

1 **MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING**
2 **OF THE EMERALD ISLE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
3 **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2016 – 6:00 P.M.**
4 **TOWN BOARD MEETING ROOM**
5
6

7 **1. Call To Order**
8

9 The regular monthly meeting of the Emerald Isle Board of Commissioners was called to
10 order by Mayor Eddie Barber at 6:00 PM in the Town Board Meeting Room.
11

12 **2. Roll Call**
13

14 Present for the meeting: Mayor Eddie Barber, Mayor Pro-Tem Floyd Messer,
15 Commissioners Candace Dooley, Steve Finch, Jim Normile, and Maripat Wright.
16

17 Also present during the regular meeting: Town Manager Frank Rush, Town Attorney
18 Richard Stanley, Finance Director Laura Rotchford, Town Clerk Rhonda Ferebee,
19 Police Chief Jeff Waters, Parks and Recreation Director Alesia Sanderson, and Town
20 Planner Josh Edmondson.
21

22 **3. Opening Prayer**
23

24 Emerald Isle resident and business person Bernie Whalley offered the opening prayer.
25

26 **4. Pledge of Allegiance**
27

28 Mayor Barber led the Pledge of Allegiance.
29

30 **5. Adoption of Agenda**
31

32 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Messer to adopt the Agenda. The Board***
33 ***voted unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.***
34

35 **6. Proclamations / Public Announcements**
36

37 Mayor Barber noted the following announcements for the public:
38

- 39 • **Friday Free Flick – Friday, February 12 – 7 pm – Community Center –**
40 **“Inside Out”**
- 41 • **Youth Tennis Clinics – Mondays – February 15 – March 14 – 5 pm – Blue**
42 **Heron Park**
- 43 • **Police Educating the Public (PEP) – Tuesday, February 16 – 10 am – Town**
44 **Board Meeting Room**
- 45 • **Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Regular Meeting – Wed,**
46 **February 17 – 9 am – Community Center**

- 1 • **Comp Plan / Land Use Plan Steering Committee Meeting – Thurs, Feb 18 –**
- 2 **3 pm – Town Admin Building**
- 3 • **Board of Commissioners Annual Budget Planning Workshop – Fri, Feb 19 –**
- 4 **8:30 am – Town Admin Building**
- 5 • **American Red Cross Blood Drive – Friday, Feb 19- 2 pm – 7 pm –**
- 6 **Community Center**
- 7 • **Planning Board Regular Meeting – Monday, February 22 – 6 pm – Town**
- 8 **Board Meeting Room**
- 9 • **Coffee With A Cop – Thursday, February 25 – 9 am – Emerald Grill**
- 10 • **Summer Employment Job Fair – Wed, March 2 – 4 pm – 7 pm – Community**
- 11 **Center**
- 12 • **Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting – Tuesday, March 8 – 6 pm –**
- 13 **Town Board Meeting Room**
- 14 • **25th Annual El St. Patrick’s Festival – Fri, March 11 – 5 pm – 10 pm and Sat,**
- 15 **March 12 – 9 am – 6 pm – Emerald Plantation Shopping Center**
- 16 • **3rd Annual Emerald Isle Marathon, Half-Marathon, & 5k – Saturday, April 9 –**
- 17 **Western Ocean Regional Access**

18

19 **7. Public Comment**

20

21 **Brief Summary:** The public will have the opportunity to address the Board about any
22 items of concern not on the agenda.

23

24 Jean Wilkerson, 132 Doe, thanked all of the staff who had worked so diligently over the
25 past few days trying to address the storm water issues caused by the significant rains
26 and hoped that the message would be conveyed to those employees that their work
27 during these times was appreciated.

28

29 **8. Consent Agenda**

30

31 a. **Tax Releases**

32 b. **Minutes – January 11, 2016 Special Meeting**

33 c. **Minutes – January 12, 2016 Regular Meeting**

34 d. **Citizen Participation Plan – 2016 Comprehensive Plan / Land Use Plan**

35 e. **Resolution Authorizing Contracts for Beach Access Walkway**
36 **Replacements (18th St., Bryan St., Nina St.) (16-02-09/R1)**

37 f. **Budget Amendment – General Fund**

38 g. **Capital Project Ordinance Amendments – Coast Guard Road Bicycle Path**
39 **Extension Project, NC 58 Traffic Signal Pole Project**

40

41 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Wright to approve the items on the Consent***
42 ***Agenda. The Board voted unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.***

43

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1 **Clerks Note: A copy of Resolutions 16-02-09/R1 and all other Consent Agenda items as referenced above are**
2 **incorporated herein by reference and hereby made a part of these minutes.**

3
4 **9. FY 16-17 Budget**

5
6 **a. Budget Calendar**

7 **b. Public Hearing – Early Budget Input**

8
9 Town Manager Frank Rush addressed the Board regarding this Agenda item. The
10 following excerpt from his memo to the Board is provided for additional background:

11
12 The Board is scheduled to formally begin the FY 16-17 budget process at the February 9 meeting. First, the Board is asked to
13 adopt the official FY 16-17 Budget Calendar, and second, the Board is scheduled to conduct a public hearing to receive early
14 citizen input on the FY 16-17 budget.

15
16 FY 16-17 Budget Calendar

17 A copy of the suggested FY 16-17 Budget Calendar is attached for the Board's review. This calendar outlines the Town's budget
18 process and includes key target dates in the process.

19
20 The FY 16-17 budget process begins with the items on the February 9 meeting agenda. The FY 16-17 budget public hearing
21 scheduled for the February 9 meeting is a chance for the Town's taxpayers to provide input at the front-end of the FY 16-17
22 budget process, and we look forward to this input. The next key step in the FY 16-17 budget process is the Board's February 19
23 budget planning workshop. The Board will review detailed budget information and discuss several potential expenditure items at
24 that meeting, and will provide direction to Town staff regarding the Board's priorities, concerns, ideas, etc. for FY 16-17. Town
25 staff and I will then consider the Board's direction and the public's input, and will work to develop a responsible budget during
26 March and April.

27
28 The FY 16-17 Recommended Budget will be presented to the Board at the May 10 regular meeting. Two budget workshop
29 meetings are tentatively scheduled for May 17 and June 7 (both are Tuesday evenings) to review the Recommended Budget in
30 detail. The official public hearing on the budget is planned for the June 7 workshop meeting, with Board adoption planned for the
31 June 14 regular meeting. (Additional budget workshop meetings can be scheduled between May 11 and June 13 as necessary.)

32
33 The Board has the flexibility to adjust this schedule as we go through the budget process if necessary and/or desired, however,
34 the establishment of the FY 16-17 Budget Calendar will help to keep this lengthy process on track.

35
36 Public Hearing – Early Citizen Input on FY 16-17 Budget

37 We have scheduled and advertised a public hearing on the upcoming FY 16-17 budget for the February 9 meeting.

38
39 NC General Statutes require the Town to conduct a public hearing on the annual budget after the Town Manager presents the
40 Recommended Budget in May, but Emerald Isle has also historically held a public hearing prior to the start of the annual budget
41 process in order to get citizen input at the front-end of the budget process. The purpose of the February 9 public hearing is
42 simply to receive comments or suggestions from our citizens regarding budget priorities for the coming fiscal year before we
43 begin the budget process. The hearing will give citizens a chance to voice their concerns about the tax rate, the fairness of the
44 Town's tax and fee structure, suggest budget and service reductions, suggest funding for certain programs or projects, etc. All
45 thoughtful suggestions are welcomed and encouraged.

46
47 I have attached some basic background budget information, and I will have this information available for the public to review.

48
49 I will be happy to answer any questions about the FY 15-16 budget, the FY 16-17 budget process, and the preliminary outlook for
50 the FY 16-17 budget at the February 9 meeting.
51

1 **Motion was made by Commissioner Finch to adopt the FY 16-17 Budget Calendar.**
2 **The Board voted unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.**

3
4 **Motion was made by Commissioner Wright to open the public hearing for early**
5 **citizen input on the FY 16-17 budget. The Board voted unanimously 5-0 in favor.**
6 **Motion carried.**

7
8 Elton Matheson, 7008 Sound Drive, commented that the debt service kept growing, was
9 8% of the total budget, and that there never seemed to be any plan to do anything about
10 it.

11
12 Town Manager Rush stated that the debt service payments were budgeted for coming
13 fiscal years and they would make those payments in time going forward, noting that the
14 Town's debt service levels were very low comparatively to other communities.

15
16 Mr. Matheson also commented about the trash pickup and how his trash had been
17 picked up today and would be picked up again on Thursday and in that time he wouldn't
18 have accumulated anything to be picked up. He said he was told this was the cheapest
19 way that this could be scheduled but it cost \$25,000 and he felt the only sensible thing
20 to do was to drop the second weekly pickup on the sound side.

21
22 Town Manager stated that was certainly an option and they could investigate it during
23 the budget process.

24
25 **Motion was made by Commissioner Wright to close the Public Hearing. The**
26 **Board voted unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.**

27
28 **10. Presentation – Potential Installation of “Roundabouts” and / or Other Traffic**
29 **Improvements at NC 58 Intersections**

- 30
31 a. **Coast Guard Road**
32 b. **Emerald Plantation**
33 c. **Mangrove Drive**
34 d. **Bogue Inlet Drive**
35

36 Mayor Eddie Barber introduced Jim Dunlop, NCDOT Congestion Management
37 Engineer, John Rouse, NCDOT Division 2 Engineer, and Patrick Flanagan, Planning
38 Director for the Eastern Carolina Council of Governments who would present this
39 Agenda item. The following excerpt from the Town Manager's memo to the Board is
40 provided for additional background:

41
42 John Rouse, NCDOT Division 2 Engineer, and Jim Dunlop, NCDOT Congestion Management Engineer, will attend the Board's
43 February 9 meeting and make a presentation about the potential future installation of roundabouts and/or other traffic
44 improvement along NC 58 in Emerald Isle. Patrick Flanagan, Planning Director for the Eastern Carolina Council of Governments

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1 and lead staff person for the Down East Rural Planning Organization, will also attend, and the February 9 presentation is
2 intended as a follow-up to his previous comments to the Board in December.
3

4 The purpose of the presentation is to better educate the Board and the community about roundabouts, provide an opportunity for
5 Board questions, and learn about other potential traffic improvements that may be helpful in alleviating peak period traffic
6 congestion on NC 58 in Emerald Isle. Additionally, I am hopeful that any future improvements along NC 58 will also result in
7 aesthetic benefits along NC 58, and view any future improvements as a significant opportunity for the Town. I do not expect the
8 Board to take a formal position on the potential future installation of roundabouts at the February 9 meeting, and envision that
9 decision occurring later this spring or summer after the Board has had ample opportunity to study this issue and consider public
10 input. Although NCDOT is the ultimate decision-making authority on any future NC 58 improvements, I believe they value the
11 Town's input and will seek to work in partnership with the Town on any future improvements.
12

13 Potential Roundabout Locations

14 As you know, the potential roundabouts are being considered as part of the NC 58 Corridor Study that has been underway (led
15 by the Down East Regional Planning Organization) for the past several months. The scope of that study includes the entire NC
16 58 corridor from the NC 24/58 intersection along all of Bogue Banks over the Atlantic Beach bridge and up to the US 70
17 intersection in Morehead City, with a goal to improve traffic flow during peak traffic periods. The NC 58 Corridor Study was
18 initiated, in part, due to concerns from mainland communities in western Carteret County about summer traffic backups into
19 these communities.
20

21 The most significant preliminary recommendation in the NC 58 Corridor Study is the installation of traffic roundabouts at the 4
22 signalized intersections in Emerald Isle:
23

- 24 • NC 58 / Coast Guard Road
25 200 ft. wide right of way available
26 Full, single-lane roundabout contemplated
27
- 28 • NC 58 / Loon Drive (Emerald Plantation Shopping Center)
29 200 ft. wide right of way available
30 Full, single-lane roundabout contemplated
31
- 32 • NC 58 / Mangrove Drive (K&V Plaza, CVS Pharmacy)
33 200 ft. wide right of way available
34 Full, single-lane roundabout contemplated
35
- 36 • NC 58 / Bogue Inlet Drive
37 100 ft. wide right of way available
38 Mini-roundabout contemplated.
39

40 A roundabout is an intersection feature that eliminates the need for traffic signals and keeps traffic flowing continuously by
41 requiring entering traffic to yield the right of way to traffic already in the roundabout. Traffic flows in a single direction around the
42 feature, with only right turns out of the roundabout in the desired direction. There are several different sizes of roundabouts:
43 large traffic circles, double-lane roundabouts, single-lane roundabouts, and mini-roundabouts.
44

45 I have attached photos of single-lane roundabouts currently installed in Hilton Head Island, SC, Ocean Isle Beach, NC, and
46 Asheville, NC to provide a better visual understanding of traffic roundabouts. I have also attached traffic counts for each of the 4
47 intersections (and also NC 24 / NC 58) that was collected in different weekdays in July 2015. NCDOT staff has reviewed traffic
48 counts and crash data for the 4 intersections in Emerald Isle, and believe that the installation of traffic roundabouts in Emerald
49 Isle will improve traffic flow during peak periods and reduce the potential for backups and delays. Jim Dunlop, Congestion
50 Management Engineer, will provide further explanation during his presentation to the Board.
51

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1 The Board should note that only single-lane and mini-roundabouts are being contemplated for Emerald Isle (not the more
2 confusing two-lane roundabouts). Additionally, the Board should note that the Town's existing bicycle path and sidewalks would
3 be integrated into the new roundabouts, slightly set back from the roundabout feature and also including an island midway
4 across the road. We don't perceive any greater safety concerns or greater difficulty for bicyclists and pedestrians to cross NC at
5 a roundabout than currently exists at the Town's signalized intersections.
6

7 The Board should also note that future development near Islander Drive and/or Mallard Drive (the two intersections between
8 Coast Guard Road and Loon Drive) may also necessitate a new traffic signal or roundabout feature in the future. The areas near
9 both of these intersections are zoned Village West (mixed use) and Business, and the Town is actively promoting quality new
10 development in this area as the real estate market continues to improve.
11

12 Finally, it is also important to consider the impact of any planned intersection improvements (or lack thereof) at the NC 24 / NC
13 58 intersection on traffic flow in Emerald Isle. NCDOT is also contemplating the future construction of an overpass at the NC 24 /
14 NC 58 intersection as part of the NC 58 corridor study.
15

16 Potential NC 58 / Coast Guard Road Roundabout

17 The NC 58 / Coast Guard Road intersection is viewed as the main choke point during peak traffic periods, and NCDOT believes
18 that a roundabout can function effectively at this location. The installation of a roundabout at this intersection also represents a
19 significant opportunity to improve aesthetics at this area, and if pursued, I envision a new "Welcome to Emerald Isle" sign being
20 installed in the center of the roundabout, along with attractive landscaping improvements.
21

22 It will be important for NCDOT staff to fully consider and evaluate the relationship with the Coast Guard Road / Reed Drive
23 intersection when planning any new roundabout at the NC 58 / Coast Guard Road intersection. As you know, recreational
24 vehicles often use that intersection to access the Holiday TravLPark, and appropriate planning should occur for these vehicles.
25 Additionally, Reed Drive represents the only alternative to access the Coast Guard Road neighborhoods, and is a popular
26 alternative route.
27

28 Other Potential Traffic Improvements

29 As you know, the Town formally opposes the widening of the NC 58 bridge into Emerald Isle, and also opposes the widening of
30 NC 58 through Emerald Isle. Instead, the Town's Land Use Plan promotes the construction of a new, mid-island bridge from the
31 Hibbs Road area to Bogue Banks in the Indian Beach / Salter Path area. Given the Town's opposition to the widening of the NC
32 58 bridge and NC 58, there are likely few other alternatives to address peak period traffic congestion in Emerald Isle other than
33 roundabouts. (NCDOT has previously synchronized the traffic signals in Emerald Isle to promote more efficient traffic flow.)
34

35 If the Town does not support the future installation of roundabouts, NCDOT may consider the construction of longer, additional,
36 and/or realigned turn lanes at the Town's signalized intersections. For example, a separate dedicated right-turn lane onto Coast
37 Guard Road from the bridge may enable these vehicles to exit NC 58 sooner, and/or longer right-turn lanes near Loon Drive (at
38 Emerald Plantation Shopping Center) may have a similar effect. New right-turn lanes could be considered in the "downtown"
39 area at Bogue Inlet Drive, and it may also be possible to include new merge lanes onto NC 58 from Coast Guard Road, Loon
40 Drive, Mangrove Drive, and Bogue Inlet Drive.
41

42 If the Town does not pursue roundabouts and instead pursues additional turn lanes, I am hopeful that these improvements will
43 also include significant aesthetic benefits for the Town. For example, I am hopeful that any new improvements might also
44 include new steel traffic signal poles at the Town's signalized intersections, ideally with decorative features. I am hopeful that the
45 construction of additional turn lanes in the "downtown" area would also include a complete reconstruction of the NC 58
46 streetscape between the new Welcome Center and the US Post Office to create a more urban environment with new curbs and
47 other streetscape features.
48

49 Process and Timeline

50 I am hopeful that any proposed improvements (roundabouts or other improvements) can be incorporated into NCDOT's planning
51 process in 2016. Depending on how the project(s) scores, it is possible that funding could be made available within the next few
52 years, although it is probably more likely that any such improvements would be programmed further out.
53

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1 Because the cost of these improvements is relatively small (compared to many NCDOT improvement projects), it is possible that
2 these improvements could be “bumped up” on the schedule if other projects are delayed or have unanticipated savings. Thus, I
3 am optimistic that any desired improvements could be constructed sooner rather than later.
4

5 Outstanding Questions to Consider

6 As you know, the Town has specifically sought out public input about this issue, and several constructive and helpful comments
7 have been received. The Town has received both positive and negative comments about roundabouts, with individuals often
8 citing positive and negative experiences in other cities, states, and countries.
9

10 Several relevant questions have been raised, and can be summarized as follows:
11

- 12 • Will roundabouts really work during peak weekend days in Emerald Isle, and enable traffic to flow more efficiently?
13 Won't the roundabouts just cause complete “gridlock”?
14
- 15 • Are the traffic counts (taken on weekdays in July) truly representative of peak traffic conditions on Saturdays, Sundays,
16 or holidays?
17
- 18 • Will vehicles entering from side streets (i.e, Coast Guard Road, Mangrove Drive, etc.) be blocked from entering the
19 roundabout by drivers on NC 58 exiting the island?
20
- 21 • What impact does the NC 24 / NC 58 intersection have on traffic flow in Emerald Isle? Should that intersection be a
22 higher priority?
23
- 24 • Will roundabouts create confusion, frustration, and impatience among drivers, resulting in more accidents and “road
25 rage” incidents?
26
- 27 • How would a Coast Guard Road roundabout work with the traffic from Reed Drive, including recreational vehicles and
28 boat trailers?
29

30 I expect that Jim Dunlop and John Rouse’s comments will address these questions, and if they do not then it may be helpful to
31 pose these questions at the February 9 meeting.
32

33 Some Additional Perspective

34 It is important for the Board and the community to realize that, in the end, some degree of traffic congestion is simply
35 unavoidable and is, in fact, a good problem to have. We are all very fortunate to be able to enjoy Emerald Isle, and it is obvious
36 that many people are seeking the same enjoyment of this beautiful place. We continually strive to make Emerald Isle as
37 desirable as possible for as many as possible, and we certainly want everyone to be able to enjoy Emerald Isle.
38

39 There will likely always be certain times when traffic does not flow as efficiently as we all might prefer, and I don’t believe any
40 improvement being contemplated now will be the “panacea” for all traffic congestion issues in Emerald Isle. I am, however,
41 hopeful that we can continue to make positive incremental improvements over time, and believe that NCDOT is committed to
42 assisting the Town in accomplishing this goal.
43

44 I look forward to receiving NCDOT’s presentation on February 9, and look forward to working through this issue with the Board
45 and the community in the coming months.
46

47 Mayor Barber stated that we were all concerned about traffic in Emerald Isle, noting that
48 this was just a fact finding opportunity tonight with no decisions being made but to learn
49 more from the NCDOT presenters about roundabouts.
50

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1 Jim Dunlop, NCDOT Congestion Management Engineer provided a PowerPoint
2 presentation for the public. Mr. Dunlop answered questions from the Board and public
3 during his presentation.

4
5 Following the presentation, Mayor Barber asked for comments from the public.

6
7 John Winchester, Coast Guard Road, asked if they anticipated a metering system or
8 methodology to create gaps and slow the traffic down from the bridge to the first
9 roundabout. Mr. Dunlop responded that they didn't anticipate needing metering signals
10 at the roundabout but it was a possibility if they happened to need it. Mr. Dunlop said
11 they did have the means of metering it to help make sure the roundabout was operating.
12 Mr. Dunlop stated that the Coast Guard intersection would have more than a single lane
13 with turn lanes and the details would be for a later part of the process. Mr. Dunlop said
14 they had volume counts from the summer, not July 4 counts, but they were summer
15 weekdays for estimates. Mr. Dunlop said they had to follow a particular process to
16 make sure they were evaluating the rotations the same way they were evaluating
17 across the state, and if they were funded then they would have a much more detailed
18 process that was required by federal law to make sure they were meeting the purpose
19 of the project.

20
21 George Norris commented that he was in the Manufactured Housing business and that
22 from Coon Crossing to Bogue Inlet Drive from the sound side of Highway 58 there were
23 540 manufactured home sites. Mr. Norris stated that the only access to those sites was
24 through Bogue Inlet Drive and Mangrove. Mr. Norris wondered how they would design
25 the roundabouts to allow a 16x76 home to get through those intersections to make a left
26 hand turn. Mr. Dunlop responded that as part of the design process they would identify
27 the needed design vehicle to be used to make sure if the mobile homes as stated were
28 a design issue they would make sure the roundabout would accommodate which would
29 enlarge the traffic apron significantly and lessen the landscaping area. Mr. Dunlop
30 noted that the manufactured homes would not necessarily go through at 20 mph and
31 over a certain size they would need to be escorted. Mr. Dunlop added that hopefully
32 they were not coming through on July 4. Mr. Dunlop stated that he had recently seen
33 video of a 200 foot wind turbine going through a roundabout. He noted they would need
34 to make sure as part of the design and planning process that it was designed for the
35 appropriate vehicle.

36
37 Carol Lauback, Coast Guard Road, pointed out that in Vermont they had a state law
38 that you had to stop at the crosswalks. Ms. Lauback felt that the roundabouts shown in
39 the presentation were way bigger than what we needed so they did work but the one at
40 the end of Coast Guard Road if more than one lane was still a huge chunk of land to be
41 used and it would have to be brought up to grade because it was on a curve. Ms.
42 Lauback noted the amount of flooding in that area and it came up to grade that water
43 would go somewhere and it would start flooding other places. Ms. Lauback felt the

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1 traffic count should have been at peak hours and that it was not peak in the middle of
2 the week but peak hours were Saturday and Sunday.

3
4 Josie Smith, Coast Guard Road, said she agreed with Ms. Lauback that none of the
5 pictures in the presentation showed traffic at peak time, they looked good and sounded
6 good but thought since we were such a rental community that it wouldn't benefit the
7 Town for the amount it would cost, and based on the comments that it would be a little
8 bit more beneficial, she didn't feel it was worth it for just a little bit more beneficial and to
9 still have the traffic. Ms. Smith stated that we had traffic Friday, Saturday, and Sunday,
10 and to taking a count in the middle of the week didn't tell anything. She also agreed
11 with the flooding issue on both sides of NC 58.

12
13 Mike Campbell, Azure Drive, said he had personal experience with roundabouts in
14 northern Virginia. Mr. Campbell said he used to spend over 20 minutes to get through
15 one intersection and when they put in a series of traffic circles it totally mitigated the
16 problem. Mr. Campbell said he was excited about this for a couple of reasons; one
17 being aesthetics, coming onto the island with a straight shot of telephone poles, and if
18 done right he had seen that it does mitigate the problem, all the issues would be up to
19 the engineers to solve. Mr. Campbell felt the other side of the bridge was a big issue
20 and really needed to be taken into account before we started looking at the roundabouts
21 on the island. Mr. Campbell said what he liked most was the aesthetics, being safer for
22 our pedestrians in the summer, and taking down the lights which he would consider
23 overhead trash and distracting. Lastly, Mr. Campbell said that it occurred to a number
24 of them last year that outside of the roundabout intersections there were certain cross
25 streets coming from the sound to the beach where it was very difficult for people to
26 cross in the busy part of our year. Mr. Campbell said this may slow traffic up a bit but
27 when you got to Lee Drive and you had people with their golf carts and grandchildren
28 they can stand there for 10 minutes trying to get across the street on Saturday and
29 Sunday. He thought they should consider the pedestrian signs with the lights as you
30 see in Atlantic Beach. He had noticed and had people tell him it was a significant
31 problem.

32
33 Mary Helen Casey, 107 Starfish Ct., was concerned that our speed limit was currently
34 45 mph and the roundabout would be 20 mph. She said coming off the bridge at 45
35 mph around a curve that was sloped and you go into a turn and have to go all the way
36 around in order to make a left hand turn to the service station. Ms. Casey said that
37 going down Coast Guard Road to go across the bridge you would have to pull in and go
38 around, assuming the traffic from the other side didn't already have you blocked just to
39 get across the bridge. Ms. Casey said there were times during the summer that you
40 had to wait through maybe two or three traffic lights when it backed down Coast Guard
41 Road but you knew when the light changed they had a safe way to get in and turn left
42 and cross the bridge. Ms. Casey said she would worry when there were people walking
43 across the roundabout and would there be a place for them to punch a button to stop all
44 traffic and they would be allowed to cross safely. She felt going in between traffic was

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1 not a safe way to cross the road. Ms. Casey said that they said it would reduce
2 accidents and she would like to know the number of accidents we have had at our
3 intersections with traffic lights. She thought that our traffic problem was not accidents.
4 She felt they should just lower the speed limit to 20 mph if that was the problem.
5
6 Elton Matheson, Sound Drive, felt the drop in speed was pretty severe and nobody
7 drove 20 mph, he had never seen a 20 mph speed limit obeyed anywhere. Mr.
8 Matheson said that would cut down on the throughput to this thing. Mr. Matheson
9 asked how they could be sure the roundabouts could handle the volume. Mr. Matheson
10 also asked why they couldn't build an overpass which for a left turn off Coast Guard
11 Road would solve the problem with everything else flowing straight through with a few
12 additional design details.
13
14 Mr. Dunlop responded that regarding the volume and how it would operate, their
15 analysis tools used for signalized intersections had also been developed for
16 roundabouts to analyze the operation and the capacity. Mr. Dunlop stated they put the
17 volume into their program as well as looking at possibilities and the interaction between
18 the legs to see what type of design was needed to make it an adequate operation.
19
20 Mr. Dunlop also in reference to the speed limits discussed that some of the design
21 features with the roundabouts helped slow drivers down getting into the roundabout,
22 showing the example on screen of the Ocean Isle approach and showing how the
23 deflection occurred entering the roundabout. Mr. Dunlop said they would make sure the
24 design accommodated getting drivers to slow down physically from 45 mph to 20 mph.
25 Mr. Dunlop if you pictured the existing signal, that signal expected drivers to go from
26 45 mph to 0 mph, and so 45 mph to 20 mph was a better situation than what existed
27 now when that signal turned red. Mr. Dunlop said there was nothing about that red
28 signal or pedestrian signal that insured the people obey it, with the roundabout they put
29 in physical features that essentially enforced the speed limit by the nature of the
30 approaches and the turns. Mr. Dunlop noted that was all part of the design details
31 which again, was a later step.
32
33 Gene Jensen, 305 Bogue Inlet Drive, noted that he was originally from Europe and had
34 experience with roundabouts and he thought they were just a fine thing, they worked
35 just right. Mr. Jensen said they made the traffic flow a lot easier, and noted if you were
36 worried about speed that in Europe they even made speed bumps; they raised the
37 roundabouts so the speed would go down. Mr. Jensen said that the flooding was a
38 different subject and had nothing to do with the roundabout. He felt the water was a
39 problem that should be taken care of when they put in the roundabouts.
40
41 Toni Winchester, 221 Windjammer East, asked if the Town could request that the
42 studies be performed on the weekends, as the Town didn't have a Monday through
43 Friday commute rush hour high volume, but we had a weekend high volume. Ms.
44 Winchester said she remembered years ago when the intersection was redone and they

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1 were so excited for the new light because they were so sure it was have a left turn
2 arrow and it did not because the study had been done at a time that was not peak. Ms.
3 Winchester said she would love to invite the DOT counters to come down and spend a
4 beautiful weekend in Emerald Isle and have the study done, and that no decision be
5 made before a study was done at a peak time.

6
7 Mr. Dunlop stated that they knew that in the coastal areas that they needed to analyze
8 operations during those periods and that was not part of the current process with their
9 prioritization. Mr. Dunlop stated that as part of the design process they would make
10 sure they were analyzing during peak periods and know how it would operate.

11
12 Bill Ellis, Cedar Street, said he came to Emerald Isle in 1949 and that this Town had
13 been great for him and he loved it. Mr. Ellis said he was concerned about the safety if
14 you were coming out to bumper to bumper traffic about 3 days a week in the summer
15 you would have no warning whatsoever if someone was going to stop. Mr. Ellis said
16 with a stop light you could see 3 to 4 cars ahead of you what they were going to be
17 doing but without a stoplight the only thing you would know was what the car right in
18 front of you was doing. Mr. Ellis said he was concerned about all they had done to
19 protect pedestrians and without a stoplight he would be concerned about people trying
20 to cross NC 58. Mr. Ellis also gave the example of someone pulling a camper trying to
21 turn left from Coast Guard Road to cross the bridge and how long it would take them to
22 get out on the weekend. Mr. Ellis felt the traffic would be backed up in his opinion
23 probably a mile down Coast Guard Road. Mr. Ellis said coming up to the shopping
24 center there were two lanes going out now from the shopping center and without the
25 stoplight there he didn't think they could get out very easily with a roundabout. Mr. Ellis
26 said on Sunday morning when church is over there are 150-175 cars leaving at the
27 same time and how would they get out without a stoplight. He felt the Town would need
28 to hire about 8-9 more police officers and increase EMS, and it would really help Roy's
29 Automobile Wrecker service because there would be a lot of crashes. Mr. Ellis said
30 safety was the main concern and they were able to get on and off the island.

31
32 John Rouse, NCDOT Division 2 Engineer, said that when they started talking about
33 roundabouts with the Town there were a couple of things he wanted to make clear. Mr.
34 Rouse stated that the work they had done so far was preliminary and they did not have
35 the exact peak hour traffic counts, or the exact zone numbers, and that was all part of
36 the design process. Mr. Rouse said that what he had communicated to the Mayor,
37 Commissioners, and Town Manager was that the NCDOT would not proceed forward if
38 the Town did not support the project. Mr. Rouse said that once they received funding
39 and got into a certain level of design where they could see exactly what they needed to
40 build they would not go forward without the Town's support. Mr. Rouse noted there was
41 a lot of concern, but noted that they had built about 4-5 roundabouts in Division 2 in
42 surrounding counties already and with every one of them there had been tremendous
43 concern but every one of them had functioned very well once they were in place. The
44 Towns that had the roundabouts were really enjoying them and the accident rates were

1 much lower, and pedestrian accident rates around this area of North Carolina were
2 zero. Mr. Rouse said again that this was very early in the process and they wanted
3 everyone to understand that they would not move forward unless the Town was in
4 complete support, the Town was their partner in this and moving forward they would
5 look at this improvement, and if this was not the answer they would look at other
6 improvements.

7
8 Mayor Barber thanked everyone for coming out tonight noting that these were the early
9 stages to get input from the Board of Commissioners and our citizens.

10
11 **11. Commercial Review – Proposed Renovation of The Islander Suites (North**
12 **Building)**

13
14 Josh Edmondson, Planning Director addressed the Board regarding this Agenda item.
15 The following excerpt from his memo to the Town Manager is provided for additional
16 background:

17
18 A request has been submitted by the Islander Suites for commercial review of the main office building at 102 Islander Dr. This is
19 a new proposal that is a complete deviation from a previous request for a new four story building at this site. As proposed, this is
20 an interior renovation of the existing office building, the addition of a second story and site adjustments for parking and onsite
21 waste water. For our purposes, the review consists of the exterior of the existing structure, the additional second story and
22 changes to the site.

23
24 The property is 4.41 acres in size. Currently, there are 82 existing condo-suite units south of the main office building which will
25 be renovated. The proposed second story will allow for an additional 20 condo-suite units. To the North of the building, note that
26 a large existing impervious area is to be removed and will become vegetative wastewater area. The planning board reviewed
27 the request at its January 25, 2016 meeting. The following pertinent items were found to be in compliance with the requirements
28 of the Unified Development Ordinance:

- 29
30
- The additional twenty units brings the total to 102 condo-suite units
 - The allowed maximum units per acre is 32 units as proposed the number is a little more than 23 units per acre
 - The 20 proposed one bedroom units combine with the 82 existing units meet the minimum requirement of 75% of the total allowable units being designated as one bedroom units
 - The allowable mean roof height for a structure in the Village West Zoning District is 40' and the actual roof height of the proposed building is shown to be 38' 4 ¼"
 - The required vegetative area in the Village West Zoning District is 25% of the lot area and as shown 25.96% or 49,930 square feet or 1.1 acres will be retained
 - The exterior wall facings and colors will match the existing found on the rear condo building which are of low reflectance, neutral and earthtone color
 - As proposed the project is exempt from stormwater requirements as the addition is over existing impervious area and the total site impervious area is decreasing
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- 1 • The parking requires 1 space per unit and 1 space per 3 employees
- 2 ○ With an additional 20 units the required parking is 105 spaces
- 3 ○ There are 133 proposed spaces

4
5 Lastly, the Planning Board found that the exterior walls of the building did not provide an adequate visual break every 20 feet as
6 required. The Board felt the gables needed to be larger on the western building front to meet the requirements. Mr. Bill Brown
7 (owner) said the gables in the architecture rendering were somewhat misleading and that gables would match the existing gable
8 size on the rear building. The Planning Board felt this change will satisfy the requirements of the ordinance. The Planning Board
9 voted unanimously to approve and forward to the Commissioners with a favorable recommendation. I have included for your
10 review pdf versions of the site and building elevation plan along with a color concept of the proposed building. I will have the full
11 18"x24" set of plans available at the meeting as well. I look forward to discussing this with the Commissioners at their February
12 9, 2016 meeting.

13
14 Town Planner Edmondson outline the proposal for the Board's consideration noting that
15 the current proposal was different than the proposal approximately one year ago in that
16 this proposal was for an interior renovation of an existing building on the north part of
17 property to the existing office and conference space, the addition of a second story and
18 site adjustments for parking and onsite waste water. Mr. Edmondson stated that at the
19 far north of the property there was a large impervious area that would be removed and
20 vegetated and used as part of the new waste water disposal area. Mr. Edmondson
21 described the details of the proposal as noted in his memo provided above, noting that
22 the Planning Board had voted unanimously to forward to the Board of Commissioners
23 with a favorable recommendation.

24
25 Town Planner Edmondson also noted that in 2007 prior to a rezoning this property was
26 developed as condo-tel's so as to keep it from becoming like a condominium complex
27 and to operate in the traditional sense as a hotel. Mr. Edmondson said that based on
28 some conflicts found with the current Village West zoning staff and the Planning Board
29 would be reviewing and addressing that in the near future.

30
31 Bill Brown, Islander Suites, stated that they would like to make the property look nicer
32 and the Board's approval would be greatly appreciated.

33
34 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Normile to approve the site plan, building***
35 ***elevations, and exterior colors for the renovation of the north building at the***
36 ***Islander Suites, contingent upon the north building elevations matching the***
37 ***aesthetic features of the previously renovated building. The Board voted***
38 ***unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.***

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1
2 **12. Proposed Sign Ordinance Amendments – Non-Profit Event Signs**
3

- 4 **a. Public Hearing**
5 **b. Ordinance Amending Chapter 10 – Definitions and Rules of Interpretation –**
6 **of the Unified Development Ordinance Regarding Non-Profit Event Signs**
7 **c. Ordinance Amending Chapter 6 – Building Regulations – of the Code of**
8 **Ordinances Regarding Yard Sale, Garage Sale Signs**
9

10 Josh Edmondson, Planning Director addressed the Board regarding both proposed
11 ordinance amendments. The following excerpt from the Town Manager to the Board is
12 provided for additional background:
13

14 The Board of Commissioners is scheduled to formally consider an amendment to the Town’s sign ordinance (in the
15 Unified Development Ordinance) that would implement changes for temporary non-profit event signs that have been
16 discussed by the Board several times in recent months. In addition, in order to maintain consistency among various
17 temporary sign regulations, the Board will also formally consider an amendment (in Chapter 6 of the Code of
18 Ordinances) that pertains to yard sale and garage sale signs. A public hearing is required before Board action, and
19 has been advertised for the February 9 meeting.
20

21 **Ordinance Amending Chapter 10 – Definitions and Rules of Interpretation – of the Unified Development Ordinance**
22 **Regarding Non-Profit Event Signs**

23 As you recall from previous Board discussion in recent months, the proposed changes are presented in lieu of
24 electronic community information signs that the Town had considered installing along NC 58 that were ultimately not
25 able to be permitted by NCDOT. The attached ordinance amendment includes new regulations regarding the
26 material, quality, and placement of temporary signs for non-profit events in the NC 58 right of way (and other Town
27 right of ways), and seeks to balance 1) the strong desire to support and promote these events with 2) community
28 aesthetics goals and 3) a desire to be consistent with commercial sign ordinances in the Town.
29

30 The Board discussed the proposed amendment regarding temporary non-profit event signs most recently at the
31 January 12 regular meeting, and the attached ordinance amendment is essentially identical to the one reviewed by
32 the Board on January 12. The attached ordinance amendment accomplishes the following key goals:
33

- 34 • the Town would continue to support these beneficial non-profit events,
35
36 • banners would no longer be permitted, which is consistent with the Town’s current ordinance prohibiting
37 banners from being used by commercial businesses in Emerald Isle, and which would eliminate the often
38 unsightly appearance of flapping banners,
39
40 • the non-profit event signs would be required to be professionally fabricated, improving the appearance of
41 such signs,
42
43 • the maximum size of the signs would remain at 32 sq. ft., however, only 3 (as opposed to 6 in the current
44 ordinance) could be that large,
45

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- 1 • an additional 5 signs that are essentially the size of typical campaign signs (up to 6 sq. ft.) would be allowed,
2 resulting in a net increase in the number of permitted signs from 6 to 8,
3
- 4 • the signs would be required to be removed within 3 days after the event, as opposed to 10 days, and
5
- 6 • new language has been added by the Planning Board to provide an opportunity for the adjacent property
7 owner to have the sign removed from the right of way if desired (to be consistent with the Town's campaign
8 sign ordinance provisions).

9
10 The attached memo from Josh Edmondson, Town Planner, includes a summary of the Planning Board's discussion
11 of this issue. As noted, the Planning Board voted 4 – 1 to recommend approval of the attached ordinance
12 amendment.

13
14 It is important to note that the attached ordinance amendment would not allow banners to simply be mounted firmly
15 on a rigid (i.e., plastic, metal, wood, vinyl) surface and be displayed. The Town's current sign ordinance does not
16 allow commercial businesses to utilize banners in this way. If the Board is interested in allowing this practice, I
17 recommend that the Board also amend the Town's ordinance for commercial businesses in the same manner.

18
19 The Board should also note that, while NCDOT frowns on the placement of such temporary signs in the NC 58 right
20 of way, I believe they will continue to be lenient if the signs are in place for a very limited duration and promote a
21 "good cause". Additionally, although there is great uncertainty about this recent ruling, I am hopeful that the
22 proposed amendments do not run afoul of a recent US Supreme Court ruling (Reed v. Town of Gilbert, AZ) because
23 they allow messages for a wide variety of special events (the Gilbert case dealt with the differential treatment of
24 church signs).

25
26 Ordinance Amending Chapter 6 – Building Regulations – of the Code of Ordinances Regarding Yard Sale, Garage
27 Sale Signs

28 As noted in Josh Edmondson's memo, the Planning Board discussion included comments regarding yard sale and
29 garage sale signs. These signs are not regulated under the Unified Development Ordinance, but rather are included
30 with the Town's overall regulations for yard sales and garage sales included in Chapter 6 of the Code of Ordinances.

31
32 In an effort to promote consistency among the Town's various sign ordinances, the attached ordinance amendment
33 to Chapter 6 simply adds:

- 34 • an identical provision to provide an opportunity for the adjacent property owner to have the yard sale or
35 garage sale sign removed from the right of way if desired, and
36
- 37 • a new requirement that signs for yard sales and garage sales may not be placed earlier than 3 days prior to
38 the sale (the current ordinance includes a requirement for the signs to be removed soon after the sale ends,
39 but no time frame prior to the sale).

40
41
42 The Board should note that yard sale and garage sale signs are not required to be professionally fabricated, and are
43 permitted within the right of way.

44

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1 Town Planner Edmondson noted that the Planning Board had reviewed the changes
2 suggested by the Board of Commissioners during their January meeting and had made
3 recommendation to the Board of Commissioners with changes noted above in the Town
4 Manager's memo regarding non-profit event signs. Mr. Edmondson said that with this
5 ordinance banners would no longer be allowed in Town and they felt that would be
6 consistent with the Town's ordinance regarding commercial signs. Mr. Edmondson
7 stated that the Planning Board suggested adding the opportunity for an adjacent
8 property owner to have the sign removed from the right-of-way if they did not wish to
9 have the sign in front of their property, as this would be consistent with how political
10 signs were treated. Mr. Edmondson stated that there were some minor changes made
11 to the Ordinance Amending Chapter 6 regarding yard sales, garage sales and the
12 Planning Board had also discussed and recommended that ordinance be kept as is
13 regarding the signage.

14
15 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Finch to open the Public Hearing. The Board***
16 ***voted unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.***

17
18 Sue Stone, Coast Guard Road, said that she considered this a wonderful, special beach
19 town and it sounded like we were trying to be something we were not. Ms. Stone said
20 she was involved in a number of non-profit organizations and felt it would have an
21 impact, a cost, as sometimes they came up with events last minute and she didn't know
22 the cost and she understood they could be reused but they could store a banner in their
23 basement, but couldn't store six signs. Ms. Stone spoke of groups like Red Cross
24 Blood Drive, Island Cat Allies, Fishing for a Cure, Diva Run, Scavenger Hunt, Beach
25 Bike Poker Run, Bike the Banks, and the Marathon and she questioned having the
26 groups having to have professional signs. She felt they could have nice banners and
27 have designated areas so non-profits wouldn't be hit with high costs. Ms. Stone felt
28 they were undoing the flavor of the Town.

29
30 Commissioner Normile had been asked by a property owner for clarification about the
31 statement included in the amendment "*provided that the adjacent property owner does*
32 *not object to the sign*" and how that would affect that property owner if they were to put
33 out an open house, political sign, yard sale sign, etc.; and whether that meant that if the
34 property owner's neighbor objected to the sign they put in front of their own home that
35 they would have to remove their sign.

36
37 Town Manager Rush said that the provision which was currently in our campaign sign
38 ordinance, with the intent in this ordinance being to be consistent with the various types
39 of signs, would mean the property owner directly adjacent to the right-of-way – so for
40 example, two neighbors side by side, one property owner puts a non-profit sign in front
41 of their home, the neighbor next door would have no right to remove it – if however, the
42 property owner put the sign in front of his neighbors home then that neighbor would
43 have the right to remove the sign from in front of their own property if they objected.

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1 Commissioner Normile understood the explanation but didn't feel the language read that
2 way. Mr. Rush said they could certainly tweak the language.

3
4 Commissioner Finch said that they could also tweak the definition of a professional sign,
5 to give a more clear definition.

6
7 Town Manager Rush said the intent of more professionally fabricated signs was
8 something made by a sign shop, neatly done, professionally made, without words spray
9 painted or drawn on with magic marker, but something that looked nice and neat, and
10 they could work on the characterization of that, but that was the intent.

11
12 Bob Horner, Green Glen Road, asked about the intent to discourage handwritten signs,
13 but accepting professionally made signs. Mr. Horner asked about the signs you can
14 purchase from Lowe's, for example a "For Sale" sign that was professionally made but
15 then in felt tip marker put in the telephone or address, and whether that would be a
16 violation. Mr. Rush noted that in any situation there would be judgement involved and in
17 his opinion they would not be upset if someone wrote a phone number in a designated
18 space for a sign, the intent was to get away from homemade signs that didn't look as
19 aesthetically pleasing as they would like in the community. Mr. Rush said that they
20 wanted to strike a balance between supporting these great events that they were
21 fortunate to have in Emerald Isle, but also to improve the aesthetics as well as being
22 consistent with what they allowed commercial businesses to do in town.

23
24 Mr. Horner said that he would ask the Board to consider erecting permanent blank signs
25 to hang letters on, possibly purchasing and putting in one or two strategic locations and
26 allowing non-profits to rent the letters from the Town for a nominal price.

27
28 Mr. Rush said that exact suggestion was what had gotten them to this point. Mr. Rush
29 stated that the reason the Board was considering this ordinance amendment was that
30 their initial plan was to have two or possibly more electronic community information
31 signs, or they even talked at one point about the kind of signs Mr. Horner suggested
32 with changing letters and the Board endorsed the plan to install the electronic
33 community information signs back in the summer. Mr. Rush said they later learned from
34 the NCDOT that they would not be permitted in the right-of-way so that was how we had
35 evolved over the last 4-5 months to these different ordinance amendments with regards
36 to non-profit event signs, but that was exactly the thought when they began this
37 process.

38
39 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Messer to close the Public Hearing. The***
40 ***Board voted unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.***

41
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43

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1 At the direction of the Board it was determined that the language of the amendments
2 would be reviewed to 1) clarify the section about the adjacent property owner
3 requirement, and 2) to better characterize professionally made signs. The changes
4 would be brought back to the Board at their March meeting.

5
6 Town Attorney Stanley added that professionally fabricated wouldn't have anything to
7 do with the contents so they could write and have all kinds of letters, any shape, size, or
8 variety, professionally fabricated meant just the way the sign was made. Mr. Rush said
9 they would work on the amendments and consult with Attorney Stanley on the language
10 before bringing back in March.

11
12 Commissioner Normile said that he didn't disagree with the spirit and intent of what had
13 been explained to him but thought if they could just flush it out a little bit so all the
14 citizens could grasp the concept.

15
16 Mr. Rush said all of the comments made were reasonable concerns and they had tried
17 to strike that balance between community aesthetics and support for the organizations
18 so the Board could really establish that balance however they thought was most
19 appropriate. He said that after going through the process and considering all of the
20 various issues this was where we wound up at this point. Mr. Rush said that the other
21 ordinance presented with regard to the yard sale, garage sale signs, contained just
22 minor changes to be consistent with everything discussed and he would bring that item
23 back to the Board at the March meeting as well.

24
25 **13. Senator Jean Preston Memorial Park**

- 26
27 **a. Resolution Authorizing Grant Application for Playground Construction**
28 (16-02-09/R2)
29 **b. Site Plan, Park Entrance**

30
31 Town Manager Frank Rush addressed the Board regarding this agenda item. The
32 following excerpt from him memo to the Board is provided for additional background:

33
34 The Board of Commissioners is scheduled to consider two items associated with the planned Senator Jean Preston Memorial
35 Park to be constructed this spring on Town-owned land adjacent to the Emerald Isle Public Boating Access Area. The Board will
36 first consider the attached Resolution Authorizing Grant Application for Playground Construction, and will then review the revised
37 site plan for the new park.

38
39 Resolution Authorizing Grant Application for Playground Construction

40 As you know, a volunteer committee (Judy Wilgus, Bernie Whalley, Phyllis Ford, Linda McCoy, Pat McElraft, and Jimmy
41 Farrington, with support from Parks and Recreation Director Alesia Sanderson and me) has been working hard for the past two
42 years to raise funds to honor the late Senator Preston's legacy with a new playground. The committee has raised approximately
43 \$50,000 to date, and continues its work toward a May 25, 2016 grand opening date for the new park.

44
45 The committee recently learned of a new grant opportunity through Trillium Health Resources, a local government agency that
46 manages mental health, substance use and intellectual / developmental disability services in a 24-county area in eastern North
47 Carolina. Trillium offers "Play Together Construction Grants for Accessible Playgrounds" in its service area, and the planned

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1 playground at the Senator Jean Preston Memorial Park represents a great opportunity to provide an accessible playground for
2 the children of Emerald Isle and surrounding areas. Accessible playgrounds include playground components designed to serve
3 children of all abilities, including those with special needs and/or served by wheelchairs. Senator Preston was committed to
4 many great causes during her service in the NC General Assembly, and particularly so to education, children, and individuals
5 with special needs. Because of the strong correlation between Senator Preston's interests, the committee's goals for the
6 Senator Jean Preston Memorial Park, and the mission of Trillium's "Play Together" grant program, we are very optimistic that the
7 Town's grant application will be selected for grant funding.
8

9 The attached resolution authorizes a total grant application of \$225,000, and these funds, if awarded, would be used to purchase
10 all-inclusive playground equipment specifically designed to serve children with special needs. I have attached a brochure with
11 several examples of the playground components that may ultimately be constructed at the Senator Jean Preston Memorial Park
12 for your review. If the Town is selected for grant funding, Town staff will return to the Board with a construction contract
13 recommendation at a future Board meeting this spring, and we will continue to work toward the planned May 25 grand opening
14 date. We expect to receive a decision on the Town's grant application within the next 30 days, and if so, we believe we can meet
15 the May 25 grand opening date.
16

17 The Town would provide a local match of \$75,000 for this grant. Of this \$75,000, \$50,000 is in the form of private donations
18 received over the past two years for the new park. These funds would be specifically earmarked for a new ~ 450 ft. long
19 elevated wooden walkway from the playground site to the existing soundfront pier and restroom facility, and would provide a safe
20 and convenient pedestrian link to these amenities. An additional \$25,000 of in-kind services has been committed by area
21 contractors, and these services include construction a roadway connection, new parking spaces, attractive landscaping, and
22 placement of sod on the site.
23

24 I recommend approval of the attached resolution. I am optimistic that the Town will be selected for grant funding, and am
25 hopeful that the Town can construct a first-class, all-inclusive playground facility at the Senator Jean Preston Memorial Park site.
26

27 Site Plan, Park Entrance

28 I have attached a copy of the site plan for the new park, and I am now seeking the Board's concurrence with the site plan as
29 presented. The site plan is predicated on the Town's ultimate award of the requested grant funding from Trillium, and will need
30 to be adjusted if the grant funds are not awarded.
31

32 The site plan includes a new asphalt driveway connection from the existing vehicle / trailer parking lot serving the Emerald Isle
33 Public Boating Access Facility to the existing asphalt driveway on the park site. A total of 10 new single-vehicle parking spaces
34 (constructed with decorative paver blocks) will be constructed perpendicular to the existing asphalt driveway to serve playground
35 patrons. (Boat trailers would not be permitted to park in this area.) The existing asphalt driveway connection to Canal Drive
36 would be eliminated, and would be replaced with a 10 ft. wide bicycle path connection to allow residents from that area to access
37 the playground area and the rest of the Emerald Isle Public Boating Access Area.
38

39 The new playground will be constructed on an approximately 50 ft. x 50 ft. area between Canal Drive and the existing vehicle /
40 trailer parking lot. A new paver block walkway will connect it with the asphalt driveway and parking area. A new ~ 450 ft. long
41 elevated wooden walkway will be constructed along the existing retaining wall on the north side of the vehicle / trailer parking lot,
42 will cross an existing storm water wetland, and will connect directly to the existing soundfront pier and walkway near the boat
43 basin. From there, the existing restroom facilities are easily and safely accessible.
44

45 As noted earlier, there are significant in-kind contributions from several area contractors. SunLand Builders is contributing time
46 and materials for the asphalt roadway connection. Yardworks Landscaping is contributing landscaping material and labor, and
47 also secured the donation of the paver blocks for the parking spaces. Task Contracting will be providing labor for the paver block
48 installation, and Sewell Quality Turf Grass is providing sod and labor. In addition, the Swansboro Rotary Club and National
49 Rotary Club are providing grant funds associated with these improvements. We are extremely fortunate to have a group of
50 community-minded businesses assisting on this project, and their contributions are greatly appreciated.
51

52 The Board should note that we continue to work through storm water permitting issues with the NC Department of Environmental
53 Quality. These issues have been challenging, and potentially could have resulted in an alternative layout for the playground

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1 parking area. I believe these issues will ultimately be resolved, and I believe the new park can be constructed as outlined on the
2 attached site plan.
3

4 I look forward to the Board's review of the site plan for the new Senator Jean Preston Memorial Playground, and look forward to
5 seeing the dedicated volunteers on the committee unveil a great new playground for the children of Emerald Isle and Senator
6 Preston's family.
7

8 Town Manager Frank Rush discussed with the Board two items associated with the
9 Senator Jean Preston Memorial Park for the Board to consider; the first being a
10 resolution authorizing grant application for playground construction. Mr. Rush
11 discussed the grant opportunity they recently became aware of through Trillium Health
12 Resources. Mr. Rush also provided a visual of the proposed site plan for the new park
13 which included access to 10 single-vehicle parking spaces via the existing vehicle /
14 trailer parking lot at the Emerald Isle Public Boating Access Area. Mr. Rush pointed out
15 that if awarded the grant they would use the grant funds for the playground, donations
16 for the new elevated wooden walkway, and there were also some very significant
17 donations from area businesses. Mr. Rush wanted to publicly thank and recognize
18 Yardworks, SunLand Builders, Task Contracting, and Sewell Quality Turf Grass for their
19 contributions to the project. Mr. Rush noted that the goal remained to complete the
20 playground facility and open it to the public by May 25 which was the late Senator
21 Preston's birthday.
22

23 Judy Wilgus, committee chairperson, spoke of the fundraising efforts by the committee
24 which consisted of Bernie Whalley, Representative Pat McElraft, Linda Mccoy, Phyllis
25 Ford, Kay Smith, Frank Rush, Alesia Sanderson, and Jimmy Farrington, to build a
26 beautiful tribute to a wonderful lady, Senator Jean Preston. Ms. Wilgus stated that to
27 date the committee had collected \$46,419.40 in contributions, and another \$25,000 had
28 been donated by Senator Preston's brother, Tommy Rouse. Ms. Wilgus also
29 recognized a young friend of hers, Jordan Hennessey, a legislative assistant to Senator
30 Bill Cook, who had been instrumental in organizing letters with names of several
31 representatives, and senators to be mailed for donations, in addition Mr. Hennessey
32 had researched and coordinated the conference call between Ms. Wilgus, Frank Rush,
33 Alesia Sanderson and the representatives of Trillium Health Resources. Ms. Wilgus
34 stated that the committee fully supported the Town of Emerald Isle in their quest for
35 grant funding for the playground in the amount of \$225,000. Ms. Wilgus said she was
36 very excited about the project and was looking forward to the dedication on May 25.
37

38 Mayor Barber thanked Ms. Wilgus for all her hard work.
39
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44

1 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Messer to approve the Resolution***
2 ***Authorizing Grant Application for Playground Construction. The Board voted***
3 ***unanimously 5-0 in favor. Motion carried.***
4

5 ***Motion was made by Commissioner Wright to concur with the proposed site plan***
6 ***for Senator Jean Preston Memorial Park. The Board voted unanimously 5-0 in***
7 ***favor. Motion carried.***
8

9 **Clerks Note:** A copy of Resolution 16- 02-09/R2 as referenced above is incorporated herein by reference and
10 hereby made a part of these minutes.
11

12 **14. Comments from Town Clerk, Town Attorney, and Town Manager**

13

14 There were no comments from the Town Clerk or Town Attorney.
15

16 Town Manager Rush updated the Board on a few items. Mr. Rush mentioned the
17 Budget Planning Workshop on February 19. Mr. Rush also pointed out the work that
18 would be done in the Board Room over the next two weeks. In addition, it was noted
19 that the contractor had installed the new beach vehicle ramp gates at Black Skimmer
20 Drive, Ocean Drive dog leg ramp, and the Point which should be a nice aesthetic
21 improvement.
22

23 The following is an excerpt from the Town Manager Comments memo to the Board
24 providing additional background information for all items of importance:
25

26 **Comprehensive Plan / Land Use Plan Steering Committee Meeting – Thurs, Feb 18 – 3 pm**

27 The committee's first meeting will be held on February 18 at 3 pm. The meeting will likely be held in the Town
28 Administration Building Conference Room, however, it may be moved back to the Town Board Meeting Room if
29 planned flooring work is complete by February 18.
30

31 **Annual Budget Planning Workshop – Fri, Feb 19 – 8:30 am**

32 This meeting will be held in the Town Administration Building Conference Room, and will likely last most of the day. I
33 have attached a copy of the DRAFT meeting agenda for your review. Please let me know if you'd like us to add any
34 other topics for discussion, or if you believe any items should be removed. I look forward to receiving the Board's
35 preliminary feedback on these items as we begin the FY 16-17 budget process.
36

37 **Controlled Deer Hunt Complete**

38 The Police Department has completed the 2016 controlled deer hunt, and removed a total of 35 deer between
39 January 6 and January 25. A total of 997 lbs. of deer meat was donated to the Hope Mission in Morehead City. I
40 have attached a summary report prepared by Chief Waters.
41

42 **Town Board Meeting Room Flooring, Painting Work**

43 The existing carpet in the Town Board Meeting Room will be removed, and the underlying concrete will be stained
44 and finished to provide a new, attractive floor surface. The existing walls in the northwest corner of the room will be
45 removed to make the main meeting room larger and allow natural light into the room, and all walls and trim in the

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1 entire room will be painted. This work will begin February 12 and may result in the room being closed until February
2 21.

3

4 **7405 Archers Creek Court**

5 We understand that a buyer has been identified for this property, and that a closing may occur by mid-February. In
6 light of this development, we have delayed the demolition to provide an opportunity for the new buyer to address the
7 concerns with this structure. If the sale does not occur and/or the new buyer does not take quick action, the Town
8 will proceed with the demolition.

9

10 **2016 Street Resurfacing Contract**

11 We are currently working on a list of recommended street segments for resurfacing this spring. We expect to solicit
12 bids later in February and present a contract recommendation to the Board at the March 8 Board meeting. Our goal
13 will be to have all planned street resurfacing work complete before May 1.

14

15 **Emerald Isle Marathon, Half-Marathon, & 5K – Saturday, April 9**

16 As of February 4, a total of 682 runners have registered for the 3 races. As of February 3, 2015, there were a total of
17 930 runners registered, so we are a little behind last year's pace. However, the 2016 race is two weeks later than
18 2015 due to the Easter holiday, and we are also facing competition from the Rock N Roll Marathon in Raleigh the
19 same weekend. We still hope to match or exceed last year's total of 1600 runners.

20

21 **Regional Access Food Vendor Program**

22 We have received applications from 5 Emerald Isle food establishments so far: Shark's Den, Dairy Queen, Sweet
23 Spot, Ben & Jerry's, and Circle Pizza. The application deadline is February 29.

24

25 **"Downtown" Lighting**

26 We expect the new "downtown" decorative lights to be installed in the next two weeks, weather permitting.

27

28 **New Wayfinding Signs**

29 I am still reviewing price quotes for the new "wayfinding" signs discussed last fall, and hope to place the sign order in
30 the coming weeks. My goal is to have the new signs installed by April.

31

32 **Water Tank Maintenance Work Expected to Be Done in March**

33 The Bogue Banks Water Corporation's water tank maintenance work has not progressed as quickly as we hoped,
34 and Police, Fire, and EMS continue to rely on a temporary emergency communications tower located along NC 58
35 across from Emerald Plantation Shopping Center. Bogue Banks Water Corporation hopes to have the water tank
36 maintenance work complete by St. Patrick's Festival weekend.

37

38 The temporary tower does not provide as reliable and clear emergency communications as desired, and is
39 sometimes problematic for the Town's Police and Fire Departments. We are anxious to return communications
40 antennae to the water tank, as the potential for more significant problems will increase during the spring and summer
41 season.

42

43 **Water Boggan Concerns**

44 Town staff have received multiple concerns about the structural integrity of the water slides at the Water Boggan on
45 Islander Drive, and County building inspectors recently visited the property. Numerous safety and code issues were
46 identified, and the structure has been posted as unsafe (see attached letter). Town Planner Josh Edmondson has
47 contacted the owner, and we will be happy to assist the owner in any way helpful to address these issues in a timely
48 manner.

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Planning Board Appointments

The terms of Planning Board members Mark Taylor, Jim Osika, and Tom Minnick all expire in March, and the Board will consider these appointments at the March 8 regular meeting.

New Flood Insurance Rate Maps

As noted previously, we expect the new flood maps (prepared by the State for FEMA) to be released to the public later this spring. Town Planner Josh Edmondson will make a presentation to the Board and the public at the earliest meeting after the maps are released to highlight the map changes that will impact Emerald Isle property owners. Overall, the new maps are very favorable for Emerald Isle property owners, however, we do expect some property owners to be negatively impacted, and want to offer as much information and assistance as possible to these property owners. There will be an opportunity for formal appeals after the maps are released to the public.

New Sidewalk Stubs Complete

The Town's contractor has completed the installation of new sidewalk stubs at the entrance to Emerald Plantation and at Mangrove Drive to provide a safer route for bicyclists and pedestrians to access the businesses in these locations. Town staff are also considering the extension of a short sidewalk stub from the corner of Coast Guard Road / NC 58 to the gas station, perhaps in conjunction with drainage improvements in that area.

New Police Vehicles

The Police Department's new Dodge 4 x 4 pickup truck and new Dodge Charger are expected to be placed in service in March or April after being outfitted with communications and electronics equipment.

New Beach Vehicle Ramp Gates

The new beach vehicle ramp gates have been fabricated, and should be installed by mid-February at the Ocean Drive dog-leg, Black Skimmer Drive, and The Point vehicle ramps. I also hope to eventually add similar gates at the Doe Drive and 16th Street vehicle ramps, and also at the Western Ocean Regional Access and Emerald Isle Woods Park in the future as funds permit. The new gates are similar to the gates installed last spring at the Eastern Ocean Regional Access.

Bicycle Path Pavement Markings

I have tasked Public Works staff with repainting all of the bicycle path pavement markings in the central area of Emerald Isle between now and the end of April, and work has already begun on some of the pavement markings. I expect this work to continue as weather permits, and should result in a fresh appearance for the bicycle path for the 2016 tourism season.

12th Street Infiltration Basin Expansion

Due to ongoing flooding issues at 12th Street / Ocean Drive, Public Works will be expanding the existing storm water infiltration basin near the beach access walkway in the coming weeks. The existing basin will be expanded to 3x or 4x the current size, and the material excavated will be used to construct a berm on the west property boundary of the beach access easement. We are hopeful that this improvement will reduce flooding duration in this area in the short term. We also hope to install a small relay pump and fixed PVC line in this area to address future flooding issues. This idea will be discussed with the Board at the February 19 budget workshop meeting.

Vendor Assignment Policy – St. Patrick's Festival

I have attached a copy of the Vendor Assignment Policy for the St. Patrick's Festival for your information. As you know, the annual festival is very popular, and we routinely run out of available booth locations for non-profit groups (and also commercial vendors) each year. Every year, several groups that we'd like to accommodate are denied a

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1 booth due to the first-come, first-served nature of the process and the limited space, and this sometimes causes hard
2 feelings.

3

4 **Deck Safety Program**

5 The vacation rental companies continue to implement the new deck inspection program, and there is a considerable
6 amount of deck repair and replacement work underway in Emerald Isle in preparation for the 2016 season. Due to
7 the complexity of dealing with multiple condominium owners associations and management companies, we have not
8 yet had an opportunity to establish a similar program for condominium complexes. I expect to work on this issue in
9 the coming weeks.

10

11 **Unified Development Ordinance**

12 As noted previously, I hope to begin work on a comprehensive review and simplification of the Town's Unified
13 Development Ordinance in the coming months. The current UDO can be confusing for Town staff, development
14 professionals, real estate professionals, and the public, and my goal is to create a much more user-friendly,
15 understandable document.

16

17 **EMS Quick Response Vehicle**

18 Emerald Isle EMS, Inc. has ordered a new 4 x 4 truck and camper shell to replace the existing 2005 Chevrolet
19 Suburban that serves as a quick response vehicle. Upon receipt of the new vehicle, we intend to purchase this
20 vehicle (which has approximately 50,000 miles) for use by Town Planner Josh Edmondson. The 2003 Chevrolet S-
21 10 pickup truck currently used by the Town Planner would then be surplus, or perhaps held as a backup vehicle.

22

23 **Police Department – Monthly Statistical Report**

24 The Police Department has revised the monthly statistics that are included in the attached Monthly Statistical Report
25 in an effort to improve the accuracy of reported data and maintain consistency with other statistical information
26 reported by the Police Department. I have asked Chief Waters to review 5 yr. crime trends with the Board at the
27 February 19 budget planning workshop meeting, and that data should match the data included in the monthly
28 statistical report in the future.

29

30 **Nies v. Emerald Isle**

31 The NC Supreme Court has not yet made a decision on whether or not hear this case. We expect a decision in
32 either late February or early March. The Nies' attorney was recently quoted in the local media as also considering an
33 appeal to the US Supreme Court.

34

35 As discussed previously, this case has significant consequences for all NC beach communities, as it essentially
36 involves the public's right to use the flat, dry-sand beach between the base of the dunes and the water. The Nies
37 have argued that the public trust beach area does not include the flat, dry-sand beach area, while the Town contends
38 that NCGS 77-20 includes this area in the delineation of the public trust beach area.

39

40 **Playground Damage – Blue Heron Park**

41 An insurance claim was approved for the playground damage at Blue Heron Park (~\$14,000), and we expect to
42 replace the damaged slide later in February.

43

44 **New Fall Music and Food Festival - on the Beach?**

45 Based on input from the Town's Economic Development Steering Committee in 2014 and ideas expressed during the
46 2015 campaign for Town Commissioner, we are considering the possible creation of a fall music and food festival on
47 the beach strand in the future.

48

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1 Preliminary ideas include renting a stage to be placed at the Western Ocean Regional Access near the top of the
2 dune, facing the ocean, with the crowd enjoying the music from the beach strand. The music festival would be held
3 in late September, when the air and water temperatures are still very warm, in an effort to lure a large crowd to
4 Emerald Isle for the entire weekend. The parking lot at the Western Ocean Regional Access would be used to host
5 various food vendors and food trucks, and public parking would be located on the NC 58 right of way. It is expected
6 that visitors would arrive via the beach strand and via the street, and visitors could pass freely between the beach
7 strand and the parking lot.
8

9 Beach music is an obvious theme for the event, along with other popular genres. Alcohol would be permitted, but
10 would be monitored by law enforcement. It will be necessary to determine the best mechanism to fund the musical
11 entertainment (charge a fee for vendors to set up and/or use a beer tent area to generate sufficient funds to pay for
12 the stage rental and music acts? contributions from sponsors? – please note that I do not envision tax revenue
13 funding this event). With the proper planning (and the luck of good weather!) this could become a second signature
14 event (along with the St. Patrick’s Festival) for Emerald Isle each fall.
15

16 I am planning to discuss this idea with the Emerald Isle Business Association in the coming weeks, and hope to
17 secure buy-in from that group, and from other Emerald Isle businesses to take a lead role on such an event.
18

19 **Promotional Video**

20 I continue to work with Playa Graphics, an Emerald Isle graphic arts firm (Brad Styron), to produce a 3 – 5 minute
21 promotional video about Emerald Isle that will highlight all of the great things about our community. The video will
22 showcase the attractiveness of Emerald Isle to potential future permanent residents (families and retirees), second
23 homeowners, and visitors. The video will initially be utilized on the Town’s website, Facebook, and Twitter
24 applications, and could potentially become a television commercial for Emerald Isle.
25

26 **The Emerald Isle “App”**

27 Rhonda Ferebee, Town Clerk, and I continue to work with Bar-Z, an app development firm, on this project. The end
28 product will be a smartphone “app” that can be used by our residents and visitors to learn about the Town, request
29 Town services, report problems, identify local businesses, and more. We hope to unveil the new app no later than
30 May.
31

32 **Emerald Isle Logo T-Shirts ON SALE Now**

33 T-shirts with the new Town logo (including Nice Matters!) are currently on sale at the Town Administration Building.
34 The 100% cotton beefy-Ts are available for \$15 each.
35

36 **15. Comments from Board of Commissioners and Mayor**

37
38 Commissioner Normile thanked Judy Wilgus for her work on the Senator Preston
39 committee.
40

41 Commissioner Messer thanked Jim Hackett for the Berger cookies from Maryland.
42

43 Commissioner Finch thanked everyone for their input and for attending.
44

45 Commissioner Wright agreed that it was a good show of what made this a great place.
46

47 Mayor Barber said it had been a good meeting and thanked everyone for coming.

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16. Adjourn

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Rhonda C. Ferebee, CMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk