



**MINUTES
TOWN OF NAGS HEAD
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS RETREAT
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2024**

The Nags Head Board of Commissioners met for a Board Retreat in the new Public Services Facility Training Room located at 2203 S Lark Avenue, Nags Head, North Carolina on Friday, October 18, 2024 at 8:30 am.

Emily Groo of Zelos facilitated the retreat. The retreat agenda is attached to and made a part of these minutes as shown in Addendum "A".

Attendees:

Board of Commissioners

- o Ben Cahoon, Mayor
- o Michael Siers, Mayor Pro Tem
- o Bob Sanders, Commissioner
- o Megan Lambert, Commissioner

Staff

- o Andy Garman, Town Manager
- o Amy Miller, Deputy Town Manager/Finance Officer
- o Perry Hale, Chief of Police
- o Chris Montgomery, Deputy Police Chief
- o Nancy Carawan, Director of Public Services
- o David Ryan, Town Engineer
- o Kelly Wyatt, Director of Planning and Development
- o Joe Costello, Deputy Planning Director
- o Randy Wells, Fire Chief
- o Shane Hite, Deputy Fire Chief
- o Jan Mielke, Director of Human Resources
- o Roberta Thuman, Public Information Officer
- o Carolyn Morris, Town Clerk
- o Brittany Phillips, Deputy Town Clerk
- o Brooke Norris, Deputy Finance Director

We started with a clear purpose for the retreat.

- Check on the Town's progress with its strategic plan and identify any new opportunities

- Build the Nags Head team and clarify future strategies
- An agenda was provided in advance

Session Agreements

Atmosphere

- o Collaborative
- o Relaxed
- o Respectful
- o Fun!
- o Open
- o Honest
- o Supported
- o Thoughtful
- o Energized
- o Engaged

Challenges

- o Listen
- o Take a breather
- o Remember that we are all on the same team
- o Be K.I.N.D.
- o Be respectful
- o Compromise
- o Be solution-oriented

Accountability

- o Anyone can referee
- o Ask folks to step back and look at the big picture
- o Refer to the ground rules
- o Ask for help/support

What is new that we should consider adding to the plan?

- The plan represents a significant amount of work, much is still underway. Let's be careful adding too much more to the plan.
- Supplemental resources (internal and external)
- A way to adapt to the grant process – do we need an internal grant management function or project manager?
- A sense of urgency relying on external resources; they are not always on our timeline.

We discussed the challenges of working with external resources and agreed that we need to build in more time for projects when there is a priority mismatch, a lack of urgency, or regulatory issues to deal with.

- We also discussed the possibility of creating an incentive structure for projects that were finished on time or early.

What have we learned in the last year related to the strategic plan?

- Certain action items result in many projects and significant effort

i.e. the Estuarine Shoreline item has now resulted in three large projects that require management. The point being that some items in our current plan can represent a significant body of work. Therefore, we need to be careful in how much we take on and make sure we have the resources to accomplish our tasks.

To help us prioritize, we discussed considering what is most important or most threatening to the success of a project

We also discussed which grants to pursue that would help with a project like Estuarine Shoreline Management

- Sometimes one item is not one item
- Need an additional evaluation tool or indicator to show how much progress a project has made (i.e. a slider) for reporting to the Board and public
- We should add the strategic plan status report from this session to the strategic plan webpage so that the public can see it
- We are up against hard deadlines on certain items (especially those that are grant-funded)
- We need to prioritize items within the strategic plan that haven't been identified as priority action items and decide who is in charge
- How do we manage non-strategic plan items that impede focus on strategic priorities
Ensure that we are being quality and outcome-focused
- Town Hall Master Plan
- Consideration of hiring a Lobbyist to pursue funding
- Gathering public input on planning issues
- Future Board appointment and orientation
- Policy for recording and streaming meetings

During the lunch break, the group toured the new Public Services facility. The group was asked to identify examples of the Town's values they noticed as they went through the tour.

Attitude is Key

- Everyone at the complex had a positive attitude

Our People are in the Know

- Our staff are experts

We do What's Right, for the Right Reasons

- We collaborated with the community on the design
- We developed as the citizen's needs expanded
- We operate with a sense of urgency
- Different groups working together
- We honor our commitments and stayed on schedule

We are Community Stewards

- Conservation easement on the freshwater pond
- It is the citizen's equipment
- A legacy of leadership and values

Our People Matter

- A state-of-the-art facility to serve the community and show our commitment to employees

As an exercise, staff was asked to create a list of accomplishments or points of pride from the prior year. Here is the list:

- Creative solutions
- Technology, solar, using trees as a natural buffer
- Changed AMI meters from manual to auto-read
- New agenda software
- Stoplights wired for generators
- Completed the Public Services complex in June
- Added two new police officers for the first time in 20 years
- Funding for part-time fire staff
- Hired in sanitation
- Hired a new planner
- Cancer screening for firefighters
- Updated emergency operations plan
- Awarded \$14 Million from grants in the last 24 months
- Triple Crown for budget, annual comp statement, and PAFR
- Created a one-page budget
- Opened new beach access bath house with environmentally friendly features
- Staff engagement is high
- Regrettable turnover is less than 5%
- Installed turtle-friendly lighting
- Got through CRS audit
- Decreased permit turnaround time
- Adopted universal beach safety flag system
- Updated beach access and the Huron memorial
- 88,000 views on the Ash Wednesday storm video
- New data collection system on septic
- New payment portal – Tyler Payments

Action Item Prioritization

- 1.1 Create water rates that incentivize water stewardship (DTM/Finance Officer Miller)
- 1.2 Develop implementation priorities/strategies for the Estuarine Shoreline Management Plan (TM/DTM/Finance Officer Miller & Planning Director Wyatt)
- 1.3 Complete/Implement Beach Nourishment Master Plan to include the following elements (TM/DTM/Engineer Ryan):
 - a. Engineering Plan
 - b. Financial plan related to tax rates/revenues
 - c. Include sprigging in all future plans
- 1.4 Complete Stormwater Management Master Plan/Develop implementation plan w/ list of projects (for annual CIP) (Engineer Ryan)
- 1.5 Complete Water System Master Plan/Develop implementation plan w/list of projects (for annual CIP) (Public Services Director Carawan)

- 2.2 Identify and correct areas of land use incompatibility within the town; correct inconsistencies between the Comprehensive Plan and the Unified Development Ordinance (i.e. this involves eliminating land uses permitted within a zoning district but may not be compatible with existing development and/or the future development plan as described in the Comprehensive Plan.) (Planning Director Wyatt)

Items to consider:

- a. Revisit the appropriateness of the Hotel Overlay District
 - b. Identify areas where the zoning designation and existing development patterns may not be aligned
 - c. Examine Beach Road vs US 158 uses (Corridors Character Area)
 - d. Examine the allowable uses within the Commercial Outdoor Recreation District
- 2.4 Develop and present an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) ordinance with a menu of optional provisions/regulatory standards that may improve community acceptance (i.e. zoning districts allowed, minimum lot size, maximum square footage of unit, height limits, deed restrictions for certain purposes, parking requirements, etc.) (Planning Director Wyatt)
- 3.1 Participate in Dare County's Housing Taskforce and apply menu of strategies from the Taskforce to the Town's housing needs (Town Manager Garman & Mayor Pro Tem Siers)
- 3.2 Evaluate optimal housing options for the Ocean Rescue staff within the Town Campus Master Plan, and explore opportunities to accommodate additional employees (Town Manager Garman)
- 1.7 Develop creative strategies to increase participation in the Septic Health Initiative (Planning Director Wyatt)
 - o Note: The Town applied for a grant to help with this initiative. If grant is awarded to the Town, it will stay on the priority list.
- 2.5 Recommend non-regulatory approaches to minimize residential lighting impacts. Suggestions include increased education on dark sky benefits, a program to provide resident with free light shields, a "keep it dark/be a good neighbor campaign", turtle friendly lighting and education on how to provide security lighting without creating nuisance lighting for neighbors (Planning Director Wyatt)

Next steps on strategic plan

- Staff will update the strategic planning webpage with the status report memo and consider adding color-coding or a slider to indicate progress on each action item

Additional next steps from retreat

Facilitator Emily Groo reviewed the day with attendees; Board members and staff agreed to the following next steps to take:

- The policy on livestreaming events is for all meetings except retreats
- Town Manager Garman will move forward to gather more information about hiring a lobbyist

- Staff will develop a plan for future Board orientation including potentially a handbook, a video, and/or a mini-retreat
- Town Manager Garman will finalize and bring forward the Town Campus master plan for Board approval
- The Planning department will adopt the strategies discussed to gather public input before the Planning Board meeting including updating the water application for citizens to opt in on planning updates
- Staff will assist the Board in appointing a new Commissioner

ADJOURNMENT

Facilitator Emily Groo received positive feedback from attendees on the retreat; the Board Retreat was adjourned at 4 pm.

Carolyn F. Morris, Town Clerk

Date Approved: **December 4, 2024**

Mayor: _____
Benjamin Cahoon