

**City of New Bern  
Board of Aldermen Meeting  
October 09, 2018 – 6:00 P.M.  
City Hall Courtroom  
300 Pollock Street**

- 1. Meeting opened by Mayor Dana E. Outlaw. Prayer by Kenny Monroe, Chaplain for the New Bern Fire Department. Pledge of Allegiance.**
- 2. Roll Call.**

Present: Mayor Dana Outlaw, Alderman Sabrina Bengel, Alderwoman Jameesha Harris, Alderman Robert Aster, Alderman Barbara Best, Alderman Johnny Ray Kinsey and Alderman Jeffrey Odham. Absent: None. A quorum was present.

Also Present: Mark Stephens, City Manager; Michael Scott Davis, City Attorney; and Colleen Roberts, Acting City Clerk.

**Amend Agenda**

Mayor Outlaw expressed a desire to amend the agenda to allow some experts to share useful information about the recent storm. Alderman Bengel made a motion to amend the agenda to allow the individuals to speak, seconded by Alderman Aster. The motion carried unanimously 7-0.

Mayor Outlaw called forward Michael Raab from Freeport, New York. Mr. Raab described his personal experience with Hurricane Sandy and his credentials. He worked for the Nassau County Office of Housing and Community Development and was assigned the task of storm recovery liaison immediately following the hurricane. In that role, he serviced and communicated with over 22,000 affected homes on Long Island. He described some of the top issues related to storms:

- Mental Health: Faith-based support is important. Victims were encouraged to reach out to clergy and mental health providers. Federal funding will become available for mental health assistance and counseling.
- Inventory everything you lose by taking photos of the items. Most grant programs and insurance companies will want proof of what is lost.
- If displaced and paying rent to live elsewhere, obtain receipts for rent paid.
- Be attentive to grant deadlines and application requirements.
- Verify contractors are currently licensed in the specific jurisdiction in which you live. Also make sure they have insurance, including workers' compensation, and verify insurance through the carrier. Do not fully pay for a job up front, but establish a payment schedule based on work completed.
- Rebuild better and smarter. Plan for future needs. Be mindful of FEMA requirements and flood insurance requirements.
- Mold must be remediated, not just covered up.
- Explain to the mortgage company your situation, and payments may be deferred for a short period.

- Volunteers will work for free, but be cautious about volunteers who seek donations. Only give out of the goodness of your heart, not if you are requested to donate.
- Municipalities are reimbursed by FEMA for hauling off debris. Be careful of companies or individuals who offer to carry away debris for free, as they may dump illegally or inappropriately use the debris picked up. If you do utilize them, take a photograph of their license plate.
- Small Business Loans (“SBA”) loans are considered duplication of benefit, which means the loan amount will be deducted from any grant funds for which you may be eligible; thus, reducing the grant amount. However, SBA loans for personal property (i.e. home contents, etc.) is not duplication of benefit if on the SBA application the applicant specifies the loan is for personal contents.
- Photographs of documentation: Take photographs of damaged documents or pictures. Services are available to replicate those documents.

Mr. Raab concluded by offering to return to New Bern and share a PowerPoint presentation on additional information to assist citizens.

Alderman Aster introduced Aaron Marshall, the Incident Commander for Team Rubicon, which is a veteran-led emergency response team. Mr. Marshall announced Rubicon has assisted 65 families in New Bern and approximately 155 families throughout Craven County. The specific tasks being performed are chainsaw work, damage assessments, continuity of services, muck out, and use of heavy equipment. Volunteers who would like to assist can report at 8 a.m. Rubicon is set up next to the main Fire station, and volunteers have been staying at the Fire Department. Alderman Aster invited churches and anyone else to prepare hot meals for the Team Rubicon volunteers.

Alderman Best introduced David Laws with Red Cross. Mr. Laws is assisting at the shelter located at West New Bern Recreation Center, and he announced there were over 610 people in shelters in North and South Carolina just two nights ago. A quarter of those individuals are in New Bern and Carteret County. West New Bern is currently sheltering around 100 people. Shelter residents are nervous about how long they may be able to stay and are seeking any help they can get. FEMA, HUD and Red Cross caseworkers are eagerly working to assist them. Mr. Laws encouraged the City and social workers to help the individuals on a one-on-one basis. The Baptist group is closing down its kitchen, so the Red Cross will be seeking food for the residents from caterers and local restaurants. Entertainment is being sought for the residents as well, especially the children. Alderwoman Harris thanked the Red Cross for their work and announced she has spoken with Curt Stewart of the Omega Center, who visited the shelter and learned of the needs described by Mr. Laws. Mr. Stewart and others are working to visit the shelter once a week with entertainment and a meal.

Alderman Best asked Mr. Laws to describe the program started by Red Cross last week. In response, he noted residents whose homes were destroyed or suffered major structural damage will receive \$600 per family for assistance. There will be two additional phases for distributing funds, which Mr. Laws described. This

funding is made possible through donations for Hurricane Florence victims. Alderman Bengel thanked the Red Cross for immediately providing a liaison to the City at the beginning of the storm, for being so responsive, and for answering questions as they arose.

Alderman Aster asked if the City Manager could reach out to Craven County to inquire about the possibility of providing mental health assistance or social workers to check on shelter residents.

### **3. Request and Petition of Citizens.**

Margie Adams of 101 Midyette Avenue thanked the City for what it is doing. She asked if there will be any type of program implemented for those with health issues as a result of bacteria from the standing water. She stated some have suffered a rash on their legs after being in the water to assist with rescues, and she also expressed concern about mold. Mayor Outlaw suggested those affected should seek attention from the health department or through MERCI Clinic.

Lorelei Schaffhausen of 511 Metcalf Street stated she was proud of the City's elected officials and staff for coordinating efforts, communicating, and keeping residents calm. She is a relatively new member of the Craven County Disaster Relief Alliance ("CCDRA"), which meets on the first and third Thursdays of each month at 10 a.m. at United Way. She shared a flyer from CCDRA with vital contact information for those who need guidance or assistance. She announced work sessions are being held at Centenary Church on Thursdays at 10 a.m. to address mental health issues. She shared thoughts on creative opportunities to support one another.

Katherine Adolph of 210 Metcalf Street stated she is a retired school principal, previous commissioner on the Housing Authority Board, and current president of Bern Investment Group, whose work has been to invest in revitalization of the community. She expressed concern about Trent Court and suggested the City transfer at no cost the Carolina Avenue property to the Housing Authority for the purpose of development.

### **Consent Agenda**

#### **4. Consider Adopting a Resolution to Call for a Public Hearing to Approve a Development Agreement with Weyerhaeuser NR Company for WEST New Bern.**

Weyerhaeuser NR Company is developing an approximately 575-acre mixed-use development that will be known as WEST New Bern. A development agreement between the City and developer, Weyerhaeuser NR Company, will establish responsibilities pertaining to utility delivery, phasing, and design standards during the construction of the property. It is requested a public hearing be called for October 23, 2018 to receive public comments on the proposed development agreement.

**5. Consider Approving a Proclamation for Red Ribbon Week.**

On behalf of the New Bern Young Marines, Angel Golding-Fort requested a proclamation acknowledging Red Ribbon Week, which is observed October 23-31, 2018. Red Ribbon Week is the oldest and largest drug-prevention campaign in the country.

**6. Approve Minutes.**

Minutes from the September 25, 2018 regular meeting were provided for review and approval.

Alderman Odham made a motion to approve Items 4-6 of the consent agenda, seconded by Alderman Bengel. The motion carried unanimously 7-0.

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Mr. Stephens noted there are two items that need to be added to the end of the agenda, both of which are disaster related.

**7. Presentation by New Bern Housing Authority on Trent Court Housing.**

At the request of members of the Governing Board, representatives from the New Bern Housing Authority were present to discuss the current housing needs of Trent Court in the aftermath of Hurricane Florence.

Martin Blaney, Executive Director of the New Bern Housing Authority, expressed thanks to the City and its staff for their help with cleanup thus far. He also expressed appreciation to first responders, the faith community, and all volunteers. He thanked the residents of Trent Court for their cooperation.

Mr. Blaney then described the impact from Hurricane Florence, noting New Bern Towers weathered the storm fairly well. The building lost electricity until Saturday, but a generator was utilized during that time. Some of the residents' automobiles were flooded in the parking lot. In Trent Court, 108 apartments were lost, which is nearly one-half of the 218 units. Some of the units sustained more than 5 feet of water. The Housing Authority office was completely destroyed and took on at least 56 inches of water. All files and electronics had been placed high, but were destroyed as the tables they were on began to float and water breached the items. After assessing the damage first thing Monday morning, the Authority sought a mitigation firm, but their quote was prohibitively expensive. On Tuesday morning, the process of emptying and de-sliming apartments begun. This was done for three reasons: as the first step to restoring electricity, to place debris on the curbside as quickly as possible in the midst of profound concerns about sanitation and hygiene, and to lower the cost of mitigation. Currently, there is no time line for completion of the mitigation, as it is unknown how many units and how much work will be involved.

The Authority has tried to maintain contact with their residents as best as possible. Three residents were found to be in a hotel or motel, 10 have vacated or intend to

vacate and not return, 16 have returned to Trent Court as unauthorized residents because they have nowhere else to go, 58 are living with family or friends, and 3 are in the shelter. Other residents have relocated within the Authority's existing inventory. Affected residents will continue to be rehoused into units that become available through attrition. Demolition of units is also an option with housing replacement vouchers and disaster vouchers issued by HUD.

Alderman Aster asked about the 16 residents who had returned to the project unauthorized. Mr. Blaney stated their units have been mitigated and there is no visible evidence of returning mold. Mr. Blaney confirmed those residents were encouraged not to return to the units and were advised of the available shelter. Alderman Aster stated a lot has been said about the conditions in which the residents live, but he wanted the public to know the residents have been discouraged from living in those units without electricity and in their condition. Mr. Blaney said the Authority was concerned about allowing them back into the units, although he was not sure the Authority could have prevented it. The residents were given a flyer notifying them they were returning at their own risk. Alderwoman Harris asked if the residents signed waivers, and Mr. Blaney stated the Authority now has waivers and will seek signatures.

Alderman Bengel asked if the Housing Authority's expenses are reimbursable by FEMA. Mr. Blaney responded they are approaching the situation as if they are reimbursable. He noted he spoke with the Director of the Housing Authority in Houston about how they handled a similar situation. Houston spent millions on cleanup, but to date their Authority has only been reimbursed \$400,000. Mr. Blaney said it is his understanding FEMA may authorize the State to dispense money to jurisdictions and housing authorities through the Community Development Block Grant program.

Alderman Bengel said there is a misconception that the City of New Bern owns the Housing Authority, and she stressed that is not the case. She noted some members of the Governing Board were at Trent Court immediately after the storm to distribute food, water and items of basic need. It was concerning to the Governing Board that the Housing Authority did not return to the property until Monday morning. Mr. Blaney clarified that he was back on the property before Monday, but could not assemble a team of employees until Monday morning. Alderman Bengel expressed thanks to the East Carolina University basketball team, local teachers, and others for assisting the residents and children of Trent Court. However, she noted going forward the Authority must have a written disaster plan. She asked for amplification of the numbers of residents accounted for and referenced earlier by Mr. Blaney, and he confirmed the number represents households, which may include 1-5 residents. Alderman Bengel stated contact has been made with the Greenville and Farmville Housing Authorities for assistance. Mr. Blaney noted four households have relocated to other Eastern North Carolina housing authorities, three of which are in Greenville and one in Ayden.

After having worked side by side with some of the temporary employees assisting the Housing Authority, Alderman Aster noted they were hardworking individuals. Alderman Kinsey asked what the Authority was looking for from the City in the way

of partnership, and Mr. Blaney stated it was time to implement the CNI Transformation Plan. Joseph Anderson, Chair of the New Bern Housing Authority, said the long-range plan is not to repeat this cycle during every storm. The immediate need is to continue the mitigation efforts. The Authority is seeking emergency vouchers for residents and is doing the best it can with the resources it has. Mr. Anderson stated he has spoken with residents, and they understand the situation. He stated there were some outside agitators who tried to stir things up and make the matter worse than it really was. Alderman Best asked how many units were lost, and Mr. Anderson reiterated 108. There are approximately 5-6 buildings which the Authority does not feel should be reopened as they are closest to the water and more susceptible to flooding. Most of these units are offline and without power, and the Authority would like to leave them that way. Alderman Kinsey asked if the Authority could close the units, and Mr. Anderson replied the units could be closed, but the Authority cannot bar or padlock them.

Alderman Kinsey asked Mr. Stephens where things stood with the transfer of property to the Authority. Mr. Stephens replied the City Attorney would be drafting documents relative to the sale of the Carolina Avenue property to the Authority. Alderman Kinsey asked how long it would take to finalize the purchase and development of the property. Mr. Stephens explained there is still an application process with HUD that must be followed through. However, before the application can be started, the Authority must have the land in place. The Authority is seeking a tax-development type property with development by Pennrose. Once a property is developed, residents would be transferred to those units. Mr. Anderson pointed out the Carolina Avenue property did not flood during the hurricane. He also noted the application process with HUD has a deadline of late November, early December or mid January. If the application deadline is missed, it will delay the process by another year. Alderman Odham asked the City Attorney if the paperwork could be available for the Board to consider approving the sale of the property at its next meeting. Mr. Davis replied yes.

#### **8. Presentation by Friends of Kafer Park.**

This presentation was not made, as representatives for Kafer Park were not in attendance.

#### **9. Presentation on Preliminary Plans for Use of Grant Funds Received for Martin Marietta Park.**

As previously announced, the City was awarded a NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Grant in the amount of \$475,000 for use at Martin Marietta Park. Foster, Hughes, Director of Parks and Recreation, shared a PowerPoint presentation describing the amenities that will be installed utilizing the grant funds:

- Playground
- Boat launch for canoes, kayaks, johnboats;
- Fishing pier/boat dock;
- Picnic shelter and restroom;
- Multipurpose trail;
- Nature observation deck;

- Nature trail;
- Two parking lots;
- Road improvements;
- Site preparation; and
- Support amenities such as signage, benches and trashcans.

An application has also been submitted for a CAMA grant in the amount of approximately \$100,000. If received, those funds will be used for an ADA-accessible kayak launch, another shelter with restrooms, and additional parking. Future phases will include a swim beach area, amphitheater, an adventure area and boathouse. Staff is currently working on sponsorship and naming-right opportunities. Mr. Hughes asked the Board if they had any priorities for future phases.

Alderman Harris asked if anyone checked the site for flooding or damage following the hurricane. Mr. Hughes stated the area where most of the development would take place was safe after the hurricane. Alderman Bengel noted a desire to make the skatepark a priority since the supporters of that movement have been so diligent in their efforts. Aldermen Aster and Odham stated their priority would be to move forward with the amphitheater. Alderman Odham noted the amphitheater would probably have the biggest impact and would be a revenue generator not only for the park, but the City overall.

Alderman Aster asked if the CAMA grant would require a match, and Mr. Hughes responded there is a 20% match if the grant is awarded.

**10. Consider Adopting a Resolution to Temporarily Suspend Certain Inspection and Permit-Related Fees.**

To assist in recovery efforts, suspension of certain building permit and other fees is desired for those who suffered damage from Hurricane Florence. The fees are outlined in the proposed resolution. Mr. Stephens noted this is similar in nature to the action taken by the Board at its last meeting when it adopted a resolution to temporarily suspend certain delinquent fees associated with utility accounts. As was the utility resolution, this resolution will be retroactive to the storm. Alderman Harris asked if inspections were being suspended, and Mr. Stephens clarified they were not.

Alderman Aster made a motion to adopt a resolution to temporarily suspend certain inspection and permit-related fees, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

Mr. Stephens pointed out the suspension of utility and permit-related fees will be reinstated once the volume of activity associated with the storm begins to dwindle down.

## **Additional Items**

- **Consider Adopting an Ordinance to Establish a Grant Fund for the Hurricane Florence Fund**

Establishing a special project fund will allow for all expenditures as well as reimbursements associated with Hurricane Florence to be tracked. Mr. Stephens noted the consultant is on site and will soon begin preparing project worksheets for submission to FEMA

Alderman Aster made a motion to adopt an ordinance to establish a grant fund for the Hurricane Florence Fund, seconded by Alderman Odham. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

- **Consider Adopting a Resolution Designating the City’s FEMA Agent**

The proposed resolution will designate Lori Mullican, Accounting Manager, as the City’s primary agent for executing and filing applications for federal and state disaster assistance. It names Joseph Sabatelli, Director of Finance, as the secondary agent. Alderman Bengel questioned why Mrs. Mullican was named as the primary and Mr. Sabatelli as the secondary. Mr. Sabatelli explained Mrs. Mullican works more hands-on with this than he does, and it seemed best to name her as the primary. Alderman Best asked about the identity of the third-party consultant, and Mr. Sabatelli replied the consultant is Disaster Recovery Services, LLC.

Alderman Aster made a motion to adopt a resolution naming Lori Mullican as the primary agent and Joseph Sabatelli as the secondary agent for FEMA reimbursements, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

### **11. Appointment(s).**

Alderman Bengel recommended Alderman Aster be considered for the appointment to Allies for Cherry Point’s Tomorrow. In response, Alderman Aster expressed a desire to speak with someone about the appointment and its requirements.

### **12. Attorney’s Report.**

The City Attorney announced Chief Summers has been working with the State ALE regarding a bar on Neuse Boulevard that operates under the name of the Howling Dog Saloon. There have been complaints that it is a source for fights, shootings, stabbings and one death. When matters such as this escalate to a certain level, they become a public nuisance. At that point, the Police Department (“PD”) will seek assistance from the ALE and will perform research, look at statistics, and talk with the owner and landowner to identify what can be done to improve the situation. For the last year, the PD has worked using various techniques to control the crowd and make the place safer. The landlord, after a lot of discussion with the PD, has



acknowledged an inability to secure the place and keep it safe. A public nuisance lawsuit is a tool that will ensure the property is never used again for a bar and that the operator will not get an ABC license to relocate within the city limits. Once the suit is filed, all of the parties involved can voluntarily go before a judge and enter into a consent order acknowledging that there is a problem. The City Attorney sought direction from the Board to move forward with the lawsuit. Within several months after filing, Mr. Davis stated he would be back before the Board with a draft consent order to explain the recommendations.

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to direct the City Attorney to move forward with filing the nuisance complaint, seconded by Alderman Bengel. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

### **13. City Manager's Report.**

As a follow-up to the recent press conference, Mr. Stephens provided a quick update after Hurricane Florence. All residential and commercial trash is running on schedule at this point. Residents are still urged to keep trashcans and recycle bins away from debris piles. As of yesterday, nearly 114,000 cubic yards of debris has been cleared. It is estimated approximately 65% of all vegetative debris has been collected. Construction debris totaling 3,307 tons have been collected to date, which is approximately 33% of the debris. There are 41 trucks from around the state here to help collect construction and demolition debris, and Mr. Stephens thanked these municipalities for providing mutual-aid support. It is anticipated collection of construction debris will take another 7-10 weeks.

Staff is still continuing to work on streets, water and sewer, and storm drain repairs throughout the City. Citizens were encouraged to heed the warnings indicated by cones and barricades. One round of mosquito spraying has taken place, with another round to take place in a week or week and a half. Water and sewer systems are functioning properly, although some emergency repairs are being made. Electricity is up and running for all customers who are available for connection. There are approximately 726 customers who still have meters that have been pulled. Approximately 590 permits have been processed since the storm. Ninety percent of the permits are being processed and closed out in less than 24 hours. Anyone with building or inspection-related questions should contact Inspections at 639-2942.

Parks and Recreation is continuing to clean up. Union Point Park has reopened, and Lawson Creek Park will reopen the day of the MumFest concert. Glenburnie Park will remain closed until cleanup and repairs can be finalized. All other parks are open and operating. Boat launches received significant damage and will remain closed until repairs can be made.

As far as staff relocations, Parks and Recreation's Administrative staff is at the Aquatics Center. The Stanley White Recreation Center is closed, and staff is operating out of West New Bern. West New Bern Recreation Center is still serving as a shelter, thus limiting programs that are available at that center. Afterschool programs are now running since most schools are back in operation.

Mayor Outlaw asked for a report on the preparations for Hurricane Michael. Mr. Stephens stated the hurricane is anticipated to impact the area on Thursday, and staff is monitoring its intensity and track. Staffing levels will increase if there are any changes or impacts on Thursday or Friday. Wind will have the most bearing on our area. The current track is not expected to produce storm surge for New Bern. Tree crews from Asplundh have been here since Hurricane Florence, and they will be able to assist as needed. Mr. Stephens did not anticipate a need to activate the Emergency Operations Center at this point.

Alderman Best noted some aldermen attended the recent press conference, and she asked if the City Clerk could send an email to the entire Governing Board when a press conference or any other vital meeting takes place.

Alderwoman Harris stated she just received a question through Facebook Live as to whether there would be mosquito spraying in preparation for MumFest. Mr. Stephens stated he was not aware of a plan to spray for the festival. Foster Hughes stated Swiss Bear is working with a vendor to bring in mosquito repellants that will be placed around the park on Friday.

Mr. Stephens announced occasional donations have been received by the City for recovery efforts. The City currently does not have a great way to track those. Swiss Bear has set up a recovery fund with all monies going toward rebuilding and recovery. Mr. Stephens sought direction on how to handle the donations. Alderman Aster asked if it is possible to establish a fund to assist the City employees who have been devastated by the hurricane. Mr. Stephens said those funds could be deposited into the general fund and designated account established. Mr. Stephens stated the City has policies in place about how money is to be handled and the time frame in which it must be deposited. Alderman Aster stated the Fire Department has a fund for firefighters in need, and he suggested something similar could be done with these donations. He also reiterated the City has employees who have lost everything, and he would like to see a fund set up to benefit the employees. Mr. Stephens stated despite current policies, donations would be put in a safe place until a policy can be established on how to handle the funds. Alderwoman Harris expressed concern that some people may not want their checks held. Alderman Odham noted the hospital has put together a similar fund with a methodical process for administering the funds. He will obtain information from the hospital, including the application process for those seeking funds.

Alderman Best asked if the Governing Board could take money from their appropriation funds to purchase food to feed the residents at the shelter. Attorney Davis advised the best procedure is to make a donation to Religious Community Services (“RCS”) that is earmarked for the specific purpose of purchasing dinner for the shelter residents. Alderwoman Harris asked for clarity that appropriations should always be routed through a nonprofit, and Attorney Davis confirmed they should. Alderwomen Harris and Best noted they were able to purchase food for National Night Out, and Mr. Stephens stated that was because it was a Police-led event for which all citizens could participate; there was no distinguishing between individual citizens.

## 14. **New Business.**

### Alderman Bengel

Last night, a meeting was held by the Historic District Residents Association (“HDRA”). The beautiful homes in the historic district bring tourists to the area and are expensive to maintain. Many of those residents are concerned about the district and the amount of resources necessary to fix these homes. They are asking for resources from the National Trust, State Historic Preservation Office, and mitigation specialists who work solely on historic homes. Alderman Bengel said she and Mr. Stephens are working to bring those resources together so more information can be given to the residents of the historic district. She thanked the residents in that area for their investment and said she understood the value of that district. The City is working to restore all areas of the City.

MumFest is scheduled for the upcoming weekend. A Dan and Shay concert is scheduled for Friday night with 100% of the profits going toward rebuilding houses through the City. Pepsi and the Minges Foundation are underwriting the costs to make it possible for all of the ticket sales to go toward recovery.

### Alderwoman Harris

Citizens were advised to take heed to the weather advisory for Hurricane Michael. Those who organized the recent distribution of furniture and clothes on the former Days Hotel property were asked to clean up the items that have been left behind.

### Alderman Aster

An accident occurred on Old Airport Road in which a car missed a curve and ran into a house on Taberna Circle. This is the third time that house has been hit because of a similar scenario. After speaking with area residents, Alderman Aster requested the speed limit be reduced from 45 mph to 35 mph. He also asked if Mr. Stephens and Mr. Montanye could implement a design that would stop any traffic that runs the stop sign and keep it from making contact with the house on Taberna Circle. The Board expressed support of Alderman Aster’s request for a reduction in the speed limit and gave the Manager direction to proceed.

In light of the damages received and the length of time it may take before FEMA reimbursement is received, Alderman Aster suggested some of the paving contracts be suspended until the City has an idea as to what the hurricane will cost; although, he acknowledged there are some streets that will have to be addressed. Mr. Stephens said it is advisable to complete the existing contracts along with the addendum for Oaks Road. Mr. Montanye stated the FY17 contract is underway as well as the contract for Oaks Road. There is a two-year obligation to complete Old Airport Road, and the City will probably not start that until late summer. That project has not yet been funded. As far as this year’s budget, \$2.8 million was allotted for paving. Alderman Aster reiterated his concern and suggested, where possible, paving projects be put on hold. Mr. Stephens announced the first payroll associated with the storm totaled \$2.8 million. The \$2.8 million budgeted for this fiscal year was earmarked for spring and summer paving. There should be a better idea at that point as to what the cost of the hurricane may be, and staff can brief the Board in January or early February at the retreat. Mayor Outlaw asked the City Manager, Finance and Public Works to look at all of the proposed projects in progress and

see if there will be increased costs associated with putting those projects off and rebidding them. It may be worth inquiring about an installment loan. Mr. Stephens stated that is an option and staff would be happy to proceed as the Board chooses. Mayor Outlaw stated he and Aldermen Bengel have discussed the decrease in sales tax from less heads on beds and tourism in New Bern. Alderman Bengel expanded to say the convention center would be closed for a year until approximately September 2019. The Doubletree will reopen around the first week of March, and the Courtyard is slowly opening rooms on the upper floors for walk-in guests. With that being said, every hotel room in Craven County is full. Downtown retail has seen a decrease in business, and downtown restaurants are seeing approximately a 10-15% decrease. Alderman Best asked Mr. Sabatelli if he had checked with Craven County as to whether it is anticipated the storm will affect receipt of ad valorem taxes. Mr. Sabatelli responded he has not conferred with the County. Mr. Stephens pointed out the property and sales taxes are the City's two primary sources of revenue, and this is certainly the time to implore citizens to shop local. Alderman Aster asked Mr. Sabatelli if he had a handle on how much the City may spend on the storm, and Mr. Sabatelli expressed it would be at least between \$4-6 million. Mr. Stephens felt it would be more like \$6-7 million, noting Hurricane Irene cost the City \$4.5 million. In light of the City's susceptibility to hurricanes and the last two hard winters, Alderman Odham voiced a desire for the Board to give staff direction to create a disaster recovery fund. The fund would set aside a specified amount from the general fund that is restricted solely for use during a state of emergency. He suggested FEMA reimbursements that are received from Hurricane Florence be utilized to start funding this "rainy-day fund". Alderwoman Harris asked if the fund could be established in a way to draw interest, and Mr. Sabatelli confirmed the fund would draw interest. Alderman Bengel asked for the amount of fund balance prior to the storm. Mr. Sabatelli stated it was approximately 35-36% as of June 30<sup>th</sup>, which equated to roughly \$13 million. Alderman Bengel said she would rather have a specified amount in fund balance without necessarily restricting a portion of it for disaster recovery. Alderman Aster stated he agreed; however, he voiced concern noting more than half of the current fund balance will be spent on Hurricane Florence and there is always the possibility another disaster could hit in two weeks.

#### Alderman Kinsey

Thanks was voiced to the volunteers who have and are assisting with the storm recovery.

#### Alderman Best

Ward 5 was hit really hard by the hurricane. Alderman Best encouraged her constituents to file claims with FEMA and Red Cross. She also stated she was aware and shared the displeasure of her constituents regarding the amount of time it took for cleanup to take place in Ward 5. However, she asked them to be patient, noting crews are in the area and working long, hard hours.

#### Alderman Odham

The storm brought to light some opportunities for improvement. While there has been some communication with partners on the county's side, there is room for enhancement. He also referenced the need to be able to better coordinate

donations. He suggested meeting with Craven County after the upcoming elections to discuss these matters.

**15. Closed Session.**

A closed session was not needed.

**16. Adjourn.**

Alderman Aster made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. The motion carried unanimously 7-0, time being 8:23 p.m.


The attached documents are incorporated herewith and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

NOTE: For additional details and information on the Board of Aldermen meetings, please visit the City of New Bern's website at [www.newbernnc.gov](http://www.newbernnc.gov). Video and audio recordings of the meeting have been archived.

Minutes approved: October 23, 2018

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dana E. Outlaw", written over a horizontal line.

Dana E. Outlaw, Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brenda E. Blanco", written over a horizontal line.

Brenda E. Blanco, City Clerk