

**City of New Bern
Board of Aldermen Meeting
September 25, 2018 – 6:00 P.M.
City Hall Courtroom
300 Pollock Street**

- 1. Meeting opened by Mayor Dana E. Outlaw. Prayer by Alderwoman Harris. Pledge of Allegiance.**
- 2. Roll Call.**

Present: Mayor Dana Outlaw, Alderman Sabrina Bengel, Alderwoman Jameesha Harris, Alderman Robert Aster, and Alderman Barbara Best. Absent: Aldermen Johnny Ray Kinsey and Jeffrey Odham. A quorum was present.

Also Present: Jordan Hughes, Acting City Manager; Michael Scott Davis, City Attorney; and Brenda Blanco, City Clerk.

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to remove Items 5 and 6 from the agenda, seconded by Alderman Bengel. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Alderman Bengel asked that the meeting be opened with a discussion about the storm, where things stand, and efforts going forward, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Jordan Hughes, Acting City Manager, provided an update on information related to the storm. The initial response to the storm was an outstanding example of teamwork across all City departments. At this point, the City has put the initial emergency response behind it and is moving forward with recovery and rebuilding of the community. All City offices reopened yesterday and normal business resumed with the exception of many Parks and Recreation facilities, which mainly encountered flood damage. Some of the facilities temporarily closed are as follows: the Parks and Recreation Administration building, which has relocated to the Aquatic Center on Laura Lane; West New Bern Recreation Center's gym and game rooms are closed as they are serving as a shelter for citizens; all City boat launches as well as Stanley White Recreation Center, Union Point Park, Lawson Creek Park, Glenburnie Park, the dog Park, and Bear Plaza. Additional Police staff are present at the shelters and restricted areas, and utility restoration is nearing completion.

(Alderman Bengel briefly left the room at 6:05 p.m.)

At this point, power restoration is complete for all customers that can have power restored. Any utility customer still experiencing an issue was directed to contact the City at 636-4070. There are a number of homes and businesses that do not have power due to sustained damage at those locations.

(Alderman Bengel returned at 6:06 p.m.)

One of the biggest steps on the path to recovery will be dealing with trash and debris pickup. Matt Montanye, Director of Public Works, was asked to provide an update. Mr. Montanye announced the recycling plant in Jacksonville is without power. Because of this, recycling has been suspended until further notice. Residents can take recycling to one of the seven Craven County convenience centers. As soon as the storm left the area last week, the debris contractors were mobilized onsite. Most of last week was spent preparing the debris-removal sites in preparation of receiving debris. Debris removal actually began on Friday. Since that time, 126 loads (a little more than 3,700 cubic yards) of vegetative and 101 tons of construction debris have been hauled off. The construction debris will be the biggest challenge in the clean-up process. The Craven County contractor is being utilized, and mutual aid has been sought from several other cities. Two crews from the City of Wilson have been certified and began working today, and two trucks from the Town of Garner have also been certified. Tomorrow morning, crews will arrive from the cities of Rocky Mount and Greenville. All of these crews will focus on construction debris. Ten trucks from Public Works have also been certified to pick up construction debris. The total number of teams picking up vegetative debris is 31.

Noting there are 188 miles of streets within the city, Mr. Montanye asked citizens to be patient. Mayor Outlaw noted the City does not usually pick up construction debris, but is doing so due to the hurricane. Mr. Montanye asked citizens to separate construction debris, vegetative, brown goods, and white goods into different piles. The debris should be placed alongside of the street, but should not be placed in the street where it blocks emergency or other vehicles. Pointing out many businesses sustained damage, especially in the downtown area, Alderman Bengel asked about commercial debris and whether it would be picked up. Mr. Montanye responded debris from businesses will be picked up, and the City will fight FEMA on the backside for reimbursement of those services. One truck has been dedicated to commercial debris, and that truck is being monitored and tracked.

Mr. Hughes reiterated everything is essentially on a normal operating schedule this week as the City continues to clean up. Mayor Outlaw stressed the importance of communication and ensuring that all citizens are aware of the resources that are available. The Mayor said the Board is aware the number one concern seems to be citizens wanting to know about housing and how FEMA will work with them.

Alderman Aster asked how many employees worked through the storm. Mr. Hughes stated it was essentially all hands on deck as far as city staff, as well as mutual aid assistance. While the count is not available at this point since staff has been focused on moving forward, those stats will be forthcoming. Alderman Aster noted the National Guard, outside Police, Fire and utility services, swift water rescue, and many others were on hand. There were 800 swift water rescues made. Alderman Aster noted the City contracts with other agencies in the spring of the year to be ready for hurricane season. Mr. Hughes stated monumental improvements have been made in emergency planning since Irene struck in 2011. Staff has held tabletop exercises that have proven helpful.

Alderman Bengel said she wants to make sure people understand the electric process. Those without power should get a licensed electrician to make sure their electrical work is safe. After an electrician has inspected a home, the City's building inspectors will perform an inspection. Alderman Bengel asked about temporary service and how one goes about getting that. Mr. Hughes explained temporary service is much like the process for new construction. An electrician will set a temporary service pole, which will be inspected by the City of New Bern to ensure it meets the minimum building standards. Once approved, electric will install a meter.

Mayor Outlaw commented the City usually receives Community Development Block Grant ("CDBG") funds, and he suggested over the next couple of weeks staff look into emergency CDBG funds that are available. Alderman Bengel commented some of the businesses are really hurting as they had to close down and their employees cannot work because of situations with their homes. She thanked Linda McMann of the Small Business Association ("SBA") for coming to New Bern last week and announced the SBA has opened an office at Centenary Church where info on disaster loans are available. Citizens were reminded if they plan to apply for FEMA, they must first get a registration number. If someone has been denied, there is an appeal process. Alderman Bengel said she is extremely proud of city employees and cannot thank them enough for the role they played during the storm. There were several "hurricane heroes". Her first hurricane heroes are Alderwoman Jameesha Harris and her son, Buddy Bengel, who went out in the middle of the storm Thursday night and knocked on doors at Trent Court. They pulled out almost 40 people and helped get them to safety. Vincent Frazier is another hero. He works with a discount appliance store and began delivering milk and food, cutting down trees, etc. The last hurricane hero she acknowledged was Alderman Bobby Aster, who knows a lot about FEMA and knows how to help people through disasters. He was a calming voice during the storm. She thanked the citizens who called to reach out to her. For those who were angry, she stated the City did its best to help everyone. City employees have been flooded out, and they are just as important as any other citizen. Yet, those employees stayed at work while their families were evacuated. Alderman Bengel stated she is seeking donations for employees, which are being collected at the Human Resources' conference room.

Alderwoman Harris said she is super proud to represent New Bern and was proud of how the City and County came together to make sure all citizens were taken care of. She expressed gratitude that the City is at a point of recovery and rebuilding. She encouraged everyone to continue to check on their neighbors once the TV is off and the cameras are gone. She thanked hurricane heroes Christina Best, Antoinette Boskey, Corey Purdie, Curt Stewart with the Omega Center, Braedon Welsh, Kayla Ingram, Smoke from the Flame, and everyone else who has poured into the City. Prayers are being said for the employees, the City and all those who have suffered loss.

Alderman Aster thanked Alderman Bengel for her compliments. He said his heroes are the firefighters and police personnel who perform rescues, linemen who stand

in neck-deep water trying to get utilities on, and Public Works' employees who are cleaning up the mess.

Alderman Best said it would take her all night to thank everyone. She expressed gratitude for everyone working together. She did not want to thank particular groups of people or call people by name, as she did not want to leave anyone out. She stressed unity as the City continues to recover.

Jerry Haney with Federal Emergency Management Agency ("FEMA") was called forward to share information on behalf of FEMA. He is the division supervisor for Region 3, which encompasses Wayne, Lenoir, Greene, Craven, Carteret and Pamlico counties. His job is to assist the counties and municipalities with whatever they need. His first task upon arriving to the area was to assess the situation, and he saw the need was great. He has requested an assistant division supervisor to take care of the western counties, so he can concentrate more in this area. A couple of staff members have also joined him. This week, people are scheduled to come into this community to address certain issues such as environmental concerns, historic preservation, etc. Today, FEMA headquarter representation came in to tour the area and meet with local officials. Stanley Kite, Director of Emergency Services, brought up some concerns during that meeting that he and Mr. Haney had recognized: registration numbers are low because people do not have electricity, internet service, or information on how to register, etc. Mr. Haney said because of that meeting, there would be more boots on the ground starting tomorrow. Disaster Survivor Assistance Teams will have iPads to mobily take information from people. Housing will be a big issue as there is inadequate rental inventory to accommodate the people who have lost homes. Governor Cooper will be briefed tomorrow on this issue.

(Alderwoman Harris stepped out at 6:35 p.m.)

Mr. Haney stated he had been assured by the City Clerk that notes from this meeting would be provided to him, and he will take that list of concerns and get answers from the FEMA specialists. Alderman Bengel asked if FEMA would be working with HUD on the issues in Trent Court and the need for significant temporary housing. Mr. Haney replied after today, he believes that conversation will take place and the two agencies will work together. Alderman Best asked about the homes in Woodrow that are no longer standing and to what extent FEMA will help those residents rebuild and whether compensation is on a percentage basis. Mr. Haney said although he is not a specialist in that area, it is important for people to register with FEMA.

(Alderwoman Harris returned at 6:37 p.m.)

If denied, citizens were encouraged to immediately appeal. Mr. Haney stressed that citizens should never accept the denial. He stated FEMA hopes to have a disaster recovery center opened very soon, preferably before the week is out. He stressed the importance of appealing face to face versus online or on the phone. Alderman Best also asked about homes located in a flood area that will be repaired and whether grant monies are available to raise those homes. Mr. Haney said an

individual specialist in that area would let those citizens know about the programs they qualify for, including programs to raise dwellings.

Alderman Aster asked Mr. Haney to explain who can apply for individual assistance ("IA"). Mr. Haney said anyone who lives in the boundary limits of Craven County could apply, even if they have insurance. Under the public assistance ("PA") program, Alderman Aster asked if the PA would write the project worksheets ("PWs") on site or if the new model would be used. Mr. Haney stated there is no longer a new model, just a PA model. He did not have the answer to that question, but stated he would get the answer.

Alderwoman Harris said some constituents who rent believe if their landlord has filed a FEMA claim that they cannot. Mr. Haney confirmed anyone could apply. Alderman Bengel asked if there would be a FEMA office here, and Mr. Haney confirmed there would; it is the Disaster Recovery Center he referenced earlier. Alderman Aster asked when the PA would be on site, but Mr. Haney was not aware. He stated PA reps were in Raleigh at the joint field office, but he did not know when they would arrive in New Bern. Alderman Aster asked if the City could write its own PWs, and Mr. Haney said he would also check on that. Lastly, Alderman Aster asked if things were at 90/10, and Mr. Haney replied he had not heard that, but mathematicians are trying to get to that number.

Alderman Best made a motion to allow citizens in attendance to ask Mr. Haney questions, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Marshall Williams of 102 Neuchatel Rd asked what FEMA actually offers and whether there are loans or grants and what is free. Mr. Haney said it is not a simple answer. When an applicant registers, they will be notified of all programs they qualify for or which are available to them in the form of grants or loans. The key is to apply and make sure you understand what you qualify for. If someone does not understand, they should go to the Disaster Recovery Center. Alderman Bengel asked if assistance is based on income, and Mr. Haney replied it is based on several things.

Karen Knapik, a Public Affairs Specialist with the Small Business Administration ("SBA"), said the majority of their assistance during a federal disaster goes to homeowners. There are additional programs such as mitigation, refinancing, and relocation programs. Low-interest loans are offered beginning at 2% interest. Renters and homeowners can get \$40,000 for personal property loss and homeowners can also get an additional \$200,000 for real estate damage. The application process is very easy and takes less than 10 minutes for homeowners. Businesses must submit their financials. Ms. Knapik encouraged citizens to go through the application process. If approved, applicants can put the loan on hold, as the approval is valid for some time.

Alderman Bengel asked about people who are laid off because their employers had to close their business. Ms. Knapik said employees could get assistance through unemployment. Employees must show a means of being able to repay the loan. Therefore, if it is a short-term problem, they are encouraged to apply. There are

two types of loans for businesses: one is for physical damage or inventory/equipment loss, and the other is economic injury, which helps keep the business going, pay employees and keep things afloat.

Mayor Outlaw referenced the list of resources that has been made available through the City. Alderman Bengel described where to find this information on the City's website, and she reviewed the list of resources that are outlined on the list. With respect to the city's utility bills, late fees and delinquencies have been suspended, but not the actual bill. A long-term disaster recovery group will be revived and lead by Sandra Phelps of the United Way. Mayor Outlaw encouraged other groups that need to get their contact information out to the public to reach out to the City so they can be added to the list of resources.

Alderwoman Harris thanked Charles Tyndall for all of his assistance. Alderman Bengel said Steve Tyson has been great with sharing information. Mayor Outlaw called Pastor Robert Johnson of Ebenezer Church to the podium to share any information he may have. Rev. Johnson thanked the Mayor and Aldermen for distributing information, noting they have done an excellent job. He stressed the importance of communication and commented that the hurricane has really brought the City together in unity. The faith-based community has held several meetings to strategize about temporary housing for citizens, which is a main concern. The desire is for people who are scattered to be able to return home.

Mayor Outlaw said citizen security and drainage issues would continue to be monitored. The Mayor thanked Alderman Aster for obtaining the railroad's assistance with pumping out an area near some tracks. The railroad sent a flagman to control traffic while the City ran lines to pump out the water. Mr. Hughes said during the storm all pump stations performed as designed, as well as the wetlands. However, there is nothing that can be done to prepare for a blow such as that which Mother Nature dealt over the last couple of weeks. The goal is to try to get water out as quickly as possible.

Alderman Aster asked if the resource list could be updated to add the number to report scams. He also noted the price to remove a fallen tree would be cheaper a few weeks from now when the demand is lower. He suggested citizens use local companies and obtain several estimates. Mayor Outlaw said several insurance companies are set up in the Lowe's parking lot. Alderman Bengel pointed out the Red Cross is handling shelters. Today, the Trent Park shelter residents were moved to Vanceboro Farm Life. The hope is to start removing some of the shelters so children can go back to school. Feeding centers are set up around the City. Everyone was encouraged to continue to check on their neighbors, as many people have not yet been able to leave their homes.

Mayor Outlaw said the City is still getting many calls about resources that are coming to New Bern. He expressed a desire to partner with Harlowe, Trenton, Pollocksville, and other sister cities that also have needs. Alderman Best asked about assistance for and services to aid senior citizens. Alderman Bengel said the list of resources is a living document that can continually be updated. Concerns for additional services need to be raised to the Red Cross.

Alderwoman Harris recalled the Board's meeting on September 11th was cancelled due to the storm. Since it was not possible to honor the 9/11 victims on that date, a moment of silence was observed at this time.

Alderman Best said residents of the Woodrow area had notified her that bread is all over the parking lot at the Sunbeam location. Concern was expressed about conditions creating a harvest for rodents, etc. Alderman Best stated she has spoken with Development Services about this concern, and they are working to get that area cleaned up.

Mayor Outlaw asked Alderman Aster to provide information about Team Rubicon, which Alderman Aster did. Most members of Team Rubicon are veterans and former firefighters and police officers, and they are available to help demuck a house, cut sheetrock out, etc. Fire Chief Boyd recommend citizens call the Fire Department or go through the volunteer center (All Hands & Hearts at phone number 978-846-5887) to get in touch with Team Rubicon. Samaritan's Purse was also reviewed by Alderman Aster.

Alderman Best expressed concern about Ben Quinn School being a shelter and individuals having to leave it. Alderman Bengel replied the Red Cross and Craven County would handle that situation. The Red Cross must inspect facilities and approve them as shelters. Alderman Best asked if the McCotter House had been reviewed, and Alderman Bengel did not think it had been inspected yet.

Mayor Outlaw asked for an update on Stanley White and West New Bern Recreation Centers. Foster Hughes, Director of Parks and Recreation, said Stanley White took on 2 feet of water. Crews are getting ready to go into the facility to pull things out and clean. It will be several months before that facility is reopened. Mr. Hughes stated he met with the Red Cross today and paperwork was signed for West New Bern to be utilized as a shelter. All boat launches are closed because the docks are gone. The majority of recreational programs have been suspended for the near future because the need to provide shelter and housing is greater. Parks and Recreation's administrative building received flooding, as Jordan Hughes mentioned earlier. The hope is administration staff can return to that location within a month. Alderwoman Harris inquired about Kidsville. Foster Hughes replied the plans are still to move forward with Kidsville in March.

Consent Agenda

3. Consider Adopting a Proclamation Acknowledging Constitution Week.

On behalf of the Richard Dobbs Spaight Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, Nancy Melling requested a proclamation recognizing September 17-23, 2018 as Constitution Week.

4. Approve Minutes.

Minutes from the August 28, 2018 meeting were provided for review and approval.

Alderman Harris made a motion to approve Items 3-4 of the Consent Agenda, seconded by Alderman Bengel. The motion carried unanimously 5-0.

5. Presentation on Preliminary Plans for Use of Grant Funds Received for Martin Marietta Park.

As noted at the beginning of the meeting, this item was pulled.

6. Discussion of Part-Time Animal Control Officer.

As noted at the beginning of the meeting, this item was pulled.

7. Consider Adopting a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a NC Department of Transportation Grant Agreement on behalf of the New Bern Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

On behalf of the New Bern Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, the City has been identified as the direct recipient of Section 5303 Federal Transit Administration Urban Planning Funds. These funds are managed by NCDOT's Public Transportation Division. In order to receive the funds, the Board of Aldermen must adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign a grant agreement with NCDOT. The total allocation for FY2018-19 is \$25,000, which reflects a Federal and State share of \$22,500 and a local share of \$2,500. The local share will be provided by the jurisdictions participating in the New Bern Area MPO as follows: New Bern \$1,387.00; River Bend \$148.50; Trent Woods \$203.50; Bridgeton \$21.00; and Craven County \$740.00. Pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding, the local shares are based on percentages of the 2010 Urbanized Area population data and will not change until after the next decennial census.

Alderman Harris made a motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a NC Department of Transportation Grant Agreement on behalf of the New Bern Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

8. Consider Adopting a Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to Sign a Grant Contract with NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

The City previously applied for the 2017 Recreational Trails Program Grant through the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources and was notified on November 30, 2016, that it had been approved in the amount of \$56,000. Staff recently received the grant contract, which requires a cash match of \$14,000. This makes the total contract amount \$70,000. The grant funds will be used for the New Bern Riverwalk Greenway.

Alderman Harris made a motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign a grant contract with NC Department of Natural and Cultural

Resources, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried 5-0.

9. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving a Revised Schedule of Maximum Speed Limits as Defined in Section 70-132 through 70-135 of the New Bern Code of Ordinances.

After months of negotiations with the NC Department of Transportation (“DOT”), DOT has agreed to reduce the speed limit along NC Hwy. 55 in the Pleasant Hill community from 55 mph to 45 mph from a point being 0.60 miles east of SR1005 (Old NC Hwy. 70) to the intersection of NC Hwy. 43. It is proposed that the Schedule of Maximum Speed Limits be revised to incorporate this change.

Alderman Best made a motion to adopt a resolution approving a revised schedule of maximum speed limits as defined in Section 70-132 through 70-135 of the New Bern Code of ordinances, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried 5-0.

10. Consider Adopting a Resolution Approving the Installation of Additional Street Lights Near Duffy Street.

Residents have requested additional street lighting in the area of Duffy Street. Upon evaluating this request, it was determined the area does not meet the City’s lighting standards. The Electric Department estimated costs associated with the installation of additional lighting to be \$1,464.08. A monthly cost of \$8.44 will be incurred by Public Works for the utility bills.

Alderman Best made a motion to adopt a resolution approving the installation of additional streetlights near Duffy Street, seconded by Alderman Bengel. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried 5-0.

11. Consider Adopting a Budget Ordinance Amendment Acknowledging the 2018 Entitlement Cities Grant.

In 2013, the Board adopted a resolution authorizing staff to pursue CDBG Entitlement City status with the US Department of HUD, which would allow the City to receive funds through an annual allocation instead of competing with other small cities and counties for funding. The City received designation as an Entitlement City in 2014 and receives ongoing annual funding through the program. The most recent funding allocated to the City is in the amount of \$223,934. This budget ordinance amendment will recognize these funds.

Alderman Bengel asked if working through additional CDBG emergency grants would affect this funding. Jeff Ruggieri, Director of Development Services, indicated there would be no impact on the funding.

Alderman Bengel made a motion to adopt a budget ordinance amendment acknowledging the 2018 Entitlement Cities Grant, seconded by Alderwoman Harris. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Additional Item

Alderwoman Harris made a motion to adopt a resolution to suspend deposits and delinquent actions on utility accounts, seconded by Alderman Aster. Upon a roll-call vote, the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

12. Appointment(s).

There were no appointments.

13. Attorney's Report.

The City Attorney had nothing to report.

14. City Manager's Report.

The Acting City Manager had nothing to report. Mayor Outlaw thanked Mr. Hughes for filling in.

15. New Business.

Alderman Aster

He has spoken with J.R. Sabatelli, Director of Finance, about how FEMA project worksheets and claims will now be submitted. In some cases, there are estimates that about 70% of the money could have been left on the table because of the way the project worksheets were prepared. The City has close to \$100 million worth of damages, of which \$30 million is related to businesses, and it is unknown how much is related to City damages that will fall under the PA program. Alderman Aster stated he made contact with some of the FEMA officials he has worked with in the past. After talking with them, it is his suggestion that the Board hire a consultant to prepare the project worksheets for New Bern. Hurricanes Irene and Matthew were nothing compared to this storm, yet the City is still not finished with those FEMA claims. Alderman Bengel concurred with Alderman Aster and said she has read up on the consulting company that Alderman Aster has become aware of. Mr. Sabatelli also expressed concurrence, noting he has spoken with the City Manager and Accounting Manager. The City does not have one person it can dedicate to this task, as everyone is busy. Alderman Aster pointed out under FEMA guidelines most, if not all, of the consultant's fees are reimbursable. Attorney Davis noted the Board would need to see the contract before it could approve it, although the Board could give direction. Mayor Outlaw stated he would like to expedite a contract as quickly as possible so reimbursement could be sought, even if that meant the Board needed to call for a special meeting.

Alderman Bengel reminded citizens that situations such as this is why the City has the fund balance it does; the City has to put out money before it can be reimbursed. Attorney Davis said staff can issue a Request for Proposals to solicit services or if it has identified a company, it can obtain a proposed contract for consideration. Alderman Aster said whichever approach is taken he wanted to make sure that approach follows FEMA guidelines. Mayor Outlaw said he did not want to wait two

weeks to approve a contract and again mentioned the possibility of having a special meeting. Alderman Aster recommended the City not write a PW until it obtains a consultant.

16. Closed Session.

A closed session was not needed.

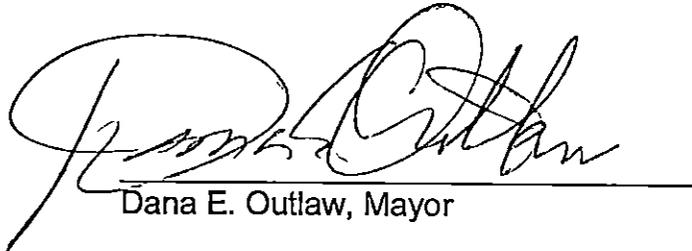
17. Adjourn

Alderman Harris made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Alderman Bengel. The motion carried unanimously 5-0, time being 7:35 p.m.

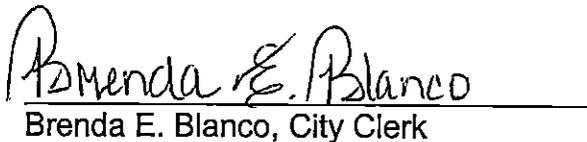
The attached documents are incorporated herewith and are hereby made a part of these minutes.

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. Video and audio recordings of the meeting have been archived.

Minutes approved: October 9, 2018



Dana E. Outlaw, Mayor



Brenda E. Blanco, City Clerk