments**
6

7 Town Manager Frank Rush provided for and summarized for the Board a
8 General Fund Comparison FY 01-02 vs FY 04-05 **(a copy of which is attached**
9 **to, and incorporated into these minutes and is self-explanatory)** which
10 compares the budget that was in place when Mr. Rush arrived and compared to
11 the recommended budget presented to the Board last week, showing where the
12 changes that have occurred over this three (3) year period. He noted the bottom
13 line shows the total budget has grown just shy of 5.4 million to just over 6.1
14 million, a total of 12.07% increase, annually about 4% per year. Mr. Rush was
15 pleased with this, and felt he and staff had tried hard to limit expenditures during
16 this three year period.
17

18 Mr. Rush also provided for the Board a Sales Tax Comparison/Use for FY 01-02
19 vs 04-05 **(a copy of which is attached to, and incorporated into these**
20 **minutes and is self-explanatory)** which gives a detailed look at sales tax and
21 was described to and discussed with the Board in detail.
22

23 **b) Police Department**
24

25 Police Chief Mark Wilson in addressing the Board noted that all line items were
26 either the same or less than last year's budget. He said regarding vehicle
27 replacements, they are on a 4-5 year rotation plan.
28

29 ***(Commissioner Hedreen arrived at this time 6:32 pm)***
30

31 Chief Wilson said he had concerns about gas prices. Town Manager Rush
32 mentioned that in the past we had been charged the state fuel tax, and we are no
33 longer subject to that charge, he hopes that this will offset some of the expense
34 next year.
35

36 Commissioner Wooten asked about the difference in the requested and
37 recommended salaries.
38

39 Chief Wilson stated that the line items were either the same or less because he
40 wanted to boost the officer salaries. Mr. Rush said that he had put in 2.5% for
41 everyone in the whole organization, and there was a line item in departmental
42 with \$30,000 that he hoped the Board approved that would be used for targeted
43 adjustments during the course of the fiscal year. Mr. Rush said in the last few
44 weeks he had made salary adjustments for the leadership, and the detective
45 positions.

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1
2 Commissioner Hedreen asked how we compared to other towns in regard to
3 salaries.

4
5 Mr. Rush said that the patrol officers seem to be in line, but he felt the leadership
6 positions were still a little low. Mr. Rush discussed what he would like to do with
7 a pay and classification study, which was to define ranges for each position, and
8 then each year at budget time ask for adjustments to the ranges by a
9 percentage, and then make decisions on individuals with the input of the
10 department head within the range, based on years of service, and ultimately he
11 hoped based on performance.

12
13 Commissioner McElraft asked about the increase in part-time salaries. Mr. Rush
14 said that he wants to have someone in the beach patrol vehicle every day during
15 the summer, from 9 am to 6 pm.

16
17 Chief Wilson made special mention that Sergeant Schelinder was the #1 DWI
18 Officer for the whole county. Chief Wilson also said that the officers were doing a
19 very good job.

20
21 Mr. Rush pointed out that there is \$5,000 in the Police budget for next year to
22 hire an architect to look at the Police Station and make recommendations on
23 renovating or expanding.

24
25 Mayor Schools mentioned how well Jeff Waters, the Towns' DARE Officer
26 interacted with the children at the elementary school.

27
28 **c) Public Works / Powell Bill / Solid Waste**

29
30 Public Works Director Artie Dunn spoke to the Board concerning his department.
31 He was also concerned with gas prices, especially the amount of fuel needed for
32 the new brush truck. The increase in yard waste stops was discussed with the
33 Mayor and Board commenting on the good job being done by the Public Works
34 Department.

35
36 Commissioner Isenhour asked about the part-time labor. Mr. Rush stated that he
37 had been asking Public Works to do more this past year, and wanted to make
38 sure there was sufficient resources to bring on part-time if needed. Mr. Rush
39 also commended Artie Dunn for the job he has done this past year. It was also
40 noted that Public Works and Parks & Recreation now share the ROW mowing.

41
42 Commissioner Wootten asked about the building improvements. Mr. Dunn
43 stated that there was significant foundation failure at Town Hall. He said based
44 on estimates there will be required excavation both inside and outside of the
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1
2 building, pile driving, and stabilizing the face of the building before any more
3 damage is done. He also noted structural damage at Public Works in the front of
4 the building, rust problems.

5
6 Mr. Dunn said he is planning on having one full-time employee work on
7 Saturdays through the summer season keeping trash picked up on the beach,
8 rolling back trash cans, dead animals.

9
10 Mr. Rush mentioned regarding the Solid Waste department, the volume of trash
11 had increased significantly, adding they had underestimated the volume when
12 they put the budget together this year. Mr. Rush also mentioned regarding the
13 Powell Bill which also is under the direction of Artie Dunn, there had been a big
14 decrease last year, down to \$148,000. He said next year this will increase to
15 around \$156,000. The decrease the previous year was due to the legislature
16 raiding highway trust fund monies to fund general fund expenses, which
17 negatively affected the distribution to cities and counties, but they are projecting
18 with their new budget that things will increase again.

19
20 **d) Parks and Recreation**

21
22 Parks and Recreation Director Alesia Sanderson discussed her department's
23 budget with the Board. She stated that overall the operating budget was a little
24 less than last year. Ms. Sanderson said they are requesting a small tractor for
25 mowing with the goal of improving the appearance of the greenway, especially
26 with the installation of the bike path. She noted that the 1992 Chevrolet truck fits
27 in with the long term replacement. She is proposing that they determine whether
28 the truck that Public Works is replacing is in better shape than the one they have.
29 They want to use this for a water truck, and for the summer custodian. She
30 noted they had requests to increase their Yoga, and Aerobic classes.

31
32 Ms. Sanderson noted the renovation of Merchant's Park bathhouse was
33 essential. She said when the bike path is constructed and open, the bathhouse
34 would need to be open year round, which is not possible at this time as there is
35 no heat, and new bathroom fixtures are needed. Ms. Sanderson said that the
36 tennis courts really need work, she had been requesting assistance for the past
37 five years, and the prices have gone up, there are more cracks, more sinking,
38 should have been resurfaced three years ago and they weren't. She noted the
39 rusting fence. Mr. Rush added that 24/7 Electric was working on the tennis court
40 lights, with \$1,300 being reimbursed by FEMA which covered only materials.

41
42 Commissioner Isenhour asked about the decrease in fees. Ms. Sanderson
43 stated that the fees were down due to a decrease mainly in the children's
44 programs, most specifically the after school program, due to various reasons.
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1
2 Commissioner Wootten asked for clarification of the responsibilities of the
3 Program Supervisor and the Athletic Coordinator. Ms. Sanderson described the
4 different responsibilities. Mr. Rush added that he had detailed job descriptions of
5 these positions and would make them available to the Board.

6
7 Commissioner Messer commended Parks & Recreation for responding quickly to
8 calls concerning problems with steps, walkway, and accesses.

9
10 Mr. Rush pointed out the very good job Ms. Sanderson has done with grant
11 applications over the past years.

12
13 **e) Planning and Inspections**

14
15 Planning Director Kevin Reed highlighted for the Board what Planning &
16 Inspections hoped to accomplish this year. He noted that with the level of
17 development in Emerald Isle it is a challenge for Inspection staff. He wants to
18 make sure that they have proper training and re-educational opportunities. Mr.
19 Reed said there are funds allocated for GIS software that would allow them to tap
20 into existing databases, increasing their level of information to help in the
21 decision making process, and for the community in general. Mr. Reed said he
22 would also like to increase the accessibility of information available on the town
23 website. He pointed out that it had been a record year for permitting.

24
25 Commissioner Wootten asked about the consultant to redo the codes. Mr. Reed
26 said this would be a comprehensive look at every town code that relates to
27 development. Mr. Reed said the figure used in the budget was based on phone
28 conversations with various firms, and was just ballpark.

29
30 Commissioner McElraft asked about the possibility of CAMA grant funding for
31 rewriting code books, and Mr. Reed answered that typically there is money from
32 CAMA through the Division of Coastal Management, however, he had been told
33 not to expect to see any of that money for at least two fiscal years. Mr. Rush
34 added that was their first hope to get a CAMA grant, which is normally a 75-25
35 match.

36
37 **f) Fire Department**

38
39 Fire Chief Bill Walker discussed his budget items with the Board. He said the
40 biggest thing in his budget was the delivery of the new fire truck. He said the
41 scheduled completion date for the truck is September 15th. He said there is
42 money budgeted to equip the truck. Chief Walker said they are looking at this as
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1
2 the year of repairs, trying to fix everything that needs to be repaired or replaced,
3 such as roof replacement at Station Two, HVAC replacement, radio system.
4 Chief Walker said they also hoped to replace the Pro-Jet, their first water rescue
5 boat, and one of the 4-wheelers is up for replacement this year.

6
7 Commissioner Wootten asked about the capital outlay expenditures this year
8 with regard to the water rescue boat and ATV, in addition to the fire truck. Mr.
9 Rush said that they are trying to keep up with the 5 year replacement schedule,
10 and the needs there. Chief Walker said the Pro-Jet boat is 15 years old, has
11 saved over 100 lives, it has taken much abuse, noting the biggest concern is they
12 no longer make this boat.

13
14 Commissioner McElraft asked about the status of the flag system. Chief Walker
15 said the flag poles should be going up within the next week, and they have
16 purchased brackets, and are waiting on the flags.

17
18 Mr. Rush pointed out a couple of typos on page 61 – in the second to last
19 column, the increase in capital outlay should be \$87,600 not \$143,000 listed.
20 The total increase to fire department budget is \$144,334.

21
22 Commissioner Messer asked Chief Walker if the Fire Department had to respond
23 in full turnout gear to vehicle accidents. Chief Walker said they did, which led to
24 Commissioner Messer's next question concerning why, if there is an accident on
25 Emerald Drive, and they have a wrecker service right across the street, the Fire
26 Department has to wait there in full turnout gear for someone to come from
27 Onslow County on a rotation wrecker to pick them up. He felt this was not right.

28
29 Chief Walker agreed and Mr. Rush said they would look into this situation.

30
31 ***The Board noted the next budget workshop meeting date scheduled for***
32 ***Thursday, May 20 at 6:00 pm at the Community Center.***

33
34 ***The Board then determined the date for the weekend Board Special***
35 ***meeting to discuss beach driving to be Saturday, July 17 at 10:00 am at***
36 ***Town Hall.***

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Mayor Schools advised the Board members that it was time for the Town Manager's evaluation. He asked that the Board return their individual evaluations to him by the 28th of May, and they would hold an executive session at the June 8, 2004 regular Board meeting.

Motion was made by Commissioner McElraft to adjourn the meeting. The Board voted unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Rhonda C. Ferebee
Town Clerk