



Town of HOLLY RIDGE

PO Box 145 * Holly Ridge, NC 28445 * Phone (910) 329-7081 * Fax (910) 329-1593

HOLLY RIDGE TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING May 14th, 2024 6:30 P.M.

Mayor Jeff Wenzel called the Regular Meeting of the Holly Ridge Town Council to order at 6:30 p.m. at the Holly Ridge Town Hall. Council members present were Councilman Hines, Mayor Pro-Tem Patti, Councilman Misciagno, and Councilman Parnian. Also, present were the Town Manager, Heather Reynolds, Deputy Clerk, Tracy Martin, and Chief Sorg. Councilwoman Stanley was absent.

Invocation and Pledge

Rev. Dante Murphy – with Manhollow Missionary Baptist Church gave the Invocation and Mayor Wenzel led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made by *Councilman Hines* and seconded by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* to adopt the agenda as presented. *All Agreed.*

Persons Wishing to Address the Council

Dorothy Royal – 103 Atkinson Point Road Surf City said her business is located at 127 Sound Road Holly Ridge. Ms. Royal said her husband and children were born here and she has been an active part of this community for decades.

Ms. Royal said so how do you think she felt when at a Regular Town Meeting last month that Ms. Royal was not even present for when Council Hines took several minutes of his closing statement to belittle and berate a member of this community. A member of this community that would never ask anyone to do anything that she would not be willing to do herself to make this a better place.

Has Councilman Hines been here so long that he has forgotten he is held to a higher standard as an elected official? Has he forgotten that his elected position mandates that he is here to improve the lives of all the members of this community and not a select few? Has Councilman Hines seen the damage caused by his unacceptable and aggressive behavior that has led to the resignation of one of our most valuable members of the Busy Bee Committee.

Does Councilman Hines even care? That is a question you should be asking yourselves. How would you feel if Councilman Hines sat up there on the record and belittled and berated all of you for doing nothing more than trying to make Holly Ridge a better place?

How would you feel if Councilman Hines said nasty things about your business, things that could falsely damage your reputation. Is that the action of a true Council person or someone who has forgotten their place, forgotten their commitment, and not forgotten that this is not about them, but about the entire community?

Ms. Royal said she is an advent believer in the first amendment, but with all freedoms come responsibility, and when a council person attacks someone for simply asking a question that should send up a red flag that should be caused for alarm and that should never happen in the position he sits in today. Do you think it is socially acceptable to allow a council person to act like this?

How many years do we have to endure this unprofessional conduct from an elected official who himself admits he's been on the very board for over thirty years? Perhaps after all those years you feel entitled to be there? Is that the case? Ms. Royal said in good consciousness, she can no longer sit by and watch and endure such abuse to herself and others by an elected official. This is shameful behavior and should never be tolerated.

Ms. Royal said with Councilman Hines's recent outburst that is on the record, it clearly shows that he no longer represents this community. Ms. Royal said Councilman Hines has broken his oath and shame on him, as it is evident that he no longer treats the people of this community with fairness, the same people who have dedicated their time and energy for free, to make this community a better place.

Ms. Royal said she respectfully demands Councilman Hines immediate resignation so that we as a community may find another person who actually cares about the people equally and with fairness. Ms. Royal said thank you and GOD bless.

Ricky Royal – 127 Sound Road Holly Ridge said he has simply got to say there should be an apology. Mr. Royal said you should man up and just write up an apology. Mr. Royal said it is not fair and it is not the type of thing you would expect someone that has proclaimed to be for us. Mr. Royal said that is basically all he has to say.

Public Hearings

Discussion and Possible Approval of a Zoning Map Amendment submitted by Stanley Sholar for two Parcels located on Drag Strip Road and Identified as Parcel # 423703101226 (Map # 735-42) and Pin # 423703101270 (Map # 735-50) to Rezone from Rural Agriculture (RA) to Commercial for a total of 1.41 acres.

Community Development Director, Nathan Rhue said the applicant is Stanley Sholar and this is related to two parcels identified as Map # 735-42 and Map # 735-50 totaling 1.41 acres. It is currently zoned rural agriculture, and the request is to rezone it too commercial. Mr. Rhue said this is on the corner of Drag Strip Road and US Highway 17.

Mr. Rhue said the future Land Use map designates this as low density residential which applies to all those properties surrounding, aside from Drag Strip being the Town Council previously rezoned that parcel to commercial and that would automatically change the land use map to commercial in that area.

Mr. Rhue said the Town Council should take into consideration all the permitted uses versus any particular use that may be suggested or planned for the property.

Mr. Rhue said the Planning Board discussed this at their meeting on April 16th, 2024, and they unanimously recommended approval being that the adjoining parcels are RA, R-20 and commercial, it would be appropriate for this area. Mr. Rhue said it is mainly vacant and underdeveloped aside from the single-family dwelling that is on the east and west of the property. There is planned unit development of the apartment complex and commercial use to the north. The future land use is indicating low density.

Mr. Rhue said if the Town Council denied the request, the applicant would have twelve months before an application can be made.

A motion was made by **Councilman Parnian** and seconded by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** to go into Public Hearing. **All Agreed.**

Mr. Stanley Sholar asked when will a stoplight and curbing be in place and will there be access to the property.

A motion was made by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** and seconded by **Councilman Hines** to return to Regular session. **All Agreed.**

Manager Reynolds said we are still working in conjunction with the Department of Transportation and JUMPO and later in the agenda packet, the Town Council has a Resolution for consideration requesting economic development funding from the Department of Transportation.

Mayor Wenzel asked if we had an answer for the curbing. Manager Reynolds said Anthony with Jacksonville Urban Metropolitan Organization suggested we go ahead and budget for the upcoming year engineering and design.

Mr. Stanley Sholar said the road is cut where they dug the new ditch, and the ditch comes back towards Holly Ridge and there is a hill going the other way towards the county line branch and Mr. Sholar said he is unsure where these drains.

Manager Reynolds said it is her understanding that is under the State's purview, and we have reached out to DEQ.

A motion was made by *Councilman Misciagno* and seconded by *Councilman Parnian* to approve the zoning map amendment submitted by Mr. Stanley Sholar to rezone two parcels located on Drag Strip Road consisting of 1.41 acres. *All Agreed.*

Discussion and Possible Approval of a Zoning Map Amendment submitted by Alice Faye Holley-Neal located on Drag Strip Road and Identified as Pin # 423703009502 (Map # 75-44) to Rezone from Rural Agriculture (RA) to Commercial for a total of 2.48 acres.

Mr. Rhue said this property is one lot above Mr. Sholar's property. Mr. Rhue said Ms. Holley-Neal is requesting rezoning from RA to commercial and the total acreage is 2.48 acres. The future land use map also designates this as low density residential.

Mr. Rhue said the Planning Board unanimously approved this as well and the Land Use map indicates this is compatible with that area and it has access to a major corridor.

A motion was made by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* and seconded by *Councilman Parnian* to go into Public Hearing. *All Agreed.*

Mr. Holley-Neal said she received a new appraisal in January of this year and Ms. Holley-Neal asked will she be receiving another new appraisal for the commercial rezone.

Manager Reynolds called on Attorney Corrie Lee to answer the above questions from Ms. Holley-Neal.

Attorney Lee said the appraisal for the condemnation's appraisal is effective as of the date that we filed the condemnation, which was last week. Attorney Lee said the appraisal will be as of the date of the taking.

A motion was made by *Councilman Parnian* and seconded by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* to return to Regular Session. *All Agreed.*

A motion was made by *Councilman Parnian* and seconded by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* to approve the zoning map amendment submitted by Alice Faye Holley-Neal to rezone 2.48 acres from Rural Agriculture to Commercial located on Drag Strip Road and include the consistency statement. *All Agreed.*

Discussion and Possible Approval of a Zoning Map Amendment submitted by Timothy Powell for property located on US Highway 17 N and Identified as Pin # 423715548954 (Map # 734-128) to Rezone from R-15A to Commercial for a total of .5 acres.

Mr. Rhue said Mr. Powell is requesting R-15 A and this property is located between Highway 17 and Holly Street and is approximately 22,535 square feet. Mr. Rhue said he failed to mention in the previous public hearings the commercial does not have a minimum of lot areas. Mr. Rhue said the adjoining properties are also R-15A and commercial and this particular property is the healthcare facility. Mr. Rhue said across the street is a dental office and a little to the north and across the street is a surveyor's office and laundry mat.

Mr. Rhue said the future Land Use indicates this is mixed use which is more significant for your residential and commercial being tied in as a mixed-use establishment.

Mr. Rhue said the Planning Board unanimously approved this at the April 16th, 2024, meeting because of the multiple commercial uses that exist in that area. Mr. Rhue said as it is, it is adjacent to parcels but there is an existing manufacture mobile home park and that the future land use marks this as mixed use which could include a concentration of commercial service, institution and residential. Also, the process prospect of locating commercial uses on property along these major thoroughfares would be in the public's interest.

A motion was made by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* and seconded by *Councilman Parnian* to go into Public Hearing. *All Agreed.*

Ms. Dorothy Royal said she owns the adjacent parcel and Dr. Powell had contacted her previously about his rezoning to commercial and Dr. Powell asked if Ms. Royal would like to rezone her property at the same time since neither one of them are fans of spot zoning. Mr. and Mrs. Royal agreed that would be fine. Ms. Royal said as the adjacent property owner, they are in favor of this.

Carolyn Sweeney – 391 Summerhouse Drive asked if anyone shows any kind of concern about all the commercial property that is becoming available to the traffic of all the apartments that is going up. No one is doing anything to stop any of this. Ms. Sweeney said we have all these people that are coming into the vicinity, but no one is doing anything about upgrading the Police Department or Fire Department. Ms. Sweeney said we are not hearing anything about making plans for the services, but we are doing all this commercial building. Ms. Sweeney said we keep hearing we need to watch out for the environment but is anyone looking out for the environment?

A motion was made by *Councilman Parnian* and seconded by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* to return to Regular Session. *All Agreed.*

A motion was made by *Councilman Parnian* and seconded by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* to approve the zoning map amendment and consistency statement submitted by Timothy Powell to rezone from R-15 A to Commercial for a total of .5 acres. *All Agreed.*

Discussion and Possible Action of a Zoning Map Amendment submitted by Dorothy Royal, Representative of Pearl Valley, LLC, applicant/owner located on US Highway 17 N and

Identified as Pin # 423711559096 (Map # 734-130) to rezone from R-5A to Commercial for a total of .19 acres.

Mr. Rhue said Ms. Royal has submitted her request for a rezone from R-15A to Commercial for a total of .19 acres. Mr. Rhue said the property is on the corner of Camp Davis Road and Highway 17 as well as Holly Street. Mr. Rhue said the surrounding current zoning R-15A adjoining the property with a high concentration of commercial as well which is undeveloped at this time and vacant with the manufactured mobile home park to the west of this parcel as well.

Mr. Rhue said the future Land Use map designates this as mixed use with commercial uses that are permitted and that should be considered. Mr. Rhue said the Planning Board unanimously recommended approval based on the adjacent property being a high concentration of commercial that the mixed use from the Land Use Plan complements that being there could be a concentration of commercial services, institutional residential, and that it being long may occur.

A motion was made by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** and seconded by **Councilman Parnian** to go into Public Hearing. **All Agreed.**

A motion was made by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** and seconded by **Councilman Parnian** to return to Regular Session. **All Agreed.**

Councilman Parnian addressed Ms. Sweeney's concerns and Councilman Parnian said he would be happy to listen more to her concerns and possibly help resolve her issues.

A motion was made by **Councilman Misciagno** and seconded by **Councilman Parnian** to approve the zoning map amendment submitted by Dorothy Royal to rezone from R-15 A to Commercial for a total of .19 acres and adopt the consistency statement. **All Agreed.**

Town Manager Report

Manager Reynolds said this past week was the debris pick up around town and it was a well participated in. Manager Reynolds said there have been a couple of requests over the last month or so to expand the debris pickup services. This is something we are looking at for the upcoming budget.

Manager Reynolds said Public Works is attempting to keep up with the grass and street repairs. Manager Reynolds said they did complete the street repairs at the entrance of the Neighborhoods of Holly Ridge.

The Liberty Fountain was sealed and pressured washed last week. It must sit for a few dry days, then the pool is painted and then it will be back up and running before the Memorial Day holiday.

Manager Reynolds said the Public Works Department has an open position, so we started advertising on Indeed and we were able to receive a few more applicants.

Manager Reynolds said sip and paint has been scheduled for May 31st, 2024, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Community Center.

Manager Reynolds said summer camp is getting full. It starts the week of June 17th, 2024, and we have hired five out of six camp counselors.

The Public Works Department installed new cameras at the Morris Landing Pier as well as the restrooms to protect the investment of the Town and the grantors.

Manager Reynolds and Mayor Wenzel attended a meeting at the county with other managers within the county and mayors. The topic of conversation was economic development, created strategic plan for Jones Onslow Economic Development.

Manager Reynolds has been working to close out grants and we should be receiving our final reimbursements by the end of this fiscal year.

Staff has been working with Councilman Parnian on the project inventory sheet and staff had a lot of fun with this exercise. We were able to take approximately 105 projects and condense them into 52 projects and that was across all strategic plans.

Manager Reynolds said Doug Skipper with our Community Development Department passed his building test this past week and we are very proud of him.

Mayor Pro- Patti asked how the grant writer position is coming along. Mayor Pro-Tem asked if the position is on indeed. Manager Reynolds said she thinks it is on indeed, but she will check with Ms. Madia with the Parks and Recreation Department.

Manager Reynolds said she and Finance Director, Chuck Strickland, met with Withers Ravenal, and they do contract grant writing, and we think that would be viable for the upcoming budget year. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti asked what the hesitation for people not applying. Manager Reynolds said it could be the salary, she is not sure why. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti asked if we should tweak that and consider changing the set-up, because it is not working out and maybe we should consider hybrid or remote options. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said not having any applicants is not good and it tells us that we should change the job description or perhaps change the way we go about this.

Councilman Hines said he thinks we should see the proposal Withers and Ravenal has because that would not include us hiring a new position, which would be contracting them to do the work.

Manager Reynolds said for Withers Ravenal, each grant is basically a different charge because the grants vary so much. Manager Reynolds said the grant for Morris Landing was a simple 10-page grant which might cost \$800.00, whereas a Partf grant which is tons of work could be closer to the three-thousand-dollar mark. Manager Reynolds said there is an added cost if we want Withers Ravenal to manage those projects which is under our current purview of our current job description for the grant writer.

Mayor Wenzel asked what is Withers and Ravenal's expertise in this. Manager Reynolds said they are a consultant and engineering company and retired or close to retirement local government employees go and work there. Manager Reynolds said there are people that come from all different types of layers of government that work within this company and their grant writing division, they typically come from an agency that is a grantor. Manager Reynolds said Adam Caldwell who worked for Senator Murphy's office now works for Withers and Ravenal.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said his only hesitation is it will deter us from applying for certain grants because we are paying per fee so if we get too high or spend too much money then we may not be able to apply for certain grants. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti asked if we had considered a 1099 contract position where we are not paying benefits and things like that?

Councilman Parnian asked if we could get two categories, one for just available grants and the other for grants that we are after. Councilman Parnian said as we move forward, pull some of the other grants from the big list that we are going for. Councilman Parnian said the grant writer position is going to be a hard position, but if you can get a list, we can have a concept and we can discuss it.

Manager Reynolds said she has been compiling a list and Mr. Adam Caldwell is prepared to help with this. They are also working on a synopsis proposal because the intensity of the grants can vary so much. Manager Reynolds said she has asked them to put together a proposal for management of a grant so we can see what all that entails, what the amount is, and what it covers.

Councilman Hines asked what the salary range for the grant writer position is. Manager Reynolds said it is either \$35,000 or \$36,000 with a three percent commission, one and a half percent at the award of a grant. It would have to be an awarded grant with an announcement. They would get 1.5% of the value of the grant, and then once the final reimbursement is made to the Town, they would receive an additional 1.5%. Councilman Hines said the person would make \$35,000 or \$36,000 regardless of if they got a grant or not. Manager Reynolds said that is correct. Councilman Hines said if we went with Withers and Ravenal it would depend on if they got a grant, and we would not have to pay them an extra fee.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said we pay the fee just to have them apply, so every grant whether we get it or not plus the application fee. Manager Reynolds said that is correct.

Councilman Parnian said the talent in his opinion the salary is not going to attract qualified people that have writing and people skills. Councilman Parnian said we may want to consider graduate students at the UNCW that we can get as an intern.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said he agrees with Councilman Parnian, and he has been trying to say this for a while, that we are not going to attract professionals when we don't have a remote hybrid option especially from Wilmington. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said we are not going to attract them for \$36,000 or \$37,000 a year. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said the commission is mute and he has done contracted work, and it is laborious to do the work and wait to receive the funds after so many months or perhaps years. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said you are either going to have to up the salary, make it a 1099 contract or pay benefits and allow for a young professional to do this the right way so we can have it in house instead of contracting it out.

Consent Agenda

A. Approval of the Following Minutes

- March 12th, 2024, Regular Meeting
- March 27th, 2024, Special Meeting
- April 9th, 2024, Regular Meeting

B. Department Head Reports

- Finance Department
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Planning & Zoning Inspections Report
- Parks and Recreation
- Grants Report

C. Committee Reports

- Planning Board
- Board of Adjustment
- ONWASA
- Busy Bee Committee

A motion was made by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* and seconded by *Councilman Misciagno* to approve the Consent Agenda. *All Agreed.*

Old Business

Discussion and Possible Action to Appoint Members to the Ordinance Review Committee

Manager Reynolds said this discussion has been ongoing since the December meeting. During the meeting last month, the Town Council agreed to move forward with a five-member board that does not require an ETJ resident because it does not deal with the Land Use laws.

Manager Reynolds said there have been several comments from Council members that would like additional information on the applicants. Manager Reynolds said the item can be tabled and staff can take the questions that the Council would like answered and send them out to the applicants this week, get those back and hopefully decide in June.

A motion was made by **Councilman Parnian** and seconded by **Councilman Misciagno** to table this item and go with the plan is outlined. **All Agreed.**

Councilman Patti said we need to make this clear that a decision needs to be made by June. Once they come in, filter the information to the Town Council so they can start thinking about it. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said he does not know if the Town Council needs to be in chambers debating people. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti suggested the Town Council look at everything, try to figure out where their minds are and who will be the best fit.

Councilman Misciagno said he also remembers Wes MacLeod was going to have good council of governments and was supposed to weigh in on this as well. Manager Reynolds said Mr. MacLeod suggested a number at the last meeting and that were no more than eleven members and the ETJ member was not required.

New Business

Appointment of Councilman Parnian to the Eastern Carolina Council of Government General Membership Board

Mayor Wenzel said this is the position that Councilman Ritter held, and Councilman Parnian has thrown his name into the hat and everyone else is already serving on some type of committee.

A motion was made by **Councilman Misciagno** and seconded by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** to appoint Councilman Parnian to the Eastern Carolina Council of Government General Membership Board. **All Agreed.**

Discussion and Possible Approval of extension contract with GFL.

Manager Reynolds said the garbage and recycling services have been a topic of discussion between the four towns, Topsail Beach, N. Topsail Beach, Surf City and Holly

Ridge. Manager Reynolds said managers feel that if we go together with four towns putting out a request for proposal because of the scale of customers, we may get a better price.

Manager Reynolds said all the managers met on Monday and Topsail Beach Manager Doug Shipley has created a shared folder and we are all putting our contracts in preparation to make sure that all four towns line up with the same contract end date. Manager Reynolds said our contract would have to be extended for one year with GFL for us to go out for the RFP and to make sure we have everything in place to transition over to a new provider for July 1st, of next year.

Manager Reynolds said the plan is so, once everyone has their contract extensions, the four managers are going to go to everyone else's town councils to explain the process more in depth.

A motion was made by *Councilman Hines* and seconded by *Councilman Misciagno* to extend the contract with GFL to allow the Town Manager to extend the contract. *All Agreed.*

Request from Councilman Parnian to Form a Branding and Marketing Committee/Task Force and a Political connection Committee/Task Force

Councilman Parnian said being new to the Town Council, he looked at the areas that we need help in terms of the next phase of growth. Councilman Parnian said two areas he has spoken with other Town Council members and mayors in similar efforts are going on in other areas. One grounding and marketing and with each one of them some work has been done. Councilman Parnian said another one is having political connections with county, state, and federal government without a political connection and political endorsement.

Councilman Parnian said in his proposal that the Town Council has received, he has each of the committees a three-phase approach. Phase one is a definition Councilman Parnian listed eight areas that will be covered in phase one. Phase one is called the definition phase and includes identifying staffing options or different budget prerequisites, feedback received from the Town Council members, timing alternate approaches and risk. Councilman Parnian said once that is defined, it will be presented to the Town Council and timing alternate approaches and risks.

Councilman Parnian said phase II is further definition of staffing and budget. The third phase is execution. This is a long-term project. The first phase problem will take three months with no cost or staffing impact. Once we get to phase II, there is some work that must be done. Phase III is execution which is getting marketing planning implemented as well as connections.

A motion was made by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* and seconded by *Councilman Parnian* to form a branding, marketing and task force. *All Agreed.*

A motion was made by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* and seconded by *Councilman Misciagno* to form a political connection committee task force. *All Agreed.*

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said he would like to clarify with the political action committee, and he stresses we need to make sure we are working with elected officials that the Town will not be in the business of working with candidates or specific issues because that is a slippery slope, and we received some advice from the Town Attorney. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said it is political connections committee to have another opportunity to reach out to elected officials for the betterment of the talent that request funding, help, or anything like that. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said it is not an interest group or a political action committee as so defined that he is used to seeing.

Consideration and Adoption of NC Resilient Coastal Communities Program Phase 3 Applications for a Greenway Project and Emergency Operations Center.

Manager Reynolds said the Town has been working within the Resilient Coastal Communities Program in North Carolina. We have a consultant Kleinfelder that we have been working with. The Community Development Department has also been working Kleinfelder. We have gone through phase I and phase II and now it's the time for phase III.

Phase III is design and feasibility engineering and Julia with Kleinfelder is joining us on Teams to answer any questions.

Flood Plan Administrator, Greg Lawrence said the RCCP program is an initiative that somebody started, and it is essentially funding that is passed down from the General Assembly, that allow coastal communities that are prone to flood hazards, to develop whatever goals they need to develop to become more resilient as a community.

Mr. Lawrence said Julia has been working with them for the last year getting passed phase one, phase two, developing a community action team. Mr. Lawrence said everything that has been done and the projects we have come up with have been based on public input, current plans, and feedback from the community action team.

Manager Reynolds said the first application is for an emergency operations center, which is a component of the proposed municipal complex that we continue to talk about. The EOC is the emergency operations center. Manager Reynolds said an example would be if there was a hurricane, the essential personnel that is on call, such as the Chief of Police Town Manger and the Public Works Department stay in Town in a Town building. That would allow us to have wind ratings that are above what is required.

Manager Reynolds said when hurricane Florence hit, the issue throughout the county was there were no buildings rated for a category 5 hurricane. The state has pushed resiliency as far as making sure towns and counties are prepared.

The second project is the Greenway is included in our Master Park Plan. It has been talked about for several months. The Town Council did prioritize the Morris Landing portion probably two years ago and money was put aside in the Parks and Recreation Department for instances like this, because with the RCCP there is a component of matching like the brick that requires matching.

Manager Reynolds said that the greenway would connect Surf City connecting the outer annexed, Morris Landing, over to the more commercial districts of the Town.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti asked if funding is bankable and is there a certain time. Julia said there is a twelve-month period, and you would go under contract as early as July. It is a twelve-month signed contract to receive money and spend it.

Community Development Director, Nate Rhue said Greg has done a great job being involved with this. Mr. Rhue said the grants that are before the Town Council came from the public comments they made at a public meeting, bee festival, and online surveys. Mr. Rhue said the applications that we are proposing to submit do not include any matching funds or any contributions.

Councilman Misciagno said he is glad this was in the Town Council's packet, because the new Town Council members were not apprised of the last three years of history. Councilman Misciagno said he saw phase III of the engineering and he feels better this grant money is what it looks like, and it is not cost to us.

Mr. Rhue said this application is proposed for Sound Road from Highway 17 all the way to the county line and then towards the park area.

Manager Reynolds said she would like to spotlight Nate's department especially with us losing the grant writer midway through this. They worked with Julia and her team and did not miss a beat. Mr. Rhue said Greg Lawrence and Marsha Gray have done a stellar job with this.

A motion was made by ***Councilman Hines*** and seconded by ***Councilman Misciagno*** to approve staff submitted applications for the Greenway Project, the Emergency Operations Center and approve the two applications for grant funding for Phase III of the Resilient Coastal Communities Program. ***All Agreed.***

Possible Adoption of a Resolution Requesting New Funding Support from the NC Department of Transportation to Support the Economic Development within the Town of Holly Ridge

Manager Reynolds said this is what she was speaking about earlier and Manager Reynolds thinks this will answer the questions of Mr. Sholar and Ms. Holly-Neal and touch on Ms. Sweeney's. Even though things are specifically said in public meetings, Town staff are working with various agencies and outside partners to secure funding to help build a community for all the development that is taking place. This includes the Land Use Plan being updated hopefully next year included in the budget.

Manager Reynolds said this Resolution is a request to the North Carolina Department of Transportation. They have an economic development wing where they will pay \$2500.00 per job that is created. For phase II, we anticipated and forecasted 235 jobs. In order to maximize the grant, we have secured 215 of the 235 jobs and we have reached the limit. The cap on this grant is \$400,000.00 from the Department of Transportation. Manager Reynolds said if approved, we will send this up requesting the \$400,000.00 to be allocated in the Department of Transportation's budget.

Manager Reynolds said in addition to that funding, the Town is working on a cost share, and we are working alongside the industrial development fund. We plan to apply for funding for the construction in June for the construction of the road. Manager Reynolds said we are working with the developer of Evolve on some of the cost of the signal. They are going to be required to put in a temporary signal at some point. We are looking into going ahead and putting in the final infrastructure, so they are not spending money and we are going out there tearing that out and putting in new infrastructure.

Manager Reynolds said Anthony suggested the Town put in the upcoming budget funds for design and engineering. The reason for that is because a portion of applying for these grants is showing we have a plan.

Manager Reynolds said the best thing about all of this is throughout phase II the development, construction, signal, the proposed road not one dollar of taxpayer money has been used for that. The design and engineering will speak to how the intersection and the road over on Drag Strip Road will come around and connect to Phase II of the Industrial Park. UPS is expecting access to that signal since they will be expecting 500 trips per day, out of their facility.

A motion was made by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** and seconded by **Councilman Parnian** to request new funding support from the North Carolina Department of Transportation to support the economic development within the Town of Holly Ridge motion for that Resolution. **All Agreed.**

Possible Appointment of Members to the Holly Ridge Busy Bee Committee

Manager Reynolds said the Busy Bee Committee is set up with seven members and we have a vacancy. Manager Reynolds said Ms. Borneman also resigned so that leaves two

vacancies. We have conducted background checks on all four applicants and there were no issues with serving on the Town Board.

During the Bee Committee meeting last week, Ms. Royal spoke about expanding the committee to ten members. An official vote was not taken, but if the Town Council is open to amending the bylaws for additional members, we could make that amendment and look at some amendments for clarification of the roles between the committee and the Town and then present that to the Bee Committee and bring it back to the Town Council for official adoption at the June meeting. Manager Reynolds said the Town Council can move forward with two appointments at this time.

Councilman Parnian asked Ms. Royal if she would like to have questions for the applicants as to why they would like to join this committee.

Ms. Royal said the four people that have applied have been active with the committee. They have been coming to the meeting as just people in attendance who have volunteered significantly at the other events. Ms. Royal said at this time she does not think it is necessary, if the committee was to grow, Ms. Royal thinks nine is a great number. Ms. Royal said the four applicants that have applied can make this a better committee. Ms. Royal said she hopes the Town Council will agree to raise the number of people to nine and they can join so we can start working on next year's event.

Mayor Wenzel asked Attorney Fountian if the Town Council could expand the number of members for the Bee Committee per the Bee Committee's bylaws. Attorney Fountain said this could be done.

A motion was made by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** and seconded by **Councilman Parnian** to amend the agenda. **All Agreed.**

A motion was made by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** and seconded by **Councilman Parnian** to expand the committee to nine members. **All Agreed.**

A motion was made by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** and seconded by **Councilman Misciagno** to amend the bylaws of the Bee Committee to nine members. **All Agreed.**

Mayor Wenzel said we have four people who have put their names in and asked if we need to vote for them individually. Attorney Fountain said he believes there is a point on the agenda that the applicant has chosen to fill the vacancy called by the resignation would just finish the unexpired term remaining would be more current to you. Manager Reynolds said one out of the four would be different.

Mayor Wenzel said the Bee Committee bylaws state a two-year appointment and currently they would serve one year. Mayor Wenzel said we have one person that would

be filling Ms. Borneman's position for the next year, and the other three would be serving two full years.

Councilman Misciagno said his only concern is we moved it to nine, so somebody might not have applied thinking that the seats were for applicants, they didn't apply. Councilman Misciagno said is it safe to say we do not make a decision on these four until we get some more applicants or pitch it to the community that there are two extra seats. Mayor Wenzel asked Councilman Misciagno if he would like to postpone the vote for the Town Council to see if there are more applicants. Councilman Misciagno said it would be fair to have more applicants since we announced the extra.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said those that are trying to get on the Bee Committee now have been participating for months and if you are not on the committee, you can still come to the meetings still participate, and still volunteer.

Attorney Fountain recommended the Town Council vote on filling the vacancy caused by the resignation, and if the Town Council wishes to appoint the remaining by Attorney Fountain's affirmation, we can do it as a single vote.

Ms. Royal said she thought Tiffany Johnson would be okay with doing the one-year term because she is involved in other committees. After her year term if she wants to apply again, we can just keep her going.

A motion was made by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** and seconded by **Councilman Parnian** to approve the recommendation by the Bee Committee Chair for Tiffany Johnson to fill the vacancy of Ms. Borneman. **All Agreed.**

A motion was made by **Councilman Hines** and seconded by **Councilman Parnian** to appoint Ken Bradshaw to the Bee Committee. **All Agreed**

A motion was made by **Councilman Parnian** and seconded by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** to appoint Nikki Patti to the Bee Committee for a term of two years. **All Agreed.**

A motion was made by **Mayor Pro-Tem Patti** and seconded by **Councilman Misciagno** to appoint Joy Ryan to the Bee Committee for a term of two years. **All Agreed.**

Manager Reynolds asked the Town Council if they would be open to amending the bylaws to clarify the roles and responsibilities later. Town Council agreed.

Town Council Comments

Councilman Parnian said he is still learning, and it has been a pleasure being here and working with everyone. Councilman Parnian thanked everyone for attending the meeting tonight. Councilman Parnian said he has met a lot of great people, and the Town Council has a lot to

do. Councilman Parnian said this goes back to Ms. Sweeney. We work with the Town staff to do the initiatives over the next five years and there is a lot going on and we have a lot ahead of us. Councilman Parnian said he looks forward to serving the people of Holly Ridge.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti thanked the Town staff and the Town Council and all those that work hard for the Town. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said he does want to highlight the resounding, unequivocal, gigantic success of the Bee Festival. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said he is a huge proponent of community engagement. We should be talking to the community, making sure the community volunteers are part of many things as possible.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said we should be proud of the Bee Festival and the Liberty Festival that is coming up. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said we want people to participate and speak at Town Council meetings. Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said it is important that we work together and share interests and goals for the Town. We may not always agree or may never agree, but that is what this country is about. Compromise, discussion and decision making. The end goal is to make Holly Ridge the best Town it can be.

Mayor Pro-Tem Patti said he would leave with this; The Town will not be a good place for any of us to live unless we make it a good place for all of us to live in.

Councilman Misciagno thanked Councilman Parnian because he has this Excel spreadsheet that would blow your mind and what the Town is utilizing what Councilman Parnian has created is truly helpful to the Town. Councilman Misciagno loved the Bee Festival and that it was in Town and the feedback was like 4.8. Councilman Misciagno assured Ms. Sweeney that work is being done behind the scenes and we are working as a collaboration with the entire Town Council and staff on what you just said. Councilman Misciagno said there is no decision when it comes to fire, Ems and emergency services but they must be planned and in the Town's budget and we are working towards that. Infrastructure is key and we must build upon what we have with our Town.

Councilman Misciagno said the other thing that has been brought up as a point of contention, which led to some of the hostility between Councilman Hines and Ms. Royal on social media. Councilman Misciagno said there is a website called mortgage calculator.net. Councilman Misciagno said he wants to be on record nobody knew the terms of the loan until the last meeting. Councilman Misciagno said it was a fifty-year note, 11% at 1.5 million. Councilman Misciagno said if you want to blame anybody, blame big government for taking advantage of a small town for fifty years. When you do the amortization schedule on that note, at the forty-year mark, the balance was roughly \$964,000.00 when we took over the loan. Councilman Misciagno said he did not like it and in four years the Town paid almost \$300,000.00 once they were made aware.

Manager Reynolds said just so everyone knows when the Town put the Housing Authority duties over and we realized the loan was at 11%, Manager Reynolds made a phone call and had the interest rate reduced to 1%.

Mayor Wenzel said there is a fifty-year USDA loan that you can refinance only once, and it was initially 11.9% in 1981. In 1982 the Housing Authority was the housing authority. In 1982 they refinanced the loan to 11% and locked it in for the duration.

Councilman Hines said we have the best employees that can be found in any town anywhere around. Councilman Hines said they are loyal to the Town and always have the best interests of the citizens in the Town. They get a lot of criticism, a lot of questions about the management and doing things that were wrong. Councilman Hines said this effects their morale and the way they do their jobs, and it puts undue pressure on them. The Town Council has every right to ask questions if they feel like something was done wrong but let's find out the facts before we start criticizing.

Councilman Hines said our fiancé officer is professional and does his job in a professional manner. Every month the Town Council receives a spreadsheet of the finances, and we also have a CPA that comes in quarterly to check behind him.

Councilman Hines said the Town Manager knows she works at the pleasure of the Town Council, and she is one of the best managers we have had since Councilman Hines has been on the board. Councilman Hines said he appreciates all the employees, and they have his support as long as they do their job.

Announcements

- Thursday, May 16th, 2024, ONWASA Board Meeting – beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the Jacksonville City Hall
- Tuesday, May 21st, 2024, Planning Board Meeting – beginning at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers
- Thursday, May 23rd, 2024, Holly Ridge Town Council Budget Workshop # 1 – beginning at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers
- Saturday, May 25th, 2024, - Memorial Day Ceremony beginning at 10:00 a.m. at the Liberty Fountain
- Monday, May 27th, 2024, Town Hall Closed in Observance of Memorial Day
- Thursday, June 13th, 2024, Bee Committee Meeting – beginning at 4:00 p. at the Community Center
- Thursday, June 13th, 2024, Eastern Carolina Council of Government General Membership Board Meeting – 233 Middle Street New Bern NC

Mayor Wenzel said the Evolve apartments are coming along as well as the gun range on Highway 50. UPS hopes to be open in 2026. Mayor Wenzel said next month the Town Manager will be celebrating her 20th year anniversary with the Town.

Closed Session

To establish or instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body by negotiating the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease per NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (5).

A motion was made by *Councilman Hines* and seconded by *Councilman Misciagno* to go into Closed Session. *All Agreed.*

A motion was made by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* and seconded by *Councilman Hines* to return to Regular Session. *All Agreed.*

A motion was made by *Councilman Hines* and seconded by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* to approve a Resolution to authorize the Town Manager to execute a settlement agreement with Rudolph and Sharon Shepard related to Onslow County tax parcel # 011520. *All Agreed.*

Adjournment

A motion was made by *Mayor Pro-Tem Patti* and seconded by *Councilman Misciagno* to adjourn at 8:34 p.m. *All Agreed.*

Attest:

Jeff Wenzel, Mayor

Tracy Martin, Deputy Clerk

These minutes were recorded and prepared by Deputy Town Clerk, Tracy Martin.

DRAFT