

## Annual Village Council Retreat Recap

The Bald Head Island Village Council conducted its annual retreat on Tuesday, February 2, 2021. Below is a recap of the items presented and discussed.

Finance – The Finance Director presented a proposed budget calendar to Council. The calendar included some internal deadlines and proposed dates for Council to conduct budget workshops. The first workshop will take place during the first part of May and other workshops could be scheduled later, if necessary. The workshops will be open to the public and will be noticed on the Village's bulletin boards and social media. The Finance Director also presented an overview of the Village's 10-year debt service obligations and estimated ad valorem tax revenues for FY22. The details of the Finance Director's presentation can be viewed [HERE](#).

Shoreline Management - A representative from the Village's Government Law and Policy Practice advocacy firm updated the Council on the status of several issues that they have engaged in on behalf of the Village through 2020 and shared some suggested issues to pick up on in the coming months with the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress. The firm has been keeping up with the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), wind energy, and the efforts to deepen and widen the channel to Wilmington (also known as the Wilmington Harbor Improvement Project or WHIP). The firm is hoping to line up meetings for the Mayor to discuss these issues and several others (BOEM offshore wind development, flood insurance, the Sand Management Plan, emergency funding issues related to COVID) with government officials as soon as this March. More details can be found in this memo [HERE](#).

The Village Manager gave a [presentation](#) on the Village's shoreline management efforts to include the sand tube groin field, the terminal groin, the sand bypass program at the marina channel entrance. He discussed the Federal beach disposal schedule and the need to continue sand placement every three years to provide a stable beach/dune system, protection of private property and public infrastructure, habitat for birds and endangered species, and a recreational amenity for property owners and visitors. He indicated that the current goal is to obtain permits for an alternative borrow site to Jay Bird Shoals and that the Village's efforts are concentrated on getting a permit for Frying Pan Shoals (FPS). Another possible long-term goal would be replacement of the sand tube groins with rock structures, this would likely include a rigorous permitting process and would need to wait until FPS efforts have concluded.

Environmental Services Contract with BHIC – Beth Darrow, Senior Scientist from the Bald Head Island Conservancy gave a [presentation](#) on the services that the Conservancy provides to support the Village. This includes forest vegetation assessment, deer management, Bald Head Creek bacteria dynamics, aquifer modeling, beach vitex assessment and treatment, and predator population assessments. She provided Council with the Conservancy's recommendations on which activities to continue under the Village's contract for FY22. All activities were recommended for continuation at some level, except aquifer modeling, which was recommended to be concluded.

Public Services – J.P. McCann, Public Services Director, [presented](#) a proposed organizational chart for a newly formed Public Services Department which will include current Public Works and Utilities employees. He recommended four additional full-time employees for consideration in the FY22 budget and provided information on workload impacts to justify the new positions. McCann provided an update on the 80/90 treatment capacity rule and discussed the Village's current waste treatment capacity, wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) expansion timing, and future capacity needs. He indicated that grants and no interest loans will be investigated to determine the best way to pay for the WWTP expansion. The expansion schedule will be driven by resident usage and the rate of new constructions on the island. He highlighted the department's current and future projects which included additional storage for equipment, numerous water/wastewater plant improvements, and an inventory and schedule plan for the motor fleet and equipment.

McCann also reviewed an updated [inventory](#) of the Village's roads which includes a grading system for conditions and use and indicates several roads which are prioritized for the FY22 budget. McCann indicated that the Village could seal some areas to slow down some of the deterioration. Quotes will be ready for discussion at budget workshops. There was discussion that the Village may want to consider a bond referendum to do a large-scale paving project over 3-4 years to complete all Village roads. While discussing this topic, the Environmental Task Force recommendation regarding a glass crusher came up. This was discussed previously and at this time there are no complaints with how glass is managed on the island. Currently residential customers can bring glass to the Public Works recycling site. Commercial customers have been using a contractor on the island who collects the glass on-site to a dumpster on the Village's property at Timber Creek Mulch site and that is eventually hauled off-island.

Village Hall – The Village Manager shared a [proposal](#) for the architectural services to design and perform construction administration for a new Village Hall. Mr. McCall indicated that the Village had looked at expansion of Village Hall in 2007, but the plans were put on hold to focus on shoreline protection. At last year's retreat, the Village Council reviewed plans for a new building which have since been [updated](#). The new building would be built on the land adjacent to the current Village Hall which was acquired since 2007. The Village Council was interested in moving this project forward and asked to have the proposal on the regular meeting agenda for approval. Construction costs are currently estimated at \$1.9M or \$350 per square foot.

Marina Park Pier – The Village Manager updated the Council on the status of this project which will replace the severely damaged pier and dock at Marina Park. The Village will be applying for FEMA reimbursement to pay for the replacement. The old structure can be removed after FEMA makes a site visit. The structure will be repositioned to provide more direct access to the dock which will decrease the amount of structure requiring long-term maintenance. The Village will need a major permit from the Division of Coastal Management (DCM), and it will require a joint application with Bald Head Island Limited since there is a riparian access owned by Limited adjacent to the Village's Marina Park

parcels. The Village and Limited are working with an engineer to provide drawings as part of the DCM application and is hoping to get the application submitted for approval and into the construction phase as soon as possible.

Lighthouse Wynd Historic District Update – Mark Prak reported that he has plans in place to acquire a lot and a conservation easement (to protect trees) in the Lighthouse Historic District which will be used to expand the Old Baldy Foundation’s campus. The [plans](#) would require the Village to close the end of Lighthouse Wynd at Old Ballast Stone Alley. These plans have not been finalized but there is discussion about using the land for a museum, theatre, and multipurpose space. The Village Council requested that adequate parking be considered in the plans. The Village will have to identify the existing utilities in the road before any decisions are made.

HFTF Update – The Village Manager updated the Council on the progress that the Village has made in completing the recommendations made by the Hurricane Florence Task Force. An [updated table](#) was presented to the Council.

Planning & Development – Will Quick of Brooks Pierce (the Village’s law firm) gave a [presentation](#) about legislative changes made by the NC General Assembly regarding planning and zoning for local governments. The changes were made to modernize the laws and simplify the laws by combining the planning and zoning chapters for Counties and Cities in Towns into one chapter. The Village’s planning and zoning ordinances must conform to the State law (now called Chapter 160D) by July 1, 2021. Mr. Quick and Village Staff will be working to make the updates to the Village ordinances and is expecting to have a draft ready in early March for the Planning Board to review and make recommendations to the Council. Council is expected to receive the Planning Board recommendations and complete the 1<sup>st</sup> reading of ordinance updates in April, leaving plenty of time to meet in June if another meeting is needed. The legislative changes also require local governments with zoning to have a comprehensive plan in place by July 1, 2022. This will be another requirement the Village will need to work on over the next year.

Public Safety – Public Safety Director Alan May gave a [presentation](#) on the department’s strategic goals for FY22. The four main goals are to improve trust and relationships with providing the highest level of professional service to our citizens and community, optimize the department’s operational capacity, resiliency, and readiness to meet dynamic mission requirements, invest in the department’s workforce, and uphold department-wide accountability. Director May expounded on each of these goals. He also provided an overview of the regulatory agencies that the department is involved with and the training and certifications the department staff must maintain to meet the requirements of the agencies. He presented a proposed organizational structure which would better utilize the strengths of those in supervisory roles. He also reviewed the department’s assets and provided the Council with information on the goals the department could achieve to improve the Village’s Insurance Service Office (ISO) rating which could mean a decrease in homeowner’s insurance premiums.