

**City of New Bern  
Board of Aldermen Meeting  
November 13, 2018 – 6:00 P.M.  
City Hall Courtroom  
300 Pollock Street**

**1. Meeting opened by Mayor Dana E. Outlaw. Prayer by Ethel Sampson. 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 Brenda Blanco, City Clerk.

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

Ed McGovern, owner of 520 South Front Street, requested a loading zone be reinstated in front of his business. The zone was removed once the two-hour parking was re-enforced a few months ago. He stated for the last three to four months, he has tried to utilize the loading zone directly across the street by the History Center. However, he feels it poses a safety hazard to his employees and others as they cross the street to carry items to the business.

John Watson of 217 Middle Street made a request for an onstreet parking pass or some other means to assist him and his wife with parking. He has lived at his residence since 1994, which does not provide offstreet parking. Years ago, parking was not an issue, but it is now that downtown has grown. The free downtown parking lots are not convenient, as the closest one is at least a block and a half away. It was his understanding there are two residences downtown that are in this same position; all others have off-street parking.

Kevin Yates of 116 Sweetbriar Court, as Chair of Wreaths Across America, announced the event is nearing. Last year, the City assisted with crowd control and an escort for the wreaths to the National Cemetery. He asked for the City's support again this year. The cemetery contains 6,772 headstones. Mayor Outlaw indicated the City would help assist in making the public aware of the opportunity to sponsor wreaths by sharing information on social media and through the PEG channel. The cost of each wreath is \$15.

Alderman Bengel asked if the City Attorney could address the requests made by the first two citizens. She pointed out the City eliminated parking enforcement on the block in which Mr. McGovern's business is located. She stated she had witnessed the store unloading on three occasions, and the vehicle was double

parked. She suggested Mr. McGovern utilize cones when unloading to help manipulate available parking spaces. Mr. McGovern stated he has attempted to use cones, but people who walk early in the morning park their cars in front of his store for two hours, and the cones are moved. Attorney Davis stated there are two options with cones: erect cones in parking spaces or park the delivery trucks on the street in the lane closest to the store and place cones around the truck. Mr. McGovern stated another issue is there are no drains across the street for him to clean up any mess that is made while unloading.

Alderman Bengel also asked the City Attorney if there were steps that could be taken to address Mr. Watson's issue. Mr. Davis said a lot of time has been spent over the last few months researching this issue. While he appreciated the fact that it seemed the problem could be easily remedied by the issuance of parking passes, the legal issue with that is it violates the state constitution with respect to private emoluments. Government cannot give individual citizens a specific benefit that it does not give everyone else. Alderman Bengel asked if anyone is able to apply for hardship or if it is a matter of "all or none", whereby each resident would have to receive a pass or no one receive a pass. Mr. Davis stated he could further research the option of all downtown residents receiving a parking pass. However, he cautioned it is not a slam dunk, stating the need for a state statute allowing for that provision. He explained the cities that offer such parking amenities are those that have residential zones that abut commercial zones, and the commercial parking rolls into those residential zones, thus driving out the residents. With the number of vacant buildings downtown, he cautioned about the downtown district filling up with residential parking that may actually put out business.

### **Consent Agenda**

**4. Consider Adopting a Resolution Calling for a Public Hearing to Amend Article II "Definitions", Article X "Permissible Uses" and Article XVIII "Parking" of Appendix A of the City of New Bern Land Use Ordinance.**

The Board was asked to call for a public hearing on November 27, 2018 to consider proposed amendments to Sections 15-15, 15-146 and 15-342 of the Land Use Ordinance. The proposed amendments would create standards for marinas in the City of New Bern. At their September 4, 2018 meeting, the Planning and Zoning Board voted 5-1 to recommend approval of the proposed amendments.

**5. Consider Adopting a Resolution Calling for a Public Hearing to Amend Article II: Section 15-15 – Basic Definitions and Interpretations of the City of New Bern Land Use Ordinance.**

The Board was asked to call for a public hearing on November 27, 2018 to consider proposed amendments to Section 15-15 "Basic Definitions and Interpretations" of the Land Use Ordinance. The proposed amendments would clean up the residential definitions found in the basic definitions and interpretations section. The last overhaul of the Land Use Ordinance created errors in formatting that lead to the retention of some older, now redundant, definitions for residential uses. Adopting the proposed changes would make sure there is no confusion in how different

residential uses are defined. At their June 5, 2018 meeting, the Planning and Zoning Board voted unanimously to recommend approval of the proposed amendments.

**6. Consider Adopting a Resolution Closing Specific Streets on December 1, 2018 for the Craven County Jaycees 2018 Christmas Parade.**

David Ricks, Event Coordinator, requested the 300-800 blocks of George Street, 400-600 blocks of Broad Street and 200-300 blocks of Middle Street be closed from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m. on December 1, 2018 for the annual Christmas parade. Additionally, it was requested the south side of Broad Street be closed to parking from 12 a.m. until the conclusion of the parade.

**7. Consider Adopting a Resolution Closing Specific Streets for the City's First Annual New Year's Eve Celebration.**

This item was pulled as noted in the motion below.

**8. Consider Adopting a Resolution Closing Specific Streets for Tryon Palace's Candlelight Christmas Celebration.**

Rebekah Hornek, Cultural Arts Coordinator, requested the 600 block of Pollock Street and 300 block of George Street be closed on December 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> from 9:15 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. for fireworks associated with Tryon Palace's Candlelight Christmas Celebration. She also requested a temporary block of South Front Street at the location of Palace Point Commons behind the palace's south lawn.

**9. Consider Adopting a Resolution Closing Specific Streets for Beary Merry Christmas Events.**

Amanda Banks, Event Chair for the Downtown Council's Beary Merry Christmas, requested the following streets be closed for the identified activities on the dates and times noted: a) the 200 block of Middle Street on November 23, 2018 from 2:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. for "Light Up the Season"; b) the 200 block of Craven Street and the "Talbot's Lot" on December 9, 2018 from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. for the "Sledding Shopping Sunday" event.

**10. Consider Approving a Proclamation for Hospice and Palliative Care Month.**

Thomas Smith, Director of Craven County Hospice, requested a proclamation recognizing November as National Hospice and Palliative Care Month.

**11. Consider Approving a Proclamation for Elinor D. Hawkins Day.**

After the unveiling of a bear statute on November 3, 2018 honoring Elinor D. Hawkins, Mayor Outlaw received a request from Rose Williams to establish November 3<sup>rd</sup> as Elinor D. Hawkins Day in New Bern. A proclamation to this effect was proposed.

**12. Approve Minutes.**

Minutes from the October 23, 2018 work session and regular meetings were provided for review and approval.

Alderman Bengel made a motion to pull Item 7 and place it on the next agenda so the times could be adjusted and to approve the remainder of the Consent Agenda (Items 4-6 and 8-12), seconded by Alderman Aster. The motion carried unanimously 7-0.

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**13. Presentation by Friends of Kafer Park.**

Mike Soares of 109 Geneva Road, a member of Friends of Kafer Park, shared a PowerPoint presentation about the group's desire and plans to raise funds to restore Kafer Park to its original state. He described the history of the park and improvements that have been made thus far. Future donations would be used as seed money to continue to reestablish the park to its original state. The Historic Downtown Residents Association and Historic Preservation Commission support the project. Before continuing with fundraising efforts, Mr. Soares asked for the Board's support of the restoration project since it involves City-owned property.

Mayor Outlaw asked Foster Hughes, Director of Parks and Recreation, to provide an update from the City's perspective. Mr. Hughes stated the group had shown him the plans, and he voiced support for the overall project if the group is able to raise the funds. He noted Swiss Bear was also supportive of the project.

Mayor Outlaw asked Mr. Soares specifically what type of support he sought from the City, and he responded a public-private partnership. Alderman Bengel stated she believed the group did not want to proceed with raising funds without knowing whether the City was amenable to their restoration plan. She also pointed out Friends of Kafer Park had previously made a presentation before Swiss Bear, and Swiss Bear agreed to be their 501(3)(c) vehicle for the funds raised. Alderman Bengel suggested Friends of Kafer Park partner with Colorfest, which has an interest in repairing and repainting the murals in the park.

Alderwoman Harris stated an online viewer had questioned where 3,000 park participants and spectators would park their vehicles. She too wanted a sounder proposal as to what would be expected from the City, such as funding, maintenance, etc. Alderman Bengel clarified the group was seeking to renovate the field and park for all types of use, not exclusive use by Friends of Kafer Park. Mr. Soares confirmed the park would still be managed and operated by Parks and Recreation. Mayor Outlaw asked if an ad hoc group was needed to work through the process, and Alderman Aster stated he did not think Friends of Kafer Park was looking for a group, but simply wanted an opportunity to work with Mr. Hughes on the project. Mr. Stephens stated it is his understanding that the group would raise funds to facilitate the redevelopment of Kafer Park with the understanding that they would have a continued presence and operation of their league at that park. Mr.

Soares stated Mr. Stephens summarized it well, but also noted the group would like to have priority preference with respect to booking the facility. Alderwoman Harris stated that is the reason she felt more discussion was needed. Mr. Stephens suggested an agreement be put in place so future Governing Boards would know what commitments had been made on each side. Mr. Davis said there were two issues: whether the location was listed as an official city park, which Mr. Hughes believed it was; and a need to have a license agreement with the East Carolina Amateur Baseball League to use the field. Mayor Outlaw stated his support, but expressed a need for the City to be indemnified if it would not be in control of the activities that would take place at the park.

Alderwoman Harris reiterated the League wanted to redevelop the park with the only benefit to them being priority booking, and that the group would continue to pay the City a \$50 fee per game. Alderman Odham said he thought the proposal was a win-win for everyone and was a tremendous investment that may set the stage for something big in the future. Mr. Soares noted the restoration was estimated to cost between \$1.5-\$2 million. Instead of establishing an ad hoc group, Alderman Odham suggested the City draft an agreement for the League's consideration, and the Board expressed consensus. Alderman Bengel recognized Doug Amerson who was in attendance and a part of the League.

#### **14. Presentation on National Night Out.**

Police Chief Toussaint Summers shared a video reflecting upon National Night Out, which took place on August 7, 2018. Twenty-seven communities participated, and the communities in attendance were presented a certificate of participation and extended a handshake of appreciation by the Governing Board. Officer Katrina Longmeyer was also presented with an Award of Excellence for her participation in community projects, including her organization of the National Night Out event for the last several years.

(Alderman Odham briefly stepped out of the room following the handshake of appreciation at 7:06 p.m.)

#### **15. Presentation on Opportunity Zones.**

A couple of members of the Governing Board expressed an interest in opportunity zones, and the Board has had some discussion on the topic. After submitting an application, property in New Bern had been deemed an opportunity zone. To learn more about the zones, a representative from the NC Department of Commerce, Lee Padrick, Chief Economic Development Planner for the Northeast Prosperity Zone and Main Street and Rural Planning Center, displayed a PowerPoint presentation. Congress enacted the opportunity zone program in December 2017 as part of tax reform. The program offers incentives for qualified investors who reinvest in low-income communities.

(Alderman Odham returned to the room at 7:08 p.m.)

Mr. Padrick stated opportunity zones are overseen by the IRS, and he described how the initiative could drive investment in communities that have low-income census tracts. He noted there are three low-income census tracts in Craven County, but only one that had been certified as an opportunity zone. Recommendations for opportunity zones are typically submitted by County Managers, County Economic Development offices, or Councils of Government. Alderman Odham asked who on the state level selected the opportunity zones, and Mr. Padrick replied a group from the Department of Commerce reviews census information and applies specific criteria when selecting a zone.

Alderwoman Harris asked about the two Craven County tracts that are not certified and the chance to have them reconsidered. Mr. Padrick replied it was his understanding that other tracts will not be revisited until legislation at the federal level is revisited. Alderwoman Harris also asked how people are able to access the funds if they have a business that lies within the census tract. Mr. Padrick did not know the answer, but stated there was hope that information would be learned at a workshop to be held at the state level. Alderman Bengel asked if projects had to be shovel ready, and Mr. Padrick replied they had to be investment ready.

#### **16. Discussion of Part-Time Animal Control Officer.**

Police Chief Summers provided a verbal update regarding the search for a part-time Animal Control Officer ("ACO"), noting 14 applications had been received. Except for two of the applicants, none had direct experience. Staff had recommended a full-time position be added because of concern of training a part-time person only for them to leave for a full-time position. Alderman Bengel expressed concern about the need for two officers to cover the nighttime hours, weekends, etc. She asked about the estimate of \$60,000 that Chief Summers had previously relayed as the cost for a full-time position and questioned whether that was the salary of the current ACO. Chief Summers noted the estimate of \$50,000-60,000 included not only salary, but also benefits, uniforms, etc. Alderman Kinsey voiced his opinion that hiring an additional full-time ACO would be the right approach. Alderwoman Harris expressed a desire for the additional position to be part-time and stated she would not vote to put more money into an ACO position as she would rather see the money utilized for a full-time police officer. Alderman Odham asked if the additional \$25,000 approved in the budget could be used to train existing police officers to address the animal calls. He stated a concern about the need to respond to after-hours calls when the current ACO was not working. If additional police officers were trained to handle the animal calls, that would address his concerns. Chief Summers stated there are three police officers currently trained who also have access to the ACO vehicle, but it was difficult to utilize them considering their current duties and work schedule.

Mr. Stephens reiterated the difficulty with finding a qualified, trained individual who could fulfill the duties on a part-time basis. The choices are to continue to wait for such a candidate, or the Board could allocate more funding to fill the position in a full-time capacity. Mayor Outlaw asked about the possibility of seeking assistance from the County. Chief Summers stated he has reached out to the County and spoken with the new director at the animal shelter. The County is also short staffed

and almost in the same situation as the City. They even asked if they could use the City's current ACO. Chief Summers stated his department had reached out to other jurisdictions such as River Bend, etc. to see if there was interest in working weekends or nights with the City, and those jurisdictions felt they could not handle the additional hours.

Alderman Odham noted the Board had previously questioned the possibility of hiring an outside contractor, but the City Attorney had concerns with an outside contractor enforcing City ordinances. Alderman Odham asked whether that issue could be remedied if the contractor called an officer to respond if it was a matter of enforcement. Alderman Aster stated the City had that option now as the Colonial Capital Humane Society had offered their assistance, but they would require a police officer on scene. By utilizing the Humane Society, they would be able to transport an animal to their shelter. Having an available shelter has been an ongoing issue for the City. Mayor Outlaw suggested speaking with the newly-elected Sheriff about a potential partnership, as he seemed to have different ideas for handling the issue. Alderman Bengel noted the County's animal enforcement was currently under the Health Department, and she believed it might change to fall under the Sheriff's Department. Mayor Outlaw stated in the past there had been a reluctance to relinquish control, and Alderman Odham stated the City needed to get past that and he voiced hoped that it could since there were now new members on both sides. He pointed out citizens of New Bern also pay County taxes and that he could easily argue New Bern's citizens were not receiving the benefit that was extended to County residents living outside of the City. Aldermen Aster, Odham and Kinsey expressed a willingness to meet with Chip Hughes, the incoming Sheriff, to discuss the situation after he takes office.

**17. Consider Adopting a Resolution to Initiate the Upset Bid Process for 570 NC Hwy. 55 West.**

Edwin B. Franklin, Sr. submitted an offer of \$6,750.00 to purchase 570 NC Hwy. 55 West. The vacant lot has a tax value of \$13,500.00, and the offer represents 50% of the value.

(Alderman Kinsey briefly stepped out of the room at 7:43 p.m.)

The property was acquired jointly by the City and Craven County through tax foreclosure in May of 2017. The total taxes due to both taxing authorities upon foreclosure was \$4,860.56. In December 2017, the County transferred its interest in the property to the City. The City subsequently demolished a structure that was on the property due to its deteriorated state and asbestos contamination. As the sole property owner, the cost of the demolition (\$7,354.00) was paid by the City. If the upset bid process were to be approved and no additional bids received, the City would receive the full proceeds from the sale, less the cost of advertising the offer.

Alderman Best made a motion to adopt a resolution to initiate the upset bid process for 570 NC Hwy. 55 West, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0. Of note, Alderman Kinsey had momentarily stepped out of the room, thus yielding an affirmative vote.

**18. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving a Contract with the Housing Authority of New Bern for the Sale of a Portion of 703 Carolina Avenue.**

As discussed at previous meetings, the Housing Authority of New Bern previously requested to purchase a portion of 703 Carolina Avenue for developing mixed-use housing and relocating some of the residents of Trent Court. The proposed contract is for slightly more than seven acres at a purchase amount of \$455,000. The contract provides for some conditions, one of which provides that the first year, the property would be sold for the purchase price. The Housing Authority plans to submit an application to have the project approved through the state's tax-credit program. In doing so, they hope to hear back sometime in August. If that is approved, the Authority's intent is to close on the property sometime in February of 2020. If unsuccessful with the first application process, the Authority will have an option to extend the contract for a nonrefundable fee of \$10,000 to allow them time to again apply for the tax-credit program.

(Alderman Kinsey returned to the room at 7:46 p.m.)

If that were the case, they would submit the second application in January in hopes of having a decision in August and closing on the property in February of 2021. There is also a stipulation that provides if the Housing Authority is approved for the tax-credit program and wishes to push the closing to June, the Authority would pay the City an additional \$10,000.

Alderman Odham asked if the award is received in August why it would take six months to close on the property. Mr. Stephens explained the additional time is needed to put together a financing package.

Alderman Best made a motion to adopt a resolution to approve a contract with the Housing Authority of New Bern for the sale of a portion of 703 Carolina Avenue for developing mixed-use housing, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried 6-1 with Alderwoman Harris voting against it.

**19. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving a Revised School Resource Officer Contract with Craven County Board of Education for Local Elementary Schools.**

On August 28, 2018, the Board of Aldermen adopted a resolution approving a School Resource Officer contract with Craven County Board of Education for four additional school resource officers ("SRO") who were to be placed in local elementary schools. The City Attorney had requested a couple of revisions to the contract to provide clarity, which were not incorporated into the contract that was previously approved by the Board.

(Alderman Kinsey momentarily left the room at 7:49 p.m.)



Mr. Stephens explained the revisions addressed specific indemnifications as well off-season utilization of the SROs. Otherwise, the funds contributed per officer were still essentially the same.

(Alderman Kinsey returned at 7:50 p.m.)

Alderman Odham made a motion to adopt a resolution approving a revised school resource officer contract with Craven County Board of Education for local elementary schools, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried 5-2 with Aldermen Best and Bengel voting against it. Before voting, Alderman Best stated when the Board initially voted on this matter, she did not vote in favor of the contract as she felt Craven County should be responsible for supplying SROs. The City's citizens pay both City and County taxes, and Alderman Best felt New Bern citizens did not receive a lot in exchange for their taxes. Alderman Bengel expressed agreement with Alderman Best's comments and felt the City would be able to have a meaningful conversation on the topic with the Sheriff-elect.

**20. Consider Adopting a Resolution Accepting the FY2018 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant.**

The Police Department was notified of an award from the FY2018 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant in the amount of \$11,334.00. Grant funds will be shared with the Craven County Sheriff's Office and utilized to procure equipment and materials for personnel workstations at the Coastal Narcotics Enforcement Team's facility. No matching funds are required.

Alderman Aster made a motion to adopt a resolution accepting the FY2018 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant, seconded by Alderman Bengel. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

**21. Consider Adopting a Budget Ordinance Amendment for the FY2018-19 Grant Fund.**

In conjunction with the grant described in the previous item, this budget ordinance amendment acknowledges the grant funds and establishes the necessary budget.

Alderman Aster made a motion to adopt a budget ordinance amendment for the FY2018-19 Grant Fund, seconded by Alderman Bengel. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 7-0.

**22. Appointment(s).**

Alderman Kinsey made a motion to appoint Anne Schout to the Board of Adjustment, seconded by Alderman Odham. The motion carried unanimously. Mrs. Schout will fill the seat previously held by Lois Jamison, and her three-year term will expire on November 12, 2021.

Alderman Best made a motion to appoint Jim Morrison to the Board of Adjustment, seconded by Alderman Kinsey. The motion carried unanimously 7-0. Mr. Morrison will fill the seat previously held by Kenneth Brown, and his three-year term will expire on November 12, 2021.

**23. Attorney's Report.**

The City Attorney had nothing to report.

**24. City Manager's Report.**

Mr. Stephens updated the Board on the trip he and Mayor Outlaw took to Washington DC a few weeks ago to meet with various agencies. They were accompanied by the Mayor of the City of Wilmington, Wilmington's legislative liaison, the Assistant County Manager for Pender County, the Mayor of Surf City, and the Director of Wilmington's Housing Authority. The group met with FEMA representatives from both the individual and public assistance sides and Assistant Secretary Neal Rackleff with HUD. During the meeting with Assistant Secretary Rackleff, HUD Secretary Ben Carson stopped in and offered his support for New Bern and Wilmington. They discussed the issue of displaced residents in Trent Court and the need to expedite the Trent Court project. The group also met with the US Department of Transportation regarding the transportation issues around Eastern North Carolina and how most of the arterial main roads were impacted by the hurricane. Additionally, the group met with Secretary DeVos and some of her staff from the US Department of Education and with White House staff, all of whom are well aware of New Bern's needs. Senator Burr and Senator Tillis' legislative assistants attended most of the meetings. Additionally, a meeting was held with the Pew Charitable Trust, and Mayor Outlaw met with a representative from 100 Resilient Cities regarding building materials and standards. Mayor Outlaw stated it has not been acceptable the amount of time it takes for funding to flow down, and he felt the holdup was more at the state level than federal. He commented that the meetings were good and allowed him and the Manager to bring home a lot of information. He relayed the need for the City to continue to communicate to the public.

Mr. Stephens announced FEMA has notified the City about two major deadlines: December 7, 2018 is the deadline for submitting buyout applications for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Funds. At the Board's November 27<sup>th</sup> meeting, staff will discuss different options that will be provided to the public. A survey will likely be distributed about mitigating issues through elevation or buyout. He cautioned citizens that just because a property is submitted does not mean it would be approved for mitigation. The process involves a scoring system where specific criteria must be met. Alderman Bengel asked who would advise the citizens as to whether they should consider a buyout or elevation. Mr. Stephens replied it is up to the citizen since it is their private property; there is no requirement for the citizen to seek mitigation. Notably, the Board is also not legally required to pass on information about mitigation requests to the County or State. He cautioned the Board about the negative effects from buyouts that result in "FEMA" lots with deed restrictions that prohibit further development, etc. The mitigation process will be discussed in detail

on the 27<sup>th</sup> with a FEMA representative providing a brief to the Board about the two deadlines. Jeff Ruggieri, Director of Development Services, stated staff was just notified of the deadline last week. Because of the short window of time, Mr. Ruggieri emphasized the need for the Board's assistance in notifying constituents. Any citizen interested in mitigation should provide their name, address and phone number. City staff will input their information into a FEMA program that ranks their property based on specific criteria. Mr. Ruggieri announced staff had already taken 100 names of people who were interested in buyout or elevation. Alderman Bengel asked if Mr. Ruggieri would put in writing the information he shared so each Board member would relay the same information. Mr. Stephens stated a package would be provided in an attempt to make the process seamless and effortless. He noted some residents of North Hills had already submitted a petition, and staff would reach out to them. Mr. Stephens reiterated approval would be based on precise criteria.

Alderman Odham noted information had been received indicating if a house makes it through the process and is approved for a buyout that 75% of the funding comes from FEMA and that the remaining 25% comes from the State, County or the City. He asked if it were known which entity has picked up the remaining percentage in the past. Alderman Aster replied the State picks up the additional cost. He pointed out during Hurricane Irene that the County submitted 100 addresses for mitigation consideration, and only 6 were bought out and none raised because there is not a tremendous amount of money for mitigation. To that point, Mr. Stephens said it is very important for the City to accumulate the list of addresses so the State can see the dire need of the area, which may help facilitate more money being received. He noted out Hurricane Irene was a 7.5 and Hurricane Florence was a 10.5, so the scale of damage and interest will be much larger.

Mr. Stephens stated the City certainly did not want to give anyone false hope and reiterated the City would only be eligible for a share of the available mitigation funds. Alderman Best noted it has been stated repeatedly that there would be a loss of tax base if homes were bought out, but the City has to act on behalf of the constituents who have repeatedly been flooded and want to pursue mitigation buyout. She announced the residents of North Hills have signed and delivered to the City Clerk a petition seeking buyouts. Alderman Best said she has stressed to them that each home is looked at on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Stephens reiterated the City is not the decision maker, but is simply a facilitator. Alderman Aster asked for press releases to be issued, and Mr. Stephens stated information will be shared on social media and the website and via press release. If needed, he stated staff would print flyers for door-to-door delivery in affected areas. Alderman Aster suggested an article also be placed in the Sun Journal. Mr. Ruggieri stated in the past that the City has funneled the information collected to the County. However, this time, the County has delegated the City to enter its data into FEMA's web-based software since the County is overwhelmed.

## 25. **New Business.**

### Alderman Bengel

Since there are several issues the City and County need to work on together, Alderman Bengel proposed a joint meeting be held with the County Commissioners after the first of the year. She asked that the process be started now with the City compiling a list of topics to discuss.

Earlier this afternoon, she, Mayor Outlaw, Alderman Aster, and the City Manager met with the group CARE regarding issues stemming from the flooding and a need for information. Alderman Bengel suggested the City have a department or division that is the public's point of resource, and she also suggested that more information be shared on CityTV3. Alderman Aster said CARE had suggested that the City have a dedicated weekly time where information relative to the hurricane is shared on the PEG channel, and he thought that was an excellent idea. He reiterated their request for a point of contact or resource for directing their questions and obtaining information. Alderman Bengel said some of the standards are confusing, and it appears contractors and surveyors are not clear on the standards; it may be necessary to hold a workshop to educate them. After sharing some of the group's requests, she noted citizens are expecting more from the City than what they are receiving. Mayor Outlaw suggested hiring someone for a 90-day period to be the "clearing house" to answer calls. Alderwoman Harris asked about the Craven County Disaster Relief Alliance and the services they provide. Alderman Bengel said that group basically addresses emotional and other support. Alderman Bengel asked if a consultant were hired whether the cost would be reimbursable by FEMA, and Alderman Aster replied it would not. Alderman Aster stated the City's current consultant had a large IA division and are experts in that area as well as flood experts. He suggested talking with the consultant. Mayor Outlaw asked if individual assistance was within the scope of the consultant's contract, and Alderman Aster stated it was not within the scope of their current contract. The Mayor then asked about the possibility of funding a position through the community development line item, and J.R. Sabatelli, Director of Finance, stated he would have to have check on that possibility.

Alderman Bengel asked if it would be okay to talk with Margaret Shields about grant funds Ms. Shields has identified that would pay for a consultant. Mayor Outlaw said he is 30 days behind on addressing this issue, and he encouraged the Board to do something about the matter. Alderman Aster suggested reaching out to Andy Innis to see if he knows of an expert in the area who would be willing to assist the City. Alderwoman Harris asked if the Board pursued a staff position to be the citizens' point of contact whether that position could be on a contract basis. Alderman Bengel replied a consultant would be under contract. Alderman Best asked if the County already had procedures in place or a list of resources for when constituents call them. Mayor Outlaw stated one of the goals while in DC was to obtain community disaster-relief funding, but that type of assistance does not happen overnight.

Mayor Outlaw stated the CARE group indicated they felt as if they were getting a run-around. Alderman Bengel said the group provided three questions at the meeting:

- Providing leadership: How do you see working together with the community on the recovery effort and planning to be a more resilient community and region for future floods? Specifically, is the City working on a plan for recovery and longterm?
- Where do you see the City's actions going on flood protection issues such as base-flood elevation, participation in the community rating system ("CRS"), and assisting homeowners to adapt their homes to a new normal of periodic flooding?
- How can we put in place an effective two-way system or forum for regular communication between citizens and the City on recovery and resiliency plans?

Alderman Harris suggested a couple of town hall meetings be scheduled with the questions answered by some of the experts who are already in this area, and Alderman Bengel stated those series could be played on the PEG channel. The Mayor urged the Board to hire a special-assignment person for a 90-day period and maybe have a designated phone line for calls. Alderman Harris asked about the City certifying and recommending surveyors and the like for major events such as this, but the Mayor noted that was the responsibility of the Attorney General or the state occupation boards; the City does not have the authority to certify those professions. Mr. Stephens recommended he and Mr. Ruggieri sit down and discuss the concerns expressed at today's meeting with CARE. He felt there were two things the group was asking of the City: 1) resiliency and future planning; and 2) a number to call for immediate answers. Long-term, the Board needs to discuss how it wants to move forward with the community as a City in terms of floodways, base-flood elevation plus freeboard, flood-mitigation strategies to include cutting off certain areas or obtaining a study from the Army Corps of Engineers. Alderman Bengel asked what it would take to engage the Army Corps of Engineers, and Mr. Stephens stated it might be as simple as a phone call.

Alderman Bengel noted the shelter at West New Bern Recreation Center closed this past Friday. The 50 people that were still in the shelter had been placed in temporary housing. Alderman Kinsey asked the Manager how soon he would activate some of the processes that had been discussed. Mr. Stephens said if it is a matter of establishing a phone number for citizens to call, that could be done quickly as he believed the City had a bank of phone numbers that could be used. If the Board chooses to contract with someone for 90 days, that would take a little longer to arrange.

Beary Merry Christmas will be kicking off with its big weekend starting the day after Thanksgiving. Lighting of the Christmas tree will take place at Union Point Park this year. Young Urban Professionals will be providing free sledding, and there will be a lot of food and games involved.

Alderman Bengel wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

### Alderman Harris

This Friday from 6-8 p.m. at the Omega Center, Young Urban Professionals will be taking applications for turkey-boxed dinners from any families affected by the hurricane. On the same date, the center will open from 2-8 p.m. for distribution of clothes.

Alderman Harris announced she is working on a presentation about her trip to the National League of Cities' City Summit and something she would like to ask the Board to do.

She, too, wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

### Alderman Aster

Citizens were cautioned to be aware of fraud and to vet any contractor they may be considering.

Sentiments for a Happy Thanksgiving were expressed.

### Mayor Outlaw

The Mayor also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

He and the City Manager will be in Asheville this week at a Metro Mayors meeting.

### Alderman Kinsey

Concern was expressed about organizations still assisting citizens and their need to continue to put out debris. Mr. Stephens advised those organizations should reach out to Matt Montanye, Director of Public Works, with the address of the property so debris pickup could be arranged.

Happy Thanksgiving was wished to everyone.

### Alderman Best

In the City Manager's report, December 7<sup>th</sup> was referenced as the first deadline. Alderman Best asked for the second important date, and Mr. Stephens stated it was sometime in January and that he would get the exact date.

A status was requested on FEMA bringing in trailers or manufactured housing. Alderman Bengel noted FEMA would make contact directly with the citizens, not the City.

Alderman Best said voiced sorrow for the family of the 44 individuals who lost their lives in the California fire.

Gratitude was expressed to the volunteers staying at West New Bern Presbyterian Church. They are aiding some of the families in the North Hills Drive area.

## **26. Closed Session.**

A closed session was not needed.

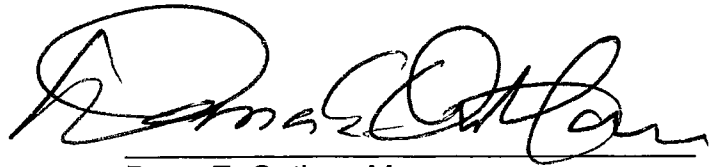
## **27. Adjourn.**

Alderman Harris made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Odham. The motion carried unanimously 7-0, time being 8:52 p.m.

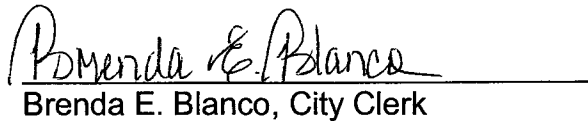
The attached documents are incorporated herewith and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

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: November 27, 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