



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

MINUTES

DARE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

SPECIAL MEETING – TOWN HALL

To conduct a Town Hall Meeting
to hear from the public about issues of concern
and to obtain suggested solutions for the challenges facing Dare County

Dare County Administration Building, Manteo, NC

6:30 p.m., January 19, 2016

Commissioners present: Chairman Robert Woodard
Vice-Chairman Wally Overman
Warren Judge, Jack Shea, Allen Burrus,
Beverly Boswell, Margarett Umphlett

Commissioners absent: None

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

Chairman Woodard called the Special Meeting to order at 6:39 p.m. The format of the meeting was announced and 5 individuals spoke, including –

1. Bob Muller called for improvements to be made to the Kill Devil Hills Library, which he said needs new carpet that is severely damaged. He asked that the cost for new carpet not be taken out of the budget for books. Mr. Muller also spoke about water quality problems in our storm water drainage ditches. He said this represents a threat to tourism, construction, and fishing, which are economic pillars that depend on water quality. He asked the Board to restart the water quality monitoring program that was in place in the late 80's and early 90's and create a task force to identify potential problem areas. He said strategies should be evaluated to replace and repair existing systems that are going to cause long-term water quality problems. In response, Commissioner Umphlett noted that the Manteo Library also needs repairs and agreed that funds should not be taken away from books. Commissioner Judge said without water we have nothing.
2. Charles Earley said that over the years he has seen the drug problem become a widespread issue that has hurt a lot of good people. He called on the community to come together and really tackle this problem. Mr. Earley said a good job is

being done by law enforcement, the hospital, fire departments, and EMS, but we need to find a solution. In response, Vice-Chairman Overman explained the role of the Substance Abuse Task Force and the importance of prevention, education, and treatment. He also outlined the help that Naloxone may provide as a tool for first responders. Commissioner Judge added that abuse of prescription drugs is a significant part of the problem. Commissioner Shea recommended that doctors prescribe pain medications that will minimize the risk of addiction.

3. Mary Ryscavage pointed out a problem at the CVS traffic light at what is known as the Midway Intersection. She said the area is extremely dark and it makes it hard to negotiate a left-hand turn at night. Ms. Ryscavage said reflectors do not work very well and she recommended that lighting be added at the intersection.
4. Judy Justice expressed concern about the workers of Dare County. She said people cannot afford to live here and struggle because of the high cost of living, which she said is higher than the rest of North Carolina. She added that Dare County has children that are homeless. She said this has been addressed in the past by the Community Development Corporation, which has since folded; and by a Committee known as the Affordable Housing Committee, which she said has disappeared. Ms. Justice called on the Board to reestablish the committee and look into this issue so people will be able to afford to live here. Chairman Woodard noted that this issue will be a discussion topic at the Board's Retreat.
5. Monica Thibodeau said she traveled to Raleigh today to attend the 2016 Atlantic Energy Forum and spoke on behalf of the Outer Banks in opposition to offshore drilling. She described activities that are underway by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and encouraged the Board to continue voicing its opposition of offshore drilling. Chairman Woodard reminded everyone that the Board has taken an adamant stand against offshore drilling.

Chairman Woodard invited Commissioners to respond to the Town Hall audience –

- Commissioner Burrus expressed concern that expansion of the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary could result in decisions being made in Washington, D.C. that could later harm the people of Dare County. He explained that it takes a village to properly address the drug issue.
- Commissioner Boswell thanked everyone for attending the Town Hall. She said it has been a productive year and thanked the Oregon Inlet Task Force for their hard work to make our waterways safer. She added that she would like to see our libraries made more inviting and described water quality as a top priority issue.
- Commissioner Umphlett said serving on the Board has been an eye opening experience. She said she is amazed at all the many services that are available in Dare County and highlighted some activities. Commissioner Umphlett said she

welcomes citizen questions and urged people to share their solutions for the problems facing Dare County.

- Commissioner Judge thanked people for coming to the Town Hall and urged everyone to get involved locally and by sharing their thoughts with various state and federal agencies. He noted that drug abuse is an issue that needs to be addressed by the entire community.
- Vice-Chairman Overman thanked everyone for braving the cold weather to attend the Town Hall. He thanked the public for allowing him to serve this great county.
- Commissioner Shea thanked people for attending the Town Hall meeting. He said the answer for the problem of workers not being able to afford to live here is attracting higher paying jobs to Dare County. He said the Board has approved a plan for economic development and he has hope that it will help bring better paying jobs to the county so that we can better retain our high school graduates.
- Chairman Woodard asked all County employees to stand up for recognition and he commended them for their dedication and service. He said the Board will be doing a salary study and addressing the problem in phases. The Chairman commended his fellow Commissioners for tackling the tough issues and thanked Senator Cook and Representative Tine for their assistance. He also thanked the media for their reporting. He expressed gratitude to several others including the Oregon Inlet Task Force, Bill Massey, and NCDOT Board Member Malcolm Fearing. Chairman Woodard closed the meeting by reminding everyone that we live in a beautiful place and encouraged people to enjoy the many wonderful things to see and do in Dare County. It was announced that another Town Hall meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m., February 4, 2016 on Hatteras Island.

At 7:33 p.m., the Board of Commissioners adjourned the Town Hall meeting.



Respectfully submitted,

By: _____


Gary Gross, Clerk to the Board

APPROVED: _____


Robert Woodard, Chairman
Dare County Board of Commissioners