



COUNTY OF DARE, NORTH CAROLINA

District 1: Roanoke Island & Mainland; District 2: Nags Head, Colington, Kill Devil Hills; District 3: Kitty Hawk, Southern Shores, Duck; District 4: Chicamacomico, Avon, Buxton, Frisco, Hatteras; District 5: At Large

Regularly scheduled Board meetings are videotaped and can be viewed at www.darenc.com

MINUTES

DARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING

Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC

5:00 p.m., February 20, 2018

Commissioners present: Chairman Robert Woodard, Vice Chairman Wally Overman
Jack Shea, Steve House, Rob Ross, Danny Couch

Commissioners absent: Jim Tobin

Others present: County Manager/Attorney, Robert Outten
Deputy County Manager/Finance Director, David Clawson
Public Information Officer, Dorothy Hester
Clerk to the Board, Gary Lee Gross

A full and complete account of the entire Board of Commissioners meeting is archived on a video that is available for viewing on the Dare County website www.darenc.com.

Chairman Woodard called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. He invited Dr. Wayne Barry from All Saints Episcopal Church to share a prayer, and then he led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Note – some agenda items were handled out of sequential order in order to accommodate the schedule of the presenter for Item #3 (NCDOT passenger ferry presentation).

ITEM 1 – OPENING REMARKS – CHAIRMAN’S UPDATE

Following is a brief outline of the items mentioned by Chairman Woodard during his opening remarks, which can be viewed in their entirety in a video on the Dare County website –

- Chairman Woodard commended Vice Chairman Overman for his efforts with the Saving Lives Task Force and noted that their recent Town Hall meeting was a great success.
- Thanked Commissioner House for traveling to the Marine Fisheries Commission meeting in Wrightsville Beach to present the Board’s resolution supporting our watermen.
- Reported on a recent meeting of stakeholders, the County, and the Park Service to discuss the need for beach nourishment in the Village of Avon.
- Gave a briefing on a meeting held earlier today with Michael Regan, Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, where stakeholders discussed the community’s opposition to offshore drilling. The Chairman encouraged everyone to speak up against offshore drilling, which he said is an issue of vital importance.

- Provided a report on today's dedication ceremony to name the new Pea Island Bridge in honor of Captain Richard Etheridge. He noted that Black History Month is a fitting time to honor the first African-American keeper of the Pea Island Lifesaving Station.
- The Chairman presented a certificate of appreciation to Gail and Angelo Sonnesso thanking them for their service to families impacted by dementia and for being a driving force advocating for memory care services, education, and support.

ITEM 2 – PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Manager outlined the procedure for making public comments in Manteo and via the video link to the Fessenden Center in Buxton. Following is a brief summary of citizen remarks, which can be viewed in their entirety in a video on the Dare County website –

The following comments were made in Manteo –

1. Lorelei DiBernardo – on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Dare County, presented the 2018 Citizens Guide and outlined the many places where people can obtain the publication that provides a helpful index of community services.
2. Brent Johnson – spoke as a business owner in support of the zoning text amendment on the agenda to allow food stands in unincorporated Dare County. He said modifying the regulations would allow local businesses to thrive and provide alternative cuisine.
3. Andrew Darling – asked Commissioners to do whatever they can to support GEM in their efforts to help families dealing with dementia. He shared his personal involvement with the group and described the positive service that they provide to the community.
4. Steve Bonney – echoed the remarks of Brent Johnson on the issue of food stands by outlining the steps he has taken to setup a food stand on Hatteras Island. He asked the Board to change the regulations, which will allow him and others to go to work.
5. Gail Sonnesso – thanked the many volunteers who assist in GEM's effort to provide the community with much needed dementia services. She gave details of an upcoming educational opportunity and urged everyone to attend the event.
6. Monica Thibodeau – commented on the meeting with Secretary Regan and said the community needs to make noise in opposition to offshore drilling. She also spoke in wholehearted support of GEM noting that they do so much on a shoestring budget.
7. Rose Clark – said she was happy that the Board of Commissioners recognized Gail and Angelo Sonnesso for the wonderful way that GEM helps the community. She shared her experience and perspective serving as a volunteer with the group for the past five years.
8. Dana Gardner – spoke in support of GEM and told the Board of Commissioners how Gail Sonnesso helps caregivers by teaching people effective things they can do at home when providing care for family members with dementia.

There were no Public Comments via the video link to the Fessenden Center in Buxton.

ITEM 3 – NCDOT PRESENTATION ON HATTERAS – OCRACOKE PASSENGER FERRY

Jed Dixon, Deputy Director of the NCDOT Ferry Division, briefed the Board on a new passenger ferry service between Hatteras and Ocracoke that is planned to begin operating this summer. He outlined how the passenger ferry will operate and described parking plans for the new service, which will supplement the existing car ferry provided by NCDOT. He thanked Superintendent Hallac for the helpful way the National Park Service has been a partner in this venture. He also thanked Commissioner Couch and Commissioner Ross for serving on the Stakeholder Committee for the passenger ferry service.

ITEM 4 – RESOLUTIONS TO NAME NCDOT FERRIES (Att. #1)

The County Manager presented two resolution requests from NCDOT seeking Board support for the naming of two ferry vessels.

MOTION

Commissioner Shea motioned to adopt the resolution as presented to name the MV Baum replacement ferry the “Rodanthe.”

Vice Chairman Overman and Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

MOTION

Commissioner Shea motioned to adopt the resolution as presented to name the new passenger ferry the “Ocracoke Express.”

Commissioner Ross seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 5 – REPORT FROM THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Superintendent David Hallac gave a comprehensive report on visitation to the Park Service sites in Dare County announcing that there were 3.2 million visits during 2017. He provided statistics on Off-Road Vehicle use and noted that 94% of Off-Road Vehicle routes were open during the summer of 2017. An update was given on infrastructure improvements including the renovations that are underway at the Visitors Center at the Wright Brothers Memorial in Kill Devil Hills. Superintendent Hallac thanked community partners including the Outer Banks Preservation Association (OBPA), the North Carolina Beach Buggy Association (NCBBA), the Cape Hatteras Anglers Club, the First Flight Society, and the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau. Chairman Woodard expressed appreciation for the positive relationship that Superintendent Hallac has developed with the Board of Commissioners.

ITEM 6 – REPORT FROM THE OUTER BANKS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Bob Peele, Chair of the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce, was joined by President and CEO Karen Brown in presenting an overview of a new Community Housing Initiative. Mr. Peele listed the organizations that are working together to address the issue of affordable housing, which is a critical need for 75% of the businesses surveyed by the Chamber. Commissioners were told that this Initiative is the first step in starting a conversation at the town and county levels to address the issue and that the group will be engaging with local government officials to find a solution to the crisis. Ms. Brown also provided the Board with an update on the Chamber’s implementation of Dare County’s Economic Development plan.

ITEM 7 – PROPOSED ZONING AMENDMENTS FOR FOOD STANDS IN UNINCORPORATED DARE COUNTY

Planning Director Donna Creef briefed the Board on requests that are routinely made by people wanting to operate a mobile food service, which was the topic of a Public Hearing conducted by the Planning Department in 2017. She explained that the Zoning Ordinance has three definitions for food establishments – 1) Food Stands, 2) Drive-ins, 3) Restaurants. Ms. Creef outlined the zoning districts that address food stands and those that do not and described the steps that need to be taken if the Board wants to address this issue. It was noted that it was the consensus of the Planning Board that ice cream vendors should not be the focus of any regulatory initiative since they serve pre-packaged goods. Vice Chairman Overman clarified that the proposed zoning amendments are intended to provide uniformity throughout unincorporated Dare County concerning the regulation of food stands. Following discussion, the Board voted to schedule a Public Hearing on the matter.

MOTION

Vice Chairman Overman motioned to schedule a Public Hearing for 5:30 p.m. on March 19, 2018 on the recommendations submitted by the Planning Board.

Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 8 – CONSENT AGENDA

The Manager announced the items as they were visually displayed in the meeting room.

MOTION

Commissioner Shea motioned to approve the Consent Agenda:

- 1) Approval of Minutes (02.05.18) **(Att. #2)**
- 2) Tax Collector's Report

Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

DEMONSTRATION OF DS200 VOTING MACHINE

The County Manager introduced Tom Janysek from Printelect who gave the Board a step by step demonstration of how the DS200 voting machine operates and outlined its features. Lynda Midgett, on behalf of the Board of Elections, summarized the involvement that Printelect has had with Dare County. Elections Chair Donna Elms noted that the Elections Board has done its homework in recommending the Printelect firm and the DS200 voting machine. The County Manager reminded that the total cost of \$125,081.90 has been previously approved by the Board and is already allocated in the budget. He said the purpose of today's demonstration was for Commissioners to be able to see and understand how the DS200 operates before formally taking action to approve its use in Dare County.

MOTION

Commissioner Shea motioned to approve the use of Printelect DS200 voting machines for Dare County elections.

Commissioner Couch seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

ITEM 9 – COMMISSIONERS’ BUSINESS & MANAGER’S/ATTORNEY’S BUSINESS

Commissioners and the County Manager frequently make extensive remarks, which can be viewed in their entirety in a video on the Dare County website. Following is a brief summary outline of the items mentioned by Commissioners during this segment –

Commissioner Shea

- Asked everyone to pray for those killed in the recent Florida school shooting. He noted that mental health issues should be a major priority for our nation’s lawmakers.

Commissioner Couch

- Gave an update on his involvement with the Children & Youth Partnership for Dare County and commended the commitment of their excellent staff. He provided details for an upcoming Children & Youth Partnership event and urged everyone to participate.
- Reported on the latest meeting of the Fessenden Center Advisory Board and thanked County staff being attentive to the community concerns that were expressed at meeting.
- Expressed thanks for the economic stimulus and development that is happening related to the new NCDOT passenger ferry service between Hatteras and Ocracoke Island.

Commissioner Ross

- Advised that the Albemarle Commission has voted to enter into negotiations for a new headquarters site in Elizabeth City that will be a leased facility rather than owned. Chairman Woodard asked Board Members to let Commissioner Ross know of any candidates to fill an At-Large seat that is currently open on the Albemarle Commission.
- Said he was looking forward to going to Raleigh on February 26 to attend the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) meeting on offshore drilling.
- Mentioned a special week coming up in March for the Dare County Center where he will be taking part in their program that delivers meals to homebound older adults
- Conveyed gratitude to three Dare County employees on behalf of someone in the community with a serious health problem who received outstanding care from Dare County Home Health. Commissioner Ross thanked Leah Todd, Sharon Lutzow, and Jennifer Harrell for their service, compassion, and professionalism.

Commissioner House

- Gave a detailed report of his trip to Wrightsville Beach on Valentine’s Day to attend the NC Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) meeting where he presented the resolution that the Dare County Board of Commissioners adopted opposing MFC’s effort to redefine commercial fishing. He explained that during the public comment segment of the meeting while people were voicing their concerns, some of the MFC members were engaged in private conversations with each other. Commissioner House reported that he spoke up and raised a point of order asking the MFC Chair to have the side conversations stopped. He added that this act was later described in a disparaging way in the newsletter of a special interest group. Chairman Woodard and others assured Commissioner House that he was not out of order in how he spoke up on behalf of the watermen who were trying to make public comments.

- Commissioner House briefed the Board on the action that was ultimately taken by the Marine Fisheries Commission at the Wrightsville Beach meeting and outlined the need for a new resolution to oppose the changes they made to the criteria for defining a commercial fishing operation. He said the issue passed in a 5 to 4 vote, which now goes to the North Carolina House of Representatives. Commissioner House urged people to contact their legislators in Raleigh about this and asked the Board to approve a resolution opposing any adverse change to the definition of commercial fishing.

MOTION (Att. #3-A)

Commissioner House motioned to adopt a resolution expressing the Board's opposition to any adverse changes in the definition of Commercial Fishing.

Vice Chairman Overman and Commissioner Shea seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

- In a related matter, Commissioner House reported on a motion made by Marine Fisheries Commission member Janet Rose who called on Governor Cooper to examine the current membership of the Commission. Commissioner House asked the Board to approve a resolution asking the Governor to examine membership of the Commission and if need be to make changes to ensure that it functions as intended.

MOTION (Att. #3-B)

Commissioner House motioned to adopt a resolution asking Governor Cooper to examine the current membership of the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission and if need be to make changes to ensure that this Commission functions as intended.

Commissioner Shea seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

- Commissioner House presented the SPCA Pet of the Week video featuring a special pet in need of adoption at the Dare County Animal Shelter.

Vice Chairman Overman

- Provided a report on the recent Town Hall Meeting sponsored by the Saving Lives Task Force. He thanked the Pastor of the Source Church in Manteo for his involvement in addressing substance use. The Vice Chairman urged everyone to attend the future Town Hall Meetings that the Saving Lives Task Force has planned.
- Expressed thanks to Gail and Angelo Sonnesso and the volunteers of GEM for their service to the community helping families care for those with dementia.

Chairman Woodard

- Thanked his fellow Commissioners for their participation in today's ceremony to name the new Pea Island Bridge in honor of Captain Richard Etheridge noting that this was a great way to celebrate Black History Month.
- Chairman Woodard announced that the Buxton beach nourishment project is approximately 95% complete and said he is glad that the project is almost finished.

MANAGER’S/ATTORNEY’S BUSINESS

1. The County Manager provided background on a recommendation from the Fessenden Center Advisory Board to move the video link for public comments from the Center’s Main Building to the Annex Building. He explained how this move will allow for the expansion of programs at the Fessenden Center while still providing adequate space for the public comments video link. He asked the Board for authorization to move forward with this noting that when the technology is in place the County will publicize the start date for the new public comments location.

MOTION

Vice Chairman Overman motioned to approve moving the public comments video link from the Fessenden Center to the Annex Building in Buxton as outlined by the Manager. Commissioner House seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

Prior to adjournment, Public Information Officer Dorothy Hester reported on the distribution of a flyer announcing the Community Meeting planned by the Board for 7:00 p.m., Monday, March 19, 2018. Ms. Hester noted that a public service announcement is being developed to encourage people to make public comments in opposition to offshore drilling. Finance Director David Clawson informed the Board that updates will soon be available for the beach nourishment debt model.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Chairman Woodard asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION

Commissioner Shea motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Ross seconded the motion.

VOTE: AYES unanimous

At 8:02 p.m., the Board of Commissioners adjourned until 9:00 a.m., March 5, 2018.



APPROVED:

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Gary Lee Gross, Clerk to the Board

By: 
Robert Woodard, Chairman
Dare County Board of Commissioners