

**TOWN OF BURGAW BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING
MUNICIPAL BUILDING MEETING ROOM
FEBRUARY 2, 2016
6:30PM**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Eugene Mulligan, Mayor
Howard N. Walker, Jr. Mayor Pro-tem
Commissioners Jan Dawson, Wilfred Robbins and Vernon Harrell

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Bill George

STAFF PRESENT: Chad McEwen, Town Manager; Sylvia Raynor, Town Clerk;
Robert Kenan, Town Attorney; Him Hock, Chief of Police;
Louis Hesse, Building Inspector; Rebekah Roth, Planning
Administrator; Allen Wilson, Fire Administrator

MEDIA PRESENT: Bill Walsh, Star News

INVOCATION: Commissioner Wilfred Robbins

PLEDGE: All

OTHERS PRESENT: Barry Klingel, Jennifer Hansen – *Planning Board*
Jim Fouche, Monique Kirby, Jakim Friant – *Promotions &
Special Events Committee*
Dayna Corcoran – *Parks & Recreation Committee*
Dr. Hodges Bell, Karen Harding – *Citizens*

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Mulligan at 6:30PM. Mayor Mulligan advised the purpose of this meeting is to get to know as many of the members of our advisory boards as we can and to do some brainstorming as to what they think the needs of the town are in the future and what projects they think we need to start thinking of for our Capital Improvement Plan, plans for next year and just generally get an idea of how they think things are going and what they would like to see happen.

Mayor Mulligan said that since Barry Klingel, Chair of the Planning Board, requested this meeting he asked Mr. Klingel to lead off and give us an idea of what he feels is going on. Mr. Klingel said as far as the Planning Board is concerned with the new committees that have started up maybe we should figure out who is making what decisions to give to the Commissioners. He said for example is it the Parks and Recreation Committee's issue when we are talking about the trail because it gets mixed together as to what Parks and Recreation does and what the Planning Board does. He said we need a solution as to whether Parks and Recreation takes it first then comes to the Planning Board or does Parks and Recreation take care of it and send it to the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Klingel said that is just a thought.

Rebekah Roth, Planning Administrator advised in the past the Planning Board always made the recommendation for any plans for the town and then it goes to the Board of Commissioners. She advised with the Bike and Ped plan that some of the items that were discussed were planning related and some of them were Parks and Recreation related. She said for that reason some of the items went to Parks and Recreation and to the Planning Board. She said each board/committee made a recommendation and then it went to the Commissioners. She advised that we have a parks plan that we will be working on and the question is, is it solely Parks and Recreation or does it go to the Planning Board. She said from what we understand is that staff doesn't necessarily support the committees. She said does it go to both boards or is it Parks and Recreation only. She said she needs some guidance as to where these items need to go. Commissioner Dawson asked Ms. Roth if she is meeting with the committees. Ms. Roth advised she has requested to be on their agenda for certain meetings if there are topics that are related to items that she is working on. Commissioner Dawson said since we don't have a Parks and Recreation director that there needs to be a department head that the Parks and Recreation Committee can report to. Commissioner Dawson said if the Planning Administrator is the person that they go to, then that is the person to make the decisions on which board to send items to for review.

Commissioner Harrell said he feels that more input is better and if there is a question as to which board/committee we should go to he doesn't see any harm in taking it to both boards/committees and getting opinions from a more

diverse group. Ms. Roth said it is her understanding that she is not supposed to be working under the direction of Parks and Recreation Committee in the same way that she works with the planning board. She said that currently she has invited the Parks and Recreation Committee to attend the Planning Board meeting in order to discuss the west side park plan but she doesn't want to circumvent the process that was intended by the Board by appointing a Parks and Recreation Committee. She said there is no clear delineation of responsibilities.

Jim Fouche, Chair of the Promotions/Special Events Committee advised they have had the same kind of discussion. He said it was his understanding that when the committees were set up that it was a citizen's advisory committee. He said that doesn't mean an operational committee and it is very clear in the instructions that we are not to get into the operational aspects or the details. He advised in some projects that is very blurred. He used the splash pad as an example. He said they knew that if they wanted it to be as expeditious as possible, they should do some of the leg work. He said that goes beyond advisory when the committee starts doing the work. He said he can see where a staff member can get confused as to whom to listen to.

Commissioner Dawson asked Mr. McEwen to check into whether or not there are other towns the size of Burgaw that have Parks and Recreation departments and whether it is a full time or part time department. Mr. McEwen advised he will check on this.

Mr. Klingel said at this point his suggestion would be that the two committees meet so we can work together. He said there should be some direction as to who they answer to. Mr. Fouche said when there are deadlines to meet not being in an operational chain can make things a little complicated.

Mayor Mulligan said the problem is that we are a small town and having staff to cover every different sort of function that the town is involved in is very difficult just because of expense. He said he thinks that sometimes we might find the rules were set up a little too literally. He said unfortunately these rules were set up so there was no staff support; that is something we should change obviously. He asked if there is one point person that the committees could deal with would it make a difference to you. Mayor Mulligan asked if this is a case of needing a coordinator. He said the current staff pretty much has their hands full with daily work duties. He said we have the facilities around town but we need someone to coordinate the use of the facilities and the programs.

Commissioner Robbins said if we are ever going to have a Parks and Recreation movement in town we will have to have someone whether it is someone in the government or whether we hire someone part time to coordinate if that's what the people want. He said he sees the Planning Board as providing input on the technical side with some input from the Parks and Recreation Committee. Commissioner Dawson said if we have a part time coordinator maybe that position could be a part of the Planning Department. Mayor Mulligan asked if this person could work with the Promotions and Special Events Committee as well. Commissioner Robbins said yes because we are too small to say no. He said that person could work with both committees. Monique Kirby asked what if we have someone to work with and they are only part time and we are promoting the depot and the community house, who shows the facilities after hours when that's when most people get off work. She said she thinks that person can be utilized more hours than just part time. Commissioner Robbins said he and Mayor Mulligan spoke in the past about having a coordinator to take care of all these issues. Mr. McEwen asked what if the Community Development Coordinator position was reinstated and it incorporates parks, recreation, programming, depot, community house, kitchen etc. Ms. Roth advised that is on the Capital Improvement Plan not for this upcoming year but for the next year. She said it is something that was discussed last year. She advised Kim Rivenbark, Planning Technician spends a lot of her time showing the depot and working with people that are planning events.

Mr. Fouche and Mr. Klingel were in agreement that the town needs to look into the possibility of hiring a coordinator. Commissioner Dawson said the job description for the community development coordinator would have to be tweaked to fit the issues that have been discussed.

Mr. Fouche stated that there is some conflicting language in the ordinance that governs the Promotions and Special Events Committee. He read several excerpts from the ordinance that are conflicting. He advised the committee cannot oversee something without having some operational input. He asked do you want to emphasize the advisory part or the other part. He said it would be helpful to clarify the intent of the ordinance. Mayor Mulligan said from his point of view the committee's input in regards to what we should do is more important than having them actually do

the work. Mr. Fouche said he is looking for clarification as to who they work with. He said part of the problem is communication and who to communicate with and who will implement a program or project when the committee makes a recommendation. Commissioner Robbins said he feels that the committees would be better served if there was a town commissioner

seated on each of the committees in an ex-officio capacity to bridge the gap between the committee and the Board of commissioners. Commissioner Harrell said we should consider strongly is getting outside influence, input from someone other than ourselves. He said that commissioner should not be chair or have an overriding influence. Commissioner Dawson said it would be like a liaison position. She said she feels there needs to be someone on staff to be able to work on the projects on a day to day basis in order to implement the plans put forth by the committees. Commissioner Harrell said he agrees with that. Barry Klingel also agreed with that as well. He said he feels that once this is started we will find that we need someone full time.

Jennifer Hansen, Planning Board Vice-Chair, said she feels it would be good to have some young people such as teenagers to have some input into the Parks and Recreation plans because they need activities that will suit their age group. Ms. Hansen said that she must leave but there is also something else that she would like to speak about before leaving. She commented that she read in the paper that we have a general fund surplus so to speak and that we should consider a tax decrease. She said she served on the bike and pedestrian plan committee and she said there were some long term goals, twenty years' worth of planning, and some of those things we would like to see accomplished. She said if there is such a thing as surplus that could be used for capital outlay to do some of those short term projects she thinks it would benefit everyone in the town. She said she is referring to connecting sidewalks for walkability. She said there are things that we have always wanted to do but there was no money. She said that was the first thing on her mind and the second thing is that we need to extend our Christmas decorations to the NC Hwy 53 corridor. She said at some point it is almost embarrassing for downtown to look so great and for nothing to be out there where all those businesses are. She advised often times that is the only side of Burgaw that some people see. She said it is only right because those folks are in the town as well. It's not just downtown and we want those businesses feel welcome as well because everybody pays taxes. Mayor Mulligan advised we are working on those sidewalk plans; we are just waiting for things to fall in place. He advised that is precisely what that money is for, to do projects like that. Commissioner Robbins said he would like to see some banners, not necessarily Christmas decorations but welcome banners similar to what we have downtown on both ends of NC Hwy 53.

Commissioner Harrell commented he was on the Parks and Recreation Committee before he became a commissioner but he still shows up at the Parks and Recreation Committee meetings. He advised there are plans in the works for a variety of things. He said the committee has looked into putting an outside basketball court at Pender Memorial Park where the former helicopter landing pad is located. Dayna Corcoran advised there has been discussion about crosswalks and safety of those crosswalks. She said the committee has talked about how to make the community more aware of the crosswalks by adding some sort of safety features at the crosswalks. She said the crosswalk on NC 53E at Bridgers Street is of particular concern. There was much discussion regarding the possibility of placing some sort of warning signal at that crosswalk as well as cutting back vegetation in the area for better visibility. Commissioner Robbins said the crosswalks should be painted more often.

Ms. Corcoran advised there has been discussion regarding a proposed movie walking tour of Burgaw. She said the walking tour would have a clip of the film for each site and could be viewed on a smart phone. Mayor Mulligan said he has heard that someone at tourism has mentioned that a UNCW student is interested in doing the film tour and that maybe someone should contact Tammy Proctor at Pender County Tourism for more information on this item. Ms. Corcoran also mentioned that Walmart has considered donating a bike rack and they have discussed finding a place convenient to downtown for the bike rack. There was mention of the putting a bike rack on the southwest corner of Fremont Street at Wright Street.

Commissioner Harrell advised the proposed adopt a green space is also a part of Parks and Recreation as well. He said he is really interested in this project. He advised this could involve citizens and relieve some of the duties of public works. He advised the idea is to have some sort of standards drawn up and essentially an agreement between the private citizen who lives in Burgaw or it could be expanded to groups, churches, etc. to adopt a green space that is owned by the town for their keeping. The citizens would be able to determine within certain guidelines what to plant and to keep that space up in a way that is reasonable meaning keeping sidewalks passable and not going out

into the streets and at the same time allow the citizen a certain amount of leeway in creating their space. Mayor Mulligan requested that further information be brought back to the board for review.

Karen Harding asked Ms. Roth what's happening with the trees on the railroad right of way. Ms. Roth advised last year all the trees were aerated and fertilized and the plastic was taken off of them. She advised public works will be taking care of the pruning when the other trees in town are pruned.

Jim Fouche asked who is handling the splash pad in regards to finding a location. Mayor Mulligan said it is a combination of input from the committees and we are looking but we are not there yet. Mr. Fouche said it is his understanding that Rotary Park has been ruled out. Mr. McEwen said he is unaware that Rotary Park has been ruled out. Several others in the room also said they were unaware. Mr. McEwen said the park is in a floodway and there will be fill issues. He said there is not existing flat land. He said the flat land has play structures or is under trees. He said the contractor advised the trees would have a negative impact in regards to filters and sprayers for the splash pad. Commissioner Dawson asked if the trees could be taken out. Mr. McEwen advised one of the complaints from parents about Rotary Park is how hot the play equipment gets and taking out the trees will add to that problem. Commissioner Robbins asked about the land between Rotary Park and the existing school; is it possible to get that land for a splash pad. Mr. McEwen said we could certainly go back to Cape Fear Community College but one of his main concerns is that we are currently using the CFCC parking lot for park visitors and the splash pad will bring in more visitors which will add to the parking problems. Commissioner Robbins said we have only been looking at lands that we currently have and could we look for land we could purchase that would be more suitable. There was much discussion about possible locations but no solution was found at this time. Mayor Mulligan advised Mr. Fouche we will continue to look for locations and asked for input from anyone who has any ideas for a location to share their thoughts with the committees or the Board.

Barry Klingel commented that he heard that there is excess money (39K) that was not used in the construction of the walking trail that could be used for the splash pad. He said he disagrees with that idea and feels the money should be used for the trail because the trail needs work and why take that money when the trail needs it.

Commissioner Dawson said we need lights in the wooded areas of the trail. Mayor Mulligan said if we put lights down there we will encourage people to go down there and then something happens for example they get mugged then we have a problem. Mr. McEwen said our insurance company advised that if we light the trail we incur liability by implying that it is safe to use at night. He said they strongly encouraged us not to light the trail and they advised it would have an effect on our insurance premium.

Barry Klingel thanked the Board for holding this meeting.

There being no further comments, Commissioner Harrell made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Dawson and carried by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05PM.

Eugene Mulligan, Mayor

Attest: _____
Sylvia W. Raynor, Town Clerk