

**Town Council Minutes
Morehead City, North Carolina**

**Tuesday, January 10, 2017 at 10:00 a.m.
Special Meeting/Council Work Session**

The Honorable Council of the Town of Morehead City met in a Special Meeting/Council Work Session on Tuesday, January 10, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers, Morehead City Municipal Building, 202 South 8th Street, Morehead City, North Carolina. The purpose of the Special Meeting/Council Work Session was to review and discuss upcoming projects. Those in attendance were:

MAYOR:	Gerald A. Jones, Jr.
MAYOR PRO TEM:	William F. Taylor
COUNCIL:	George W. Ballou
	Demus L. Thompson
	Harvey N. Walker
	Diane C. Warrender
CITY MANAGER:	David Whitlow
CITY ATTORNEY:	Derek Taylor [Absent]
CITY CLERK:	Jeanne M. Giblin
OTHERS:	Holly Cook; Anna Harvey, Reporter, THE

CARTERET NEWS TIMES; Kerri McCann; Holly Fletcher; Wylie Cook; Fire Chief Jamie Fulk; Police Chief Bernette Morris; Public Services Director Daniel Williams; Human Resources Officer Susan Nixon; Finance Director Jewel Lasater; IT Manager Jon Snyder; Recreation Director Craig Lands; Planning Director Linda Staab; Stephanie McIntyre; Tim Necaise and several others.

Mayor Jones opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

**I. Briefing on Charles Wallace Building Structural/Functional Analysis --
Wylie R. Cooke and Morehead City Staff**

Mr. Wylie Cook of MMM Design Group reported that in 2014 MMM Design Group undertook a space needs analysis for the present staff of 28 expanding to 38 individuals in the future. He said that analysis looked at the Charles Wallace Building with a 2,000 square foot municipal chambers, library space, drive-up window for payments, etc. The study also reviewed the present Municipal Building, City Hall, and Library, in addition to all City properties.

When this study was initially done, the Charles Wallace Building was still being occupied. Now that it is vacant, it is deteriorating very quickly. Something has to be done soon or the building will be gone. The current building contains approximately 40,000 square feet, while the space needs analysis indicated that 16,000 to 17,000 square feet was necessary for governmental purposes. Mr. Cook summarized the following:

- Replace the gym and rebuild as the new Council Chambers.
- Structural issues – the lintels holding up the brickwork and framing need to be replaced.
- In the hallways, both walls are bearing walls.
- Exterior access does not meet emergency codes.
- The building does not meet safety codes.
- Many upgrades are needed to meet today's standards.

The building was initially built in 1939 and rebuilt in 1970 after a fire. The building "does not feel good" due to deteriorating conditions. A \$40 value per square foot has been placed on the building. Two [2] building layout options were presented of which Mr. Cook recommended Option #1 with the governmental operations occupying the west wing and center of the bottom floor and the west wing and center of the second floor and adding new council chambers. In the present option there are 78 shown parking spaces where 200 are needed to support an office building.

Mr. Cook presented costs. To rebuild the council chambers would be \$828,000 or \$217 per square foot. In the existing building, the leasing portion [east side of first and second floors] would not have any of the existing utilities and would cost approximately \$120 a square foot. In total, the entire project with contingencies would cost \$4,821,134.00. The

timeline would be planning six [6] months; prepping two [2] months; building 18 months. The gym is in really bad shape and would be expensive to make it viable.

Councilman Taylor commented on what was reasonable space for current and future employees and the additional costs of maintenance for a new building. He spoke about life cycle costs and the need for a study on the impact of these costs on the taxpayer. He would like to seek the backing of the public before undertaking the project.

Councilwoman Warrender commented that there is an interest in an outside entity developing the building and leasing the space back to the City.

Mr. Cook advised that the building is in need of immediate repair to stabilize it and that cost would be approximately \$500,000. It cannot sit in its current condition too long as it needs to be protected. He advised that the governmental purposes do not need 40,000 square feet and if there is an opportunity to sell the building that it may be the best approach and use the money elsewhere. He again emphasized that Option #1 would be the approach he would suggest as to the use of the building.

City Manager Whitlow stated that City staff needed guidance from the Council as to what direction to take. Immediate decisions need to be made regarding the repairs, but the larger question is what can the staff do to help make a decision?

Mayor Jones commented that decisions need to be made about the costs of moving municipal operations into the building and the space needs for the next 20 years.

The Council concurred to email the answers to the questions which were listed in City Manager Whitlow's memo to the Council dated January 4, 2017, by Friday, January 13, 2017. [Memo dated January 4, 2017, from City Manager Whitlow is attached to and made a part of these minutes herein by reference.]

Council took a short break.

II. Discussion of North Carolina Seafood Festival [NCSF] Operations and Possible Modifications -- Morehead City Staff

City Manager spoke about the effort required in costs and manpower to Morehead City staff when the North Carolina Seafood Festival [NCSF] occurs. The NCSF is a signature event that happens for a much larger public. He spoke about the staff meeting held after the festival and the topic of the effect the festival had on City employees. This year, part of the problem was that Hurricane Matthew was expected the following weekend. The total costs of the festival to Morehead City were \$66,553.00. The direct costs are \$19,000 in water usage, supplies and trash disposal. The other costs are for overtime manhours. It is not just the Seafood Festival which incurs these expenses for the City. Other events also have costs. The question is, "How much financially should the City be expected to share from some of these events?" The Seafood Festival has become an "All hands event", due to its size and three [3] day span. In past years City employees would volunteer, however, since it has become a three [3] day event it takes assigned staff with all our first responders and public works employees. This year the Fire/EMS Department has 23 calls in addition to what happened at the Festival and we have only one [1] private medical transport company in this area now. It is not just a question of expenses for the festival, it is a question of the depth of City employees needed to carry out this function. [Attached to and made a part of these minutes herein by reference is City Manager David Whitlow's memo dated January 4, 2017.]

Fire Chief Jamie Fulk explained that 40 individuals needed help by EMS Services at the festival this past year.

Councilman Thompson addressed Stephanie McIntyre, the Director of the NCSF, and spoke about the great open relationship the City has had with the festival.

Chairman Tim Necaise, the Chairman of the NCSF this year, responded that there is a lot of good that the festival brings to Morehead City which should be considered. The attendance of 180,000 people each year puts a lot of money back into the local economy and gives local nonprofits the ability to raise funding.

Councilman Walker commented that he did not feel comfortable discussing this.

Councilman Taylor explained that this item was brought to the attention of the Public Works Committee. City staff was asking for Council to provide a customer oriented solution to these problems which would be mutually beneficial to the festival and the City.

Mayor Jones commented that this is about all events held in Morehead City. City staff is looking for guidance. One cannot neglect services to the rest of the City when events occur downtown. There is the need to work collaboratively so everyone is on the same path.

Councilwoman spoke about the businesses downtown and losing their productivity during festivals and special events.

Councilman Ballou expressed that the City wanted to do everything to keep this relationship and all the activity downtown. He realized there is a cost and sacrifice during these events. He spoke about the Seafood Board of Directors and the hard work volunteers do and that they give their “heart and soul” to the community.

The Council concurred that there was a need to set up a task force with members of the Public Works and Public Safety Committees, Fire/EMS, Police, Recreation and Public Works personnel within the next 30 days.

NCSF Director Stephanie McIntyre offered that the festival will do whatever was necessary to help.

III. Briefing on Possible Use/Sale of National Guard Armory – Morehead City Staff

Councilman Ballou MOVED, seconded by Councilman Walker, and carried unanimously, to enter into CLOSED SESSION as per G.S. 143.318.11[a][5] to consider the options and negotiations for the sale of surplus real property.

Councilman Walker MOVED, seconded by Councilwoman Warrender, and carried unanimously, to return to OPEN SESSION. [Memo dated January 4, 2017, from City Manager Whitlow is attached to and made a part of these minutes herein by reference.]

The Council took a lunch break.

IV. Briefing on Pavement Condition Study and Funding Considerations – Chase Cullipher, Stroud Engineering and Morehead City Staff

[Memo dated January 5, 2017, from City Manager Whitlow is attached to and made a part of these minutes herein by reference.]

Chase Cullipher reported that the last pavement study was done in 2003. He explained that the study presently undertaken catalogued all the City streets exhibiting distress, assessed the maintenance and calculated costs. He explained the different types of distress roadways can exhibit and how to assess values to the streets having distress. He advised that a significant number of City streets are experiencing distress. He explained the different maintenance activities that can be applied and the costs involved. Other aspects affecting pavement conditions are poor drainage, sedimentation, vegetation control, etc.

He estimated that \$400,000 was specifically for asphalt being installed, but there were other underlining things which could affect the costs, such as structural failure, traffic control, engineering, drainage, ditches or shoulders, leveling surfaces, etc. He demonstrated a new product which could help alleviate the stormwater backflow from tidal changes. He showed on a map the worst areas of pavement which needed immediate attention.

Upon a question from Councilman Taylor as to an estimated window of time for these projects, Mr. Cullipher recommended within a year for some places. If some of the roads were left as is for five [5] years, it would be very expensive to repair.

Councilman Taylor suggested considering the areas of greatest complaints.

Public Services Director Williams replied that many of the complaints are potholes and also poor drainage issues.

City Manager Whitlow advised that in some areas the City would need an engineer to identify the problems and how they were to be addressed. The City receives approximately \$190,000 annually from the Powell Bill which was committed to maintenance type of repairs. He offered that City staff could take the worst ten [10] projects on the list and figure the total costs to remedy the problems. Some of the minor issues can be done in-house. He continued that a source of ongoing funding was needed for maintenance and repair pavement issues and he recommended a source of that funding could be the vehicle registration fee program.

Councilman Ballou commented he is not interested in a vehicle tax.

Councilman Taylor discussed borrowing money to repair the roads to which City Manager Whitlow replied he has a difficult time recommending borrowing funding for maintenance.

Councilman Ballou commented he would keep the option of borrowing open.

Councilwoman Warrender stated that the vehicle registration fee program could be assessed from \$5 to \$30 per vehicle.

The Council concurred that City staff would review the ten [10] most immediate projects and get costs. At the same time, the City staff could look at doing the low cost, easier projects in-house.

V. Briefing on Katherine Davis Park Concept Plan – Morehead City Staff

City Manager Whitlow discussed the concept of Katherine Davis Park and how members of the Katherine Davis Park Committee arrived at the conclusions. He and Councilwoman Warrender demonstrated on a map the conceptual outlay of the park.

Councilman Walker requested that the dumpster area be moved from its current placement on the map.

Councilman Taylor commented that the placement of the proposed building have to adhere to the new flood elevation recommendations.

The Katherine Davis Park Committee met for a total of seven [7] meeting with good participation with 20 individuals attending each of the meetings. The tone of the meetings was extremely cooperative and there were strong opinions on the future of the park.

City Manager Whitlow commented that the next step is to bring in a professional. The plans must also address reducing stormwater runoff. He continued that the City is in possession of pirate ship playground equipment which needs to be placed at one of the City parks. The City staff will put out a Request for Proposals and bring the costs to the Council. He also advised that the Council should expect to see design funding in the budget. Notification will be given to the private entities which have placed dumpsters on the park property that they need to be removed.

Councilman Taylor suggested leaving the parking area as is at the current time until a park plan is in place.

Council took a short break.

VI. Briefing on Wireless Communication Micro-Antennas – Susan Robold, Project Manager, Cityscape Consultants, Inc.

Planning Director Linda Staab reported that her department has a draft ordinance but needs guidance on this topic. She introduced Susan Robold, from Cityscape Consultants, Inc., which is a consultant group to governmental agencies on wireless communication issues.

She spoke about the history of the wireless industry and did a powerpoint presentation. She explained that about 1980, the first generation wireless operated in a low frequency of maybe six [6] miles; in 1990, the second generations operated at a higher frequency of two [2] to four [4] miles; in 2000, it was right before the introduction of smart phones; now we are in the fourth generation with smart phones and the need for greater band width and speed. The greater the density of prescribers, the more towers required. A series of policies from the Federal Communication Commission [FCC] and the Federal Government were issued on zoning and transmission equipment. A zoning ordinance must address all the types of equipment. She described the definitions of all the wireless equipment and infrastructure.

Ms. Robold advised that an ordinance must follow the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and Federal Legislation Section #704 which gave the parameters of what a municipality can regulate. She advised that when a new site is reviewed, the municipality development standards must address all the things the municipality wanted to see deployed especially for base stations and rights-of-way. The North Carolina State Statutes may be less restrictive than the federal standards, however the State Statute is superseded by the FCC guidelines. She commented that the wireless companies have a huge lobby and are trying to become known as public utilities. She also advised that companies are popping up to secure the rights-of-way.

Councilman Walker left the meeting at 3:05 p.m.

Ms. Robold continued that the best solutions are:

- Education and knowledge of the industry.
- Being informed on federal and state legislation.
- Have a Master Plan.
- Have a plan for regulations, definitions and terms, preferred types and locations of infrastructure, specific development standards.
- Have an incentivized approval process.
- The ordinance needs to be in place as soon as possible.

VI. Update of Stormwater Issues – Morehead City Staff

Public Services Director Williams explained that most of Morehead City consists of low, flat property. A drainage study was done in 2008, and the City started mapping the system and the worst areas assessing the conditions and starting repairs. There is a lot of work to do. The City spends 1,950 manhours per year on just maintaining the system. He would like to be more proactive. The Church Street project still needs \$142,000 to complete the project; 12th and Bridges Streets would cost \$60,000; a Blair Farm Parkway storm drain costs \$39,000. The need goes on.

Public Services Director Williams continued that the City is reviewing where projects can make the biggest impact. He also explained that there is a lot more impervious surface now than in the past. The City needs an ordinance or something in place to address site stormwater runoff. The storm drains were built to handle the streets and now are also handling private property runoff. CAMA [Coastal Area Management Act] will not allow the City to increase its outfalls. Public education may be a way to help alleviate some of the problems. Right now there is nothing in place. He asked if the Council would support a measure to encourage storm water alleviation? There is a need to focus especially on new development.

Planning Director Staab explained that the City relies on the state stormwater permitting process to mitigate the situation.

City Manager Whitlow commented that private ditches are now no longer being maintained which adds to the stormwater problem.

Councilman Taylor commented that could not ordinances be developed to control runoff from private properties?

Planning Director Staab offered that the Planning & Inspections Department could institute a no fee permit developing process showing residents what is impervious surface

with staff doing a rough calculation to make them aware that when you keep covering your lot with impervious material it makes stormwater runoff.

City Manager Whitlow explained that pre and post development, the stormwater runoff should be the same.

The Council was in agreement with an educational-type program under the auspices of the Planning & Inspections Department as a first step. The Council also requested that the City begin looking at obtaining easements for some of the problem ditch areas; to discuss this possibility with City Attorney Derek Taylor and to work this through the Public Works Committee.

VII. Approaches for Defining City Responsibilities for Outside Events – Morehead City Staff

City Manager Whitlow explained that Morehead City has been receiving a lot of requests from special events organizers for use of City property and that City staff would like to receive guidance from the Council on how to approach these events.

Parks & Recreation Director Craig Lands reviewed for the Council the many different requests from various organizations he receives for use of City facilities. In addition to the North Carolina Seafood Festival and the Big Rock/Blue Marlin Fishing Tournament, these requests come from various fishing tournaments, concert events, marathon races, festivals, weddings, sunrise services, shows, etc. He has received a request from an entity to hold a concert on July 4th weekend this year. For many of these events, Morehead City provides trash and recycling pickup, fire/EMS services, traffic control, setup and takedowns, etc. The City in some instances provides the erection and dismantling of large tents. In many instances, the City is providing services for free which a local business could provide. In terms of providing tents, which need to be replaced, the City provides a large amount of manpower which also costs the taxpayers. He requested that the Council provide direction to the City staff of what any outside entity should expect from the City in terms of sites, equipment and staffing.

He described that during the North Carolina Seafood Festival, the dockmaster was keeping the public restrooms serviced. He described the over usage at the transient docks during these activities. He also advised the Council that the City has had problems with vandalism, vagrancy and panhandling at Jaycee Park. He continued that the original use of the Jaycee Park restrooms was for the transient docks only.

Councilman Taylor commented that the broader question is what can the City recommend for a fee schedule and policies to deal with the use of City facilities and manpower?

For many of the tournaments, the money raised does not come back to nonprofit entities in the area, but is raised for out-of-town entities.

Councilwoman Warrender commented that if the City was providing anything, the City needed to be able to get some type of reimbursement.

Councilman Ballou was concerned with how public relations would look if the City were to lock the restroom facilities.

The Council concurred to review a fair fee schedule, procedures and guidelines and give a recommendation at a future meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Attest:

Jeanne M. Giblin
Jeanne M. Giblin, City Clerk

Gerald A. Jones, Jr.
Gerald A. Jones, Jr., Mayor

