
**Town of Nags Head
Planning Board
November 18, 2025**

The Planning Board of the Town of Nags Head met on Tuesday, November 18th, 2025, in the Board Room at the Nags Head Municipal Complex.

Planning Chair Megan Vaughan called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. as a quorum was present.

Members Present

Megan Vaughan, Meade Gwinn, David Elder, Molly Harrison, David Thompson, Basil Belsches, Brad Carey

Members Absent

None

Others Present

Kelly Wyatt, Joe Costello, Andy Garman, Lily Nieberding

Approval of Agenda

Chair Vaughan called for a motion to approve the agenda. David Elder moved to approve the agenda as presented, David Thompson seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Public Comment/Audience Response

None

Approval of Minutes

Chair Vaughan asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the October 21st, 2025, meeting. Meade Gwinn moved to approve the minutes as presented; David Elder seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Board Member Transitions and Upcoming Appointments

Recognition of Planning Board Members Elected to Board of Commissioners

Planning Director Kelly Wyatt recognized Chair Megan Vaughan and Board Member Molly Harrison who were recently elected to the Board of Commissioners. She thanked them for their service on the Planning Board, noting their contributions to complex conversations including multifamily housing and various rezonings to name a few. Director Wyatt expressed appreciation for their help in navigating board items, working alongside staff, the board, and articulating town projects to the community. She mentioned that while this would be their last Planning Board meeting, they would be seen again at the Board of Commissioners meeting in December.

Board Member David Elder expressed his appreciation and good wishes for both members as they moved into their new roles.

Overview of Upcoming Planning Board Appointments and Chair/Vice Chair Nomination Process

Ms. Wyatt provided a timeline for the upcoming transition process:

- Today will be the final Planning Board meeting for Chair Vaughan and Ms. Harrison.
- At the December 3rd Board of Commissioners meeting, they will be sworn in as Commissioners. At that same meeting, the Board of Commissioners will appoint two new members to fill the vacancies.
- The Town Clerk maintains a list of citizens interested in being appointed to a Town Board or Committee, people can apply online or by phone.
- At the December 16th Planning Board meeting, the two newly appointed Planning Board members will be present.
- Vice Chair Meade Gwinn will chair the December meeting.
- At the January 2026 meeting, the Planning Board will elect a new Chair and Vice Chair.

Mr. Belsches asked if the town would publicize the openings to attract additional interested citizens. Ms. Wyatt explained that there are already numerous qualified individuals on the existing list who have been contacted to confirm continued interest.

Mr. Elder expressed some concern about the January meeting, noting that several members would be new to the process of electing officers. He requested guidance be provided to new members regarding board procedures, motion terminology, and overall process. Ms. Wyatt confirmed that staff would be providing a "Planning Board 101" orientation to new members like they usually do as well as look into NC School of Government training resources, as well as provide basic procedural guidance.

Board Members shared that meeting terminology and abbreviations can be particularly challenging for new members, with Mr. Gwinn specifically mentioning the difficulty of understanding abbreviations. Ms. Wyatt agreed and stated that staff would make every effort to provide detailed staff reports and avoid using unexplained abbreviations.

Chair Vaughan suggested a comprehensive overview of the UDO and Comprehensive Plan for all members would be beneficial given the number of newer board members.

Action Items

None

Report on Board of Commissioners Actions – September 3rd, 2025

Ms. Wyatt provided a report on the Board of Commissioners' actions from their November 5th meeting. Of note: The Earl Murray Junior Employee of the Year nominees were announced, with Connor Twitty from the Planning Department being selected as the recipient; the Board set public hearings for December to discuss amendments to the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance and the vested rights special use request for Nags Head Church parking lot expansion; the Board unanimously approved UDO amendments related to the crowd gathering permit process; the Board approved the site plan amendment for TW's Bait and Tackle for a storage addition as well as the Outer Banks

Sports Club expansion; Deputy Director Joe Costello updated the Board on the Harvey Sound Side Event Site Living Shoreline progress.

Mr. Belsches asked if there had been any public feedback on the crowd gathering permit process. Ms. Wyatt reported there was none, though the Board emphasized the importance of involving the Visitors Bureau in the changes.

Secretary Nieberding noted that Town Manager Andy Garman had recognized Director Wyatt for her 20 years of service in the town at the meeting.

Town Updates

None

Discussion Items

Planning & Development Directors Report, November 5th, 2025.

Ms. Wyatt highlighted several items from her report, of note: The Septic Health Advisory Committee met in October, and reviewed work done by their intern, including social media content and a short reel featuring Connor Twitty's work. Sand relocation operations are beginning, with equipment being placed on the beach and staff monitoring the work. Ms. Wyatt then gave an overview of Dowdy Park activities which include: A grand opening of the FLAG (Free Little Art Gallery) installed by the Outer Banks Women's Club, the upcoming Holiday Market on November 29th from 9 AM to Noon and the annual tree lighting ceremony also on November 29th starting at 5pm, featuring Santa arriving via fire truck, music from Manteo High School students, an elf, refreshments, and commemorative ornaments for the first 200 attendees.

Deputy Planning Director Joe Costello provided an update on the Estuarine Shoreline Management Plan:

- The Harvey site project is progressing with schematic designs approved by the Tourism Board
- Public feedback has been incorporated into the design
- A permit application will be submitted following a pre-application meeting
- Construction is expected to begin in fall 2026
- Secretary Reid Wilson from the Department of Environmental Quality will visit the site
- Sites 1 and 2 (Villa Dunes Drive and West Soundside Road) are being reassessed due to challenges with submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) locations

Mr. Carey asked about the wave-breaking apparatus for the Harvey site, and Mr. Costello explained they would use rock sills with geotextile material and a base structure, as there were concerns about proprietary materials that might be difficult to replace or maintain.

Mr. Elder raised some question about beach nourishment prompting Town Manager Andy Garman to provide information about the upcoming project:

- A workshop is scheduled for December 17th with the Board of Commissioners
- Recent storm damage prompted a new survey to inform decisions about the next beach nourishment project
- The project has been bid with three responsive bids received
- The bid includes a base amount of sand with add-on alternates in 100,000 cubic yard increments

- Funding comes primarily from town taxes (generating about \$3 million annually) and county occupancy tax contributions
- The project is tentatively scheduled for summer 2026
- Winter projects are not feasible due to rough ocean conditions, which would significantly increase costs
- The town has historically received FEMA funding (approximately \$28 million) to replace sand after storms, but no other Federal funds are available.

Planning Board Members' Agenda

Ms. Harrison expressed appreciation for her time on the Planning Board, noting how much she had learned and her increased appreciation for the town; she looks forward to serving on the Board of Commissioners and continuing to work with the Planning Board members.

Board Member David Elder highlighted the harmonious nature of the board, stating that "it isn't how we disagree or that we disagree. It's how we agree that makes this board work." He thanked the departing members for their contributions and emphasized the importance of their decision to step up into new roles.

Mr. Thompson congratulated the departing members and expressed confidence that they would maintain Nags Head's standing as "the best run town in America." He emphasized his pride in the town and appreciation for their future service.

Vice Chair Gwinn echoed Mr. Elder's thoughts and expressed optimism about the future of the town with the new commissioners and looks forward to supporting the town's growth in the desired direction.

Planning Board Chairman's Agenda

Chair Vaughan expressed appreciation for her time on the Planning Board and the importance of the Board's discussions, even when lengthy. She expressed confidence in the remaining members and looks forward to working with them in her new role.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by David Thompson. The time was 9:55 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Lily Campos Nieberding