

MINUTES
BOARD OF ALDERMEN
JANUARY 13, 2022

Mayor Mills called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Council Chambers, 321 Causeway Drive, Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina.

Attendance: Mayor Darryl Mills, Mayor Pro Tem Hank Miller, Alderman Ken Dull, and Alderman Zeke Partin; together with Town Attorney Brian E. Edes, Town Manager Timothy W. Owens and Town Clerk Sylvia J. Holleman.

Absent: Alderman Jeff DeGroote who was out of Town.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Invocation by Pastor John McIntyre, Wrightsville Beach Baptist Church.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: 1) MS. TAYLOR HAMMEKE: BANNING OF PLASTIC BAGS; 2) MS. LISA WEEKS: SUPPORT FOR PARTF GRANT AND LIGHTED TENNIS COURTS; 3) MR. JIM CHAFFINS: SUPPORT FOR PARTF GRANT AND LIGHTED PICKLE BALL COURTS; AND 4) MS. SUE BULLUCK: REQUEST FOR MEETING WITH BUSINESSES AND MARKETING ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE.

Ms. Taylor Hammeke said, "I am proposing banning plastic bags on Wrightsville Beach. We have the impact on the environment, on marine life and then on people. On the environment, plastic is non degradable. There are 17.6 billion pounds of plastic that are dumped into the ocean every year. It is estimated that if we continue at this rate, there will be more plastic in the ocean by 2050 than fish. Also, plastic emits greenhouse gasses which affect the ozone layer and our climate. As we know, plastic is also harmful to wildlife and marine life. Thirty-five percent of sea turtle deaths are due to consuming plastic bags because they look like jellyfish, which they consume in their diet. Plastic was found by National Geographic in 90% of birds' stomachs. So, when fish eat the micro-plastics that don't degrade in the ocean, we eat the fish and the plastic ends up in our stomachs. Something that I wanted to share is the great Pacific garbage patch. This is literally one million square miles in the Pacific Ocean. Now, why Wrightsville Beach? I think many of us have heard of the Wrightsville Beach Sea Turtle Patrol. A lot of sea turtles nest on our beaches. There were fourteen nests on our beach in 2021 and that was 1300 eggs that hatched. So, being an oceanfront community, we have the opportunity to reduce waste on land and in the ocean. I believe by banning plastic bags, we could eliminate that waste that could potentially harm all of the sea turtles that are coming onto our beaches and then going into the ocean; as well as other marine life, like dolphins and sharks, etc. I also believe that banning plastic bags here would be a catalyst for a mind shift and behavior shift change in our community. So, if plastic bags are banned, people might start using reusable bags, recycling more and therefore, in our own community, doing what we can to help the future of our oceans for our children and their children because, again, more plastic in the ocean by 2050 is frightening. In terms of execution, I know you said in the beginning there is no guarantee that action will be taken, but a lot of communities, hundreds of them around the world, have banned plastic bags or implemented a five-cent or ten-cent tax on plastic bags. (California had a statewide ban on plastic bags.) There are six businesses in Wrightsville Beach that use plastic bags, so I think it would be a quick win to eliminate that all together. While this problem of plastic pollution is huge in our world and for our future, I think this quote really resonates; 'I alone cannot change the world but I can cast a stone across the water to create tiny ripples.' Thank you for your consideration. I'm happy to create a proposal that would outline in more detail if this is something that the community would like to go into."

Ms. Lisa Weeks, 408 North Channel Drive, said, “I’d like to express my support for Item f on tonight’s agenda; to proceed with a PARTF Grant Application for five to six new pickleball courts; lighting for the existing four tennis courts and the new pickleball courts; and the multiuse path and landscaping. Tennis continues to be a popular sport with our residents and we have seen a significant growth in pickleball interest and with only four courts and natural lights half the year, there continues to be more and more pressure on court utilization. I’m committed to work with fellow supporters and the Wrightsville Beach Foundation to help raise private funds towards the \$400,000 match that the Town would be responsible for with the PARTF Grant. Our goal would be to raise \$200,000 through private donations and fundraisers like Casino Night – I’m here as well to promote that on March 5th at Shell Island. I hope you all can join us for that. We’d appreciate the support. It’s been a long time coming; when I was on the Board we were discussing lights on the tennis courts. So, now’s the time to do something about it.”

Mr. Jim Chaffins, 10 West Salisbury Street, said, “I am the Manager of the Wrightsville Beach Pickleball Group. I’m going to provide you with a quick update on the status of pickleball at the Wrightsville Beach Park. Last August, you approved the conversion of one of the Park’s tennis courts into four dedicated pickleball courts. For this, the Wrightsville Beach Pickleball Group is very thankful. As agreed upon, this conversion was funded by the Group. Additionally, we raised about a thousand dollars for auxiliary equipment to help with the pickleball playing on the new courts. Pickleball Open Play continues three times a week. In the last six months, participation has increased to approximately thirty players per session. On ten days during this time, we had over forty people participating in Open Play. And on one day, which was New Year’s Day, we had fifty people playing using the Open Play format. There has also been a big increase in the number of visitors and local players using the pickleball courts. As I said, we’ve sponsored Open Play on holidays. This year we did Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day. And we averaged about thirty-five players per day. Additionally, the Wrightsville Beach Pickleball Group has occasionally offered well-attended Sunday afternoon Open Play pickleball sessions. With the colder weather coming, you’d think the numbers would diminish. However, we had thirty-five people on Tuesday and today, we almost had forty people playing. On any given day, one third of the players are Wrightsville Beach residents or property owners. The Wrightsville Beach Pickleball Group really supports the construction of additional lighted dedicated pickleball courts. And this will support the ever-popular growth of the sport. Lighted courts would provide playing opportunities for our younger players that have to work or go to school. They can play at night. The Wrightsville Beach Pickleball Group supports the initiative of the Wrightsville Beach Foundation. This is with the understanding that our Group is a social organization and we’re somewhat limited in our ability to raise funds. The Wrightsville Beach Pickleball Group respectfully requests that the Board approve the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grant (PARTF). I would also like to thank Katie Ryan for what she’s done for pickleball.”

Ms. Sue Bulluck said, “I’ve had calls for the Wrightsville Beach Chamber from businesses asking that we have some kind of sit down with Tim and whoever is interfacing with D.O.T. about plans for the summer and the bridge issues. The second part of this is that the Marketing Advisory Committee has been meeting monthly. We had a good meeting yesterday. We will be coming to you asking for your support for several grants. One for the research that I mentioned last month. We had an explanation of the outreach that has occurred, I think partially because of our interest and your asking the TDA for something different. The Beach and Wilmington Marketing Committee chairs met and helped in the selection of a new marketing company. That was a good process. It could have been helpful had Robert been briefed in terms of some of the people who we’ve had

before. A lack of communication in that process took its toll and they ended up interviewing two of the agencies that we have had in the past and asked that they not return. So, had that information been available earlier, they might have saved some of that time. Public relations is based on stories. Wrightsville Beach has a good story to tell, whether it's for tourism or the residents. But our public relations has not been served well by the current process. The public relations stories that are going out are too broad; they focus on the area or they focus on Wilmington. As a result, our story in a positive way doesn't really get out. So, one of the suggestions we're going to be making is that either we as a town look at hiring a PR or someone who can help tell our story, or that we insist that the TDA (promotional budget) hire someone who is focused on the beaches and what their story is. We will pay a price if we do not." Alderman Partin said when she was on the Marketing Committee, there were opportunities for blasts to go out when the weather was good, like it was over Christmas. She asked if we still did that. Ms. Bulluck replied, "In the last year, because of COVID, we have had virtually no real overt advertising. One of the things that caused us to have a different focus and to understand that our profile and our PR is different than others is that, because of the pent-up demand of COVID, our hotels and our rental cottages have had one of the better years in the last ten years with no advertising and no PR. That tells us that we're doing something wrong with what we have been doing. So, we are truly refocusing and going to focus more on the beach. And, yes, we need more of that because we have to have a season that goes year round. We can't continue to push more people on the island only in the summertime. Chairman Robert Huckabee has been interfacing with Kim and Shawn and meeting with the others. We have been meeting as a collective committee monthly and this year, they asked for suggestions and we will have a number of them." Mayor Pro Tem Miller said, "Since Ms. Bulluck mentioned it, there are monthly meetings scheduled by the D.O.T. about this bridge. The first one is in January and Tim and I will be attending. The contract was let by D.O.T. and while it is in our town, we don't have a lot to do with their schedule. They're contractually bound to start and they're contractually bound to finish. They're hoping to accelerate that schedule but it will still be August instead of November. It's going to be a mess however it's done. I can assure you that Tim and I, as representatives of the beach, are on them every day. I would love for you to be at the meeting because I know you have a lot to add to it." Ms. Bulluck said she would be happy to attend. .

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVED WITH A 4-0 VOTE BY MOTION OF ALDERMAN PARTIN AND SECOND BY ALDERMAN DULL.

- a. Approved Minutes of December 8, 2021.
- b. Approved special event permits as follows:
 - 1) Sage/Wood Sunrise Wedding (*60 people*)
Thursday, July 14, 2022
Location: Beach Access 4 (L-Shaped Lot)
- c. Acknowledged previously approved special events for February.
- d. Approved Commemorative Bench Sponsorship donation of \$1,200 from the Wrightsville Beach Foundation for placement of a bench adjacent to the playground at the Harbor Way Gardens as a memorial for Lynn Leford.
- e. Approved Resolution No. (2022) 2257 expressing appreciation to Jimmy and Keaton Gilleece (Jimmy's at Wrightsville Beach) for their outstanding community service with regard to collecting bicycles for those in need.

- f. Adopted Resolution No. (2022) 2259 approving the 2022 Farmers’ Market Rules and Regulations.
- g. Approved revised 2022 Board of Adjustment Meeting Schedule to cancel the January 27th meeting.
- a. Set a public hearing for Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 5:30 p.m., or as soon thereafter as possible, to consider a Text Amendment to Section 155.9.1.5 Off-Street Parking Requirements and Section Exhibit A-3, Definition of Mixed-Use Commercial Residential.

PRESENTATION OF RESOLUTION TO JIMMY AND KEATON GILLEECE IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR SUCCESSFUL CHARITABLE HOLIDAY BIKE DRIVE.

Mayor Mills presented Resolution No. (2022) 2257 expressing appreciation to Jimmy and Keaton Gilleece for their outstanding community service. Mr. and Mrs. Gilleece accepted the Resolution and thanked the Board for the special recognition.

TWO REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE PLANNING BOARD WITH NEW TERMS TO EXPIRE JANUARY 2024.

Using ballots, the Board made the following reappointments to the Planning Board with terms to expire January 2024. (There was a 2-2 tie vote to fill the seat previously held by Jim Smith who completed three consecutive terms and was ineligible for reappointment. Mayor Mills noted that the Board would make that appointment on February 10th when the full Board would be present.)

PLANNING BOARD APPOINTMENTS	
APPLICANT	VOTE
Neal Braggi – Reappointed	Mayor Mills, MPT Miller, Alderman Dull, Alderman Partin
Karen King – Reappointed	Mayor Mills, MPT Miller, Alderman Dull, Alderman Partin
Susan Collins	Mayor Mills, Alderman Partin
David Culp	Mayor Pro Tem Miller, Alderman Dull

TWO REAPPOINTMENTS TO THE PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE WITH TERMS TO EXPIRE JANUARY 2024.

Using ballots, the Board made the following reappointments to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee with full terms to expire January 2024.

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS	
APPLICANT	VOTE
Jeff Turpin – Reappointed	Mayor Mills, MPT Miller, Alderman Dull, Alderman Partin
Sami Winter – Reappointed	Mayor Mills, MPT Miller, Alderman Dull, Alderman Partin

ONE REAPPOINTMENT TO THE HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION WITH THE NEW TERM TO EXPIRE JANUARY 2024.

Using ballots, the Board made the following reappointment to the Historic Landmark Commission with term to expire January 2024.

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS	
APPLICANT	VOTE
Nancy Faye Craig – Reappointed	Mayor Mills, MPT Miller, Alderman Dull, Alderman Partin
Bill Blair – Write-In	Mayor Pro Tem Miller

REAPPOINTMENT OF FORMER MAYOR BILL BLAIR TO THE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT FOR A THREE-YEAR TERM TO EXPIRE JANUARY 2025.

Mayor Pro Tem Miller made the motion to reappoint Bill Blair to the Board of Adjustment for another term to expire January 2025. The motion was seconded by Alderman Partin and approved with a 4-0 vote.

ASSIGNED BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEMBERS TO VARIOUS BOARDS AND COMMITTEES FOR A TWO-YEAR TERM TO END JANUARY 2024:

BOARD OF ALDERMEN PROPOSED ASSIGNMENTS	
Tourism Development Authority	Alderman Dull
Ports, Waterway and Beach Commission	Mayor Mills
Metropolitan Planning Organization	Mayor Pro Tem Miller
Holiday Flotilla Committee	Alderman Partin
WB Marketing Advisory Committee	Alderman DeGroote
Cape Fear Council of Governments	Alderman Partin

Alderman Partin made the motion to accept the Board Assignments. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Miller and approved with a 4-0 vote.

PARTF GRANT FOR PICKLEBALL COURTS AND OTHER IMPROVEMENTS TO THE WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH PARK.

Program Supervisor Katie Ryan gave the following overview: “In August, the Board directed staff to do a survey of the area between the museum and the existing tennis courts to see if we could put some pickleball courts in and to see if we would be eligible for a PARTF Grant this year. We had the survey done and we would be able to put in five pickleball courts. We wouldn’t be able to put six because there was a tree that we didn’t want to mess with. Then, a ten-foot multiuse path taking the existing sidewalk and extending it, making it ten feet wide which would allow connectivity to the Loop on one side and then to the pickleball and tennis court facility; and provide access for Public Works to get into that area. It would extend beyond the tennis courts and all the way to the restrooms – items that would be eligible for a PARTF Grant

that could be included in an application. That takes into consideration the tennis courts eventually when they're resurfaced and adding the pickleball courts which the Pickleball Group funded. Some factors with this that would make it a really competitive application: the fact that it would be a new facility in the Park. You accumulate points with some of these components. So, it would be the fact that it's a new facility in the Park; the fact that the pickleball courts and the tennis court lighting were both in the top ten responses for new facilities and our needs assessment survey that supported the 2030 Parks and Recreation Master Plan; the fact that the sidewalk could be extended to ten feet and it provides connectivity; the lighting which allows for additional hours of public use as well as recreational programming; and the fact that we have such great community support. We include all of that in our justification, the community support including the fact that the Pickleball Group has raised \$8,000 to fund the pickleball courts on the existing courts that we would be resurfacing, and then the Wrightsville Beach Foundation actually did the lines for the pickleball courts on the tennis courts when we brought the sport out here. We introduced it in 2014 and the Foundation funded the lines. In 2015, we started our lessons and the Open Play Program started in 2017. The page that we would be submitting with the grant application includes the costs that we were able to get from the various vendors and contractors. When we were going to the webinar with the grant application, it said take all those costs and add another 25%. That's not usual with the application; it's just because of the way conditions are right now with supplies and costs and everything. So, we added another 25% on there and then the application asked for another 5% contingency. Then the contractor management, construction management and the survey that we just completed would be eligible for reimbursement as well. The total is close to \$800,000. The grant is a 50-50 match so the Town's portion would be plus \$400,000. In order to meet the deadline on the application, there are a lot of things that have to be done and also to accumulate more points. We will have a public meeting specific to the application on January 26th (if the Board approves this) and that will score additional points. Then I'll schedule meetings with the Harbor Island Garden Club and Wrightsville Beach Foundation and would request letters of support. That would also add points to the application. Then, February 7th would be our Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee meeting; they already support the project, they just haven't seen the costs yet. Then in March, the first round of the application is due for technical support. And the final application is due May 2nd. So, the goal would be to turn it in by the end of April. Then, if the Town is awarded the grant, the Parks Authority reviews it late summer and then the contract would be signed in October or November."

Alderman Dull asked if the \$800,000 included the 25%. Ms. Ryan replied, "Yes." Alderman Dull said, "I thought we were going to give the tennis players back their fourth court once we built the other pickleball courts but this shows three tennis courts and eight or nine pickleball courts." My questions is, once the new pickleball courts are built, that was our plan wasn't it, then you were going to revert the other one back to a tennis court." Ms. Ryan Replied, "That's a Board decision." Ms. Weeks said, "That was the motion at the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee meeting with the caveat that we would agree to that fourth court being restriped until they got their five, then that fourth court would revert back."

Mayor Pro Tem Miller said, "That's how I remembered it." Mr. Chaffins said, "I would say that just pure numbers, right now, we're playing on six courts and it's crowded. We would like to retain, quite frankly, those other four courts because just the pure numbers of people playing pickleball here. You've got fifty players showing up on a given day. Pickleball is growing. It's the fastest growing – we're getting people from all over town and they like to come to the beach. And we've got lots of residents here, too. So, I know what was said but we would definitely like to be able to keep those four courts based upon pure numbers of people using the facilities here at Wrightsville Beach." Mayor Pro Tem Miller said, "I hear what you're saying but, I think if we went back to our minutes, I think that we agreed that once we built these courts, that we were going to go back to what we had. I'm just afraid, at the end of the day, if that's what we all said we were going to do, that's what we all said we were going to do." Mr. Owens asked if we could make that a dual court like we have now?" Ms. Ryan replied, "Well, when we resurface, we were going to add the pickleball court lines on these other two tennis courts. But that's for temporary courts." Alderman Dull said, "I always thought that was just going to be temporary." Mayor Mills said, "I think we all had the same recollection. The minutes will say but I think we all had the same recollection. The tennis players should be able to use that court once these new pickleball courts are built." Mr. Chaffins said, "If that was converted, those four courts would be torn up and back to a tennis court, could we still be able to restripe for pickleball?" Mayor Pro Tem Miller said, "I don't know that we want to get into all that. We had an agreement where we sent them back to do something. So, where we are today is, if that was our agreement, I want to go back to what we agreed to do." Alderman Dull said, "I think tennis is just as robust as pickleball. If you put the fourth tennis court back, you've still got four of those." Mayor Pro Tem Miller said, "What I don't want to do as a Board is get up here and manage tennis and pickleball. We're getting ready to pay for lights; we're getting ready to put pickleball courts; and we're getting ready to put tennis. The pickleball courts are going to be 24-7 when you get these courts and tennis will be, too, with the lights." Mayor Mills said, "We're going to do what the minutes say we were going to do." Ms. Weeks said, "The lights are going to open up a lot of chances for us to start having a league at Wrightsville Beach." Mayor Mills said, "And we recognize that. We're going to do what we said we were going to do." Alderman Dull then made the motion to approve Katie to go out and get the grant done and try to get the money. The motion was seconded by Alderman Partin and approved with a 4-0 vote. Mr. Owens said, "One of the things she talked about, too, would you be open to us bringing back a budget adjustment just showing that \$400,000 in a CIP Account for support for the project?" Mayor Mills said, "We're trying to honor our commitment." Mr. Owens said, "We'll do that in February."

DIRECTION TO STAFF ON USING ARPA FUNDING.

Mr. Owens said, "We got roughly \$815,000 for ARPA money, which is federal pass-down money. There are limited uses for ARPA money. We had hired McKim and Creed to look at our system. In order to gather all the water from Cape Fear Public Utility Authority, we need to make improvements and we probably need to make them sooner than later because our system is sort of degraded with the chlorides and what have you. What I'd like for the Board to consider is allowing us to go out for an RFQ to select an engineer to basically give us a proposal to plan these facilities and also agree that the ARPA money is going to be allotted to support the improvements towards the water system. The estimated cost of \$1,995,000 is a couple of years old.

It did not include anything under the Intracoastal Waterway as far as duplicate water or sewer line. Two things I'm asking for: 1) allow me to go out for an RFQ to basically design these facilities and give us a proposal and I'll bring that back to you; and 2) agree that the ARPA money be allotted to the water improvements." Following a brief discussion regarding the fact that this was a good way to spend the ARPA money, Mayor Mills made the motion to allow the Town Manager to go out for an RFQ and also to negotiate with the contractor and bring that contract with the winning bidder back to the Board. The motion was seconded by Alderman Partin and approved with a 4-0 vote.

DIRECTION ON APPROVING THE USE OF UP TO 150 MILLION GALLONS OF WATER FROM CFPUA AND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTION NO. (2022) 2258 AND BUDGET ORDINANCE NO. (2022) 551-B.

Mr. Owens gave the following overview: "We were receiving forty-five million gallons from Cape Fear Public Utility Authority for three years at sixty-five cents per thousand. That's the only caveat here; it's a little bit different because of the chlorides that we basically take in half of the water that we need to service customers in a year – we usually use three hundred million gallons. They have sort of come to us and said that it's going to be at a bulk rate. So, that's why I'm bringing it to the Board. That bulk rate for half of the water supply for the Town for 150 million gallons is \$522,000. If we decide to go that route, what I'm proposing to do is use existing funds that we were going to use for infrastructure to offset that for half the year until July 1. In our budget deliberations, then we can decide if we need to go up on rates to basically offset the cost of providing water. Again, it would be \$522,000 but obviously we're just looking at the rest of this year until July 1." Mayor Mills asked what consideration they were giving us for our wells. Mr. Owens replied, "The response I got back was – we gave you that rate but we can't continue to do that. Basically, that should be a Chemours' problem as opposed to a Cape Fear Public Utility Authority problem." Mayor Mills said, "The flaw with that logic is – it continues on. They haven't cleaned it up." Mr. Owens said, "And it was a pass-through – it was Gen-X, then it was them pumping stuff into the aquifer that really caused the harm." Alderman Dull said, "Which was CFPUA that pumped the water into the ground." Mr. Owens said, "That's right. I would be willing, if you want me to, to go back and write a letter to their chairman and have the Mayor sign it and ask for the same deal for the 45 million gallons at sixty-five cents per thousand and then know that the other is probably going to be at a bulk rate. The other is sort of on us with regard to the wells." Mayor Mills said, "The water we're purchasing to replace the wells that they have contaminated should continue to have the discounted price." Mr. Owens said, "That was Well #11." Alderman Dull said, "To me, the logic is, whatever it costs us to produce that water that we used to have from Well #11 – there is cost – whatever that was – that's what we should pay for that amount."

Public Works Director Bill Squires said, "Every time we've met with them, we brought that up that we wish to get that rate again." Mr. Owens said, "We can make it more formal, obviously, coming from the Mayor." Mayor Mills said, "This will now come from the Board." Alderman Dull said, "Or they could find us a well site and go put the well in and then we'll take it over." Mr. Owens said, "I think what my charge is to do is to write a letter basically saying – please provide us with 105 million gallons worth of water at the bulk rate and the other 45 million at the same rate we were paying."

Mayor Mills said, “And explain that the Board has discussed it and this is the Board’s firm position.” Mr. Owens said, “At a minimum what I would want to bring out of that is that we get 105 million gallons at the going rate immediately because we’re going to need that water immediately.” Alderman Partin said, “I did have a conversation with Tim yesterday about the water and all of that so I could get a feel for it, and I did bring up desalination. He said it was way too expensive. But I just wanted the record to show that y’all looked at it.” Mayor Pro Tem Miller said that was the Water Committee.” Mr. Owens said, “We looked at all options – ASRs, desalinization, purchasing, more wells but there are no sites available.” Mayor Pro Tem Miller said, “The problem is, even with more wells, the seepage is still coming.” Mr. Squires said, “More wells is just putting more straws into the same water.”

Mr. Owens said, “We would have to do a budget amendment anyway – that’s (2022) 551-B.” Alderman Dull said, “If we’re trying to go along this line of thinking that they’re providing a wholesale rate...” Mr. Owens said, “Let’s do this; let me bring that part back and then we’ll know what the real number is, whether it’s sixty-five cents per thousand gallons or it’s \$3.48. I’ll just bring it back in February. By then we’ll know whether their answer is yes or no.” Alderman Dull said, “I would love for you and their director to handle it at y’all’s level, but if it needs to go to the Board level, I don’t want it coming back “No” and that be the end of it. I’d like to reserve the right for us to be involved if the answer is “No.” Mr. Owens said, “I think at the director level has been decided – it is the bulk rate. And, we pleaded our case that it should still be the sixty-five cent rate, so, I believe it will probably have to be maybe a phone call from you or the Mayor to their chairman and explain why we feel this way.” Mayor Mills said, “So, you go work on it and come back with whatever you’ve got. We’ll make some phone calls.”

DIRECTION ON AN RFP TO BID WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH SANITATION SERVICES.

Mr. Owens gave the following overview: “It boils down to the fact that we need some options. As you probably know, we’ve missed a couple of days here and there and we’re doing the best we can with one CDL driver when we need four. We’ve got a supervisor that’s basically running trash, too. It’s hard to keep employees now days in any business. What we’re asking to do, if it’s okay with the Board, I’m going to send out an RFP. There’s probably three or four vendors in town that could potentially bid on it and we’ll just see how much the service is. What I’m bidding out is everything we do and even more. So, it’s going to include a recycling component; it’s going to include one-a-day, two-a-day, two-a-day in the summer, and trash pickup on the street as far as loose trash – everything we do. I’d like to move forward with that. I’d also like to have the flexibility – not to do that now – but potentially go to once-a-week pickup for residences. We’re not proposing to do that now but as the weather gets warmer and the demand gets a little more, we may have to move in that direction; so, I’m just sort of notifying the Board, if I have to pull that plug, we may need to do it. I’m not asking for permission or approval but that’s an option that we might have to go to if we need to.”

Alderman Partin said it was a real mess at Christmas. Mayor Mills agreed and said it was due a lack of staffing.” Mr. Owens said, “I would also like to recognize our staff. We had Water and Sewer guys driving trash trucks and guys that don’t normally do that stuff on the back of trucks. We put something out today that basically

says we're still following the same service but at some point, your trash may not be picked up on this day; it might be the next day. There may be some delays due to staffing." Mayor Pro Tem Miller said, "We've got to pick up the trash however we pick up trash and we've got to pick it up the best we can and as many times as we can. And in order for us to give direction, we've got to have all the information and you've got to do what you can do to get the information. So, I don't want anybody to misconstrue anything – that we are going to one-day-a-week. If you haven't got people to pick it up, it may be one day a month – it doesn't matter; but we've got to have numbers from both internal and external to figure out what it would cost us to go to five days a week or one day a week." Mr. Owens said that was what they were trying to do. Mr. Squires noted that the upcoming Monday is a holiday for them and they are all coming in to work." Alderman Dull said, "I think we recognize that the people that are here are working their butts off."

Mr. Greg Campbell, 15 West Oxford Street, said, "I read on the agenda where the CDLs are down from four to one. Yet, I didn't see any explanation. I think the crux, as I see it, is the number of CDLs that are there. I think we all know but I'll ask a question. Is the lack of staff or shortage of staff due to compensation or market adjustments that need to be made, or what?" Mayor Mills replied, "It's a combination of things and it includes everything that you mentioned." Mr. Owens said, "It's a seven-day-a-week job for those guys and they're working mostly every other weekend and most holidays. It's a tough job so that's one part of it." Mr. Campbell said, "No question it's a tough job and I think they do a great job. When I see that it's going to be "potentially outsourced" with an RFP – I think when you outsource something like that, you lose a lot of control. And if it ever went to one-day-a week, I would only caution that there should be some work done in advance as to where are the problems. And the guys on the truck know where the problems are. There was a big rental house that has one trashcan, so if you have a five-bedroom rental house, which we have on our street on the ocean, and you have three families in there – plus the price that they're paying to rent it – one trashcan will not handle that. When you call the rental service, they want nothing to do with it. What happens is – it's on the ocean and you let it overflow, the guys have to work three times as hard to get it into the truck and then they have to work with the blue cans because it's all over the sand on the entranceway." Mayor Mills said, "That's part of our discussion." Mr. Campbell said, "I have a pretty good indication on the CDLs and where they went and why they went and the compensation differential. I respect the work that you do and I just want to make sure that that issue – because the one thing we don't want to do, talking about the advertising, we don't want to take the shine off of what we have here." Mayor Pro Tem Miller said, "I will tell you that we are keenly aware of what you're talking about. The only way to figure out proper remuneration, as far as I'm concerned for our staff, is to find out what it would cost to privatize it and once we get that information, I think we can fairly look at compensation. But I will tell you and as Buck will tell you, just trying to hire CDLs – they go where the money is and it's hard to keep them. It is about compensation but it's other things, too." Mayor Mills confirmed with Mr. Owens that he had the guidance that he needed.

ALDERMAN DULL: OTHER ITEMS AND REPORTS. (Alderman Dull left the meeting at 6:30 p.m. to catch a flight.

- No TDA report at this time. They will meet in two weeks.

ALDERMAN PARTIN: OTHER ITEMS AND REPORTS.

- Alderman Partin requested that the Flotilla Committee come to the next meeting to report on the Flotilla because when you give them money to help put on this event, she thought we should get a report.

MAYPR PRO TEM MILLER: OTHER ITEMS AND REPORTS.

- As Ms. Bulluck brought up earlier, Time and I are meeting with the MPO next week. Mr. Owens said he would send out any kind of schedule or synopsis that we get to everybody.
- Mayor Pro Tem Miller said, “For the record, we are painfully aware of the current situation on the beach. Some of the dunes are getting undermined and the citizens are concerned. But I can assure you that all of us, individually and collectively, are talking to anybody and everyone from Washington D.C. to Wilmington.” Mayor Mills said, “There are a number of people associated with Wrightsville Beach, including Ms. Bulluck, the Town Manager and the Mayor, that are constantly in communication with Congressman Rouzer, the Senatorial Offices, the County and the State Representatives, desperately trying to advocate for sand at Wrightsville Beach.”

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 6:36 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sylvia J. Holleman
Town Clerk