

**River Bend Town Council
Work Session Meeting
March 10, 2016**

Present Council Members:	Mayor John Kirkland Luci Avery Bill Camp Buddy Sheffield Irving Van Slyke Pat Yocum
Town Manager:	Delane Jackson
Town Attorney:	Dave Baxter
Town Clerk:	Ann Katsuyoshi

HIGHWAY 17 ASSOCIATION PRESENTATIONS

Marc Finlayson of the Highway 17 Association told the Council that the Association is supported by 12 of the 13 corridor counties, nine municipalities and five regional or county economic development partnerships. Because of the work of the Association, the NCDOT has committed over \$250M to projects along the corridor including Washington to Williamston, the Washington Bypass, the New Bern Bypass, Jones County, the Jacksonville Bypass, Wilmington and the Wilmington Bypass. Mr. Finlayson said that he knew that the Jones County project was of particular interest to the residents of River Bend. He said that the Corps of Engineers and the NCDOT have finally agreed on a route and the permitting process is nearly completed. Four-laning this part of U.S. Highway 17 will make it a much safer road for the people in Craven and Jones Counties and will greatly facilitate commercial growth.

Mayor Kirkland thanked Mr. Finlayson for his continuing work on behalf of the communities along the Highway 17 corridor.

RIVERS AND ASSOCIATES PRESENTATION

Greg Churchill, Vice President of Rivers and Associates, addressed the Council on the wetlands fill work that will be necessary for future upgrading of the Wastewater facilities. He pointed out that the Town currently has all state and federal permits in hand to do this work and reminded them that there is no guarantee that they would be able to get the permits re-issued should they be allowed to expire. Mr. Churchill also pointed out that the longer the Town waits, the more expensive the project is likely to become. He recommended that the Council make plans to proceed with this work understanding that at some point in the future NC DENR will require that the plant be updated.

DISCUSSION OF ZONING AMENDMENT RECOMMENDATION FROM PLANNING BOARD

Town Manager Jackson said that the Planning Board has returned this amendment to the Council with a recommendation of approval. This amendment would require developers to install contracts in all future large developments. The question will be put to the Council at its Regular meeting.

TREE CITY PRESENTATION

Manager Jackson that a member of the North Carolina Forestry Service will present the Town with its seventh Tree City Award at the Regular meeting next week.

ARBOR DAY PROCLAMATION

The Council will be asked to the annual Arbor Day Proclamation at the Regular meeting.

REVIEW AGENDA MARCH 17, 2016 COUNCIL MEETING

The Council reviewed the Agenda for the March 17, 2016 Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT/RECESS

There being no further business, Councilman Sheffield **moved to adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Ann H. Katsuyoshi
Town Clerk

**River Bend Town Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2016**

Present Council Members:	Mayor John Kirkland Luci Avery Bill Camp Buddy Sheffield Irving Van Slyke Pat Yocum
Town Manager:	Delane Jackson
Town Clerk:	Ann Katsuyoshi
Town Attorney:	Kyle Dickerson
Police:	Chief Ryland Matthews

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Kirkland at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 17, 2016 in the Town Hall Meeting Room with a quorum present.

ADDRESSES TO COUNCIL

Tree City – Austin Harriett, Assistant County Ranger for Craven County, said that he was pleased to present the Town of River Bend with its seventh Tree City USA Award. River Bend is one of only 85 cities and towns in North Carolina and one of approximately 3,400 in the nation to receive this recognition.

Ranger Harriett said that Tree City USA began as a 1976 Bicentennial project co-sponsored by the National Association of State Foresters and the USDA Forest Service. The National League of Cities and the U.S. Conference of Mayors are also co-sponsors.

He also said that River Bend has met all of the criteria required for the Tree City designation. He added that for a community forestry program to be effective, it takes support and commitment from the entire community. In River Bend, the community forestry program thrives because of the combined dedication of the Community Appearance Commission members, the Town staff, elected officials, business community, and residents who take pride in improving the quality of life in River Bend through environmental stewardship.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Mayor presented the Council with the Consent Agenda. Councilwoman Avery **moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.** The motion carried unanimously. Within this motion the following items were approved:

A. *Approve:*

*Minutes of the January 14, 2016 Work Session
Minutes of the January 21, 2016 Council Retreat
Minutes of the January 21, 2016 Regular Meeting
Minutes of the February 11, 2016 Work Session*

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

PUBLIC WORKS AND WATER RESOURCES – MAYOR JOHN KIRKLAND

The Public Works Advisory Board did not hold a meeting in March. Their next scheduled meeting will be April 5th. Advisory Board member Bud Danehy will represent the Board during the Budget Work Sessions.

FINANCE – COUNCILMAN IRVING VAN SLYKE, JR.

Financial Report – Town Manager Delane Jackson told the Council that the General Fund balance as of February 29, 2016 was \$3,047,972. Ad valorem tax collections were at \$786,851.

Vote – Approve Resolution Approving a Qualified Source for Obtaining the Ethics Training Required by N.C. GEN. STAT. § 160A-87 – Councilman Van Slyke said that all elected officials must go through state-approved ethics training. This Resolution is in support of the designation of the firm of Sumrell, Sugg, Carmichael, Hicks & Hart, P.A. as a qualified source for such ethics education. He **moved to approve the Resolution Approving a Qualified Source for Obtaining the Ethics Training Required by N.C. GEN. STAT. § 160A-87 as presented.** The motion carried unanimously.

PLANNING BOARD – COUNCILMAN BUDDY SHEFFIELD

The regular meeting of the Planning Board was held on Thursday, March 3rd at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was present. Chris Harmon gave the report of the building permits for the month.

The Board passed a resolution confirming that the sidewalks for new development ordinance submitted to the town council is consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan. There was discussion about whether the Town should regulate gardening contractors. The storm water report was put off for a month. The next meeting will be held April 7th.

Vote – Amend §15.01.082 “Preliminary Plat” and § 15.01.095 “Generally” – Councilman Sheffield said that the Council has discussed this item on several occasions. This amendment would require sidewalks in new, large developments. **He moved to reject the Amendment to the Town of River Bend Ordinances, §15.01.082 “Preliminary Plat” and § 15.01.095 “Generally,” as presented.** The motion carried with three ayes (Camp, Sheffield, Yocum) and two nays (Avery, Van Slyke).

ENVIRONMENT AND WATERWAYS ADVISORY BOARD – COUNCILMAN BILL CAMP

The EWAB meeting was called to order on March 7, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. by Ralph Iorio. The prior month's minutes were read by Rhys Evans and approved.

The kayak launch area sign is in place “No Bicycles or Skateboards on Pier.” The concern was for youths bicycling off the kayak launch float and into the water.

Rhys will have his boat in the water in early April and will have aboard members to inspect “No Wake Zone” signs for readability. They will also look for areas where new no wake zone signs

might be placed and be observed by boaters. Any trees that have fallen into the canal, debris and other possible hazards to navigation will be noted and resolved.

PUBLIC SAFETY – COUNCIL MEMBER PAT YOCUM

CERT - Mary Houlihan started the meeting by asking the members if they had read the article she had entered in the Riverbender Feb. issue that explained the outcome of the Emergency Contact Drill, which was held the end of November.

C.E.R.T.S. had held a mock drill to practice the use of an Emergency Contact list they had put together and which 250 residents had returned. With that many people the list had to be organized by needs and locality.

The goal of the Mock Drill in November was to test out the efficacy of the list and make any necessary changes. The drill proved to be successful. They were appreciative of the resident's participation when they called their homes and want to remind residents that they will be called by a member of C.E.R.T. if we have damage from severe weather.

The group then went into the plans that they had made for the Severe Weather Event, which will be held on June 18th from 10-2. Don't forget to mark your calendars. They have invited guest speakers and businesses to participate with materials that people may need if there is wind damage or power outage.

Gene Bauer discussed contacting insurance agencies for contributions for prizes to be awarded to attendees. Nancy Donahue who is presently disabled with a broken leg offered to prepare gift bags to be handed out.

The upcoming formidable footprints training out of Raleigh was discussed. The idea of the training programs are worthy, however, they are scheduled on the Saturday before Easter, Memorial Day weekend and the last Sat. in July. It was decided because of the conflict of the dates with what are typically Family gathering times that the only training that would get the largest turnout of C.E.R.T. members would be the one at the end of July.

A short training on setting up an incident command center as described on a checklist was then conducted.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Community Watch - The River Bend Community Watch Team held its quarterly meeting on February 17. It was a meeting with mixed emotions as it was Council Woman Luci Avery's last meeting as our council liaison. We all thanked her for her dedicated support of and involvement with Community Watch with a gift certificate to Water's Edge. That presented the opportunity for newly elected Council Woman Pat Yocum to introduce herself to the group as the new council liaison. She talked about attending and learning at the School of Government sessions for new council members and looking forward to working with Community Watch.

The team was then treated to an informal and informative presentation by Ralph Iorio from the Rhems Fire Department. He asked those present - and by extension I am asking readers of this article - to look for house numbers as they drive in town during the day. You will find many

cases where the numbers are missing or obscured/unreadable. Now picture a medical emergency in the middle of the night. Our first responders are outstanding but, since they don't know every street and house, the extra minutes to find the house could well be the difference between life and death. The solution, as has been mentioned before, is to purchase and properly display the number signs available from the Rhems Fire Department.

Robin Beilby reiterated her desire to, after many years of outstanding work with and for Community Watch, retire as president and turn that position over to Jim Kelly. She asked for a volunteer to assume the co-president position and Egon Lippert accepted the challenge to try to fill some very hard shoes. Formal nomination motions were made and approved.

Closing with an editorial from the new co-president, I want to remind everyone that Community Watch is one of the least demanding while at the same time being one of the most important organizations for the safety of River Bend. It is least demanding because there are no dues, there are no long training sessions/drills and meetings are quarterly. If you can walk, jog, ride a bike or drive a car about two hours a month you're watching for suspicious activity will help our excellent Police Department to focus on other major things while ready to support you if needed. And, for your identification and safety, t-shirts, hats vests and car magnetic plaques are available for free.

Our next meeting is on June 15 as the last meeting before our July 4th festivities. There will always be our core group of volunteers but many additional volunteers will be needed and welcomed. So that would be a great opportunity for you come and sign up or, even better, contact Jim Kelly at 252-268-5668 or Egon Lippert at 252-672-0060 now to join Community Watch because "A Community Watch a day helps keeps the bad guys away".

PARKS & RECREATION/CAC – COUNCILWOMAN LUCI AVERY

CAC - CAC met on March 9. Shrubs and perennials have been ordered for the front of the town hall building and to complete the Plantation median project. The award letter from the Arbor Day Foundation again designating River Bend a Tree City was shared with the board. A representative from the foundation will make a formal presentation at the March Council meeting. It was decided that a shade tree would be planted outside the dog park to celebrate Arbor Day. Plans for other landscaping around the dog park were discussed including ideas for pet memorials. Plans to enhance the front entrance with a new sign and landscaping were discussed. CAC had evaluated their program for 2015 and reported a total of 234.5 volunteer hours. The next board meeting will be May 11 at 1:30 p.m.

Parks and Rec - Parks and Recreation met on March 2. Activities for March were discussed. March 12 was a Do It Yourself workshop conducted by Lowes employees. Twenty-five people attended and heard instructions on lawn care, repairing leaky faucets and toilets and had their questions answered. This was a first time event and will be repeated.

The annual Easter Egg hunt is scheduled for March 26 for children up to age 12. The event for preschoolers will be at 10:30 a.m. on the basketball court, age 5 - 8 at 10:45 near the playground, at 11:00 a.m. for age 9 - 12 on the grassy area near the volleyball court and special needs children will hunt eggs at 11:30 a.m. near the playground. Local businesses have contributed gift certificates and small toys to be given as prizes to the children.

April events will include a fishing derby for children accompanied by a parent on April 16 at 10:00 a.m. at the pond behind Town Hall. The ever popular bunco will be held on April 20 at 1:00 p.m. in Town Hall.

Parks and Recreation board members volunteered a total of 536 hours in 2015 to provide activities for River Bend residents of all ages. The next meeting will be April 6 at 7:00 p.m.

Community Organic Garden - This group met on March 14. The gardeners are busy with daily bed preparation and spring and summer plantings. The February workshop featured local garden experts who answered questions and gave advice to 80 participants. The next workshop will be May 10 and the topic will be strawberries--growing, preserving and cooking with the berries. The Green Team of students from New Bern High School are excited about a project in the garden to save butterflies by creating a habitat with host plantings. Mitchell's hardware donated bone meal and plants to the garden.

Discussion continued on ways to involve River Bend residents who are interested in organic gardening but are not able to do the physical labor. Opportunities include data entry, publicity, research, organizing the workshops, and grant writing. The group is open to other ideas for participation. Those interested are encouraged to attend the next meeting on April 11 at 2:00 p.m. in Town Hall.

The Community Organic Garden and Education Center volunteers recorded 2541 hours of garden labor in 2015 and 1344 hours performing educational and administrative activities. 440 pounds of produce were donated to Interfaith Refugee Ministry.

Board of Adjustment - The Board of Adjustment is a quasi-judicial body whose purpose is to review and rule on appeals of zoning issues. Meetings are as needed. An organizational meeting was held on March 14 to elect officers and discuss a training session on legal requirements of the board. Jared Kennish was elected Chair and Otto Kuehrmann Vice-Chair. The town manager discussed the ordinance relating to the Board of Adjustment. The legal training will be scheduled for May.

Arbor Day Proclamation – Councilwoman Avery said that the Council adopts an Arbor Day Proclamation each year as part of the Town's Tree City Program. She moved to adopt the 2016 Arbor Day Proclamation as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Kirkland said the first of seven Budget Work Sessions was held on Tuesday, March 8th. The Council reviewed the various aspects related to employee compensation, utility cost for general fund and enterprise fund activities, the cost of motor fuel, the cost of the several insurance programs that the Town holds. All of these costs reflect on the individual department budget proposals that will be covered in the future Work Sessions. The review looked at the historic cost in each category and discussed the projected fiscal year 2016-2017 cost with the Manager. The council by consensus agreed that the proposals appeared appropriate to enter into the budgeting process as it moves forward.

The Town's long-range Capital Improvement Project projections were reviewed for the General Fund and for the enterprise funds. The final discussion reviewed the Town's Information

Technology (IT) equipment and the contracted IT services and the estimates for the support in the next fiscal year.

The meeting was attended by a large number of citizens who followed the presentations and raised a number of questions.

The meeting was recessed until March 22nd. The meeting that was scheduled for March 15 was moved when North Carolina changed its Primary Election day.

March will see the annual Easter Egg hunt sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. This event is always a delight to observe and special thanks are extended to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for their faithful conduct of the "hunt."

The Town's CERT has again scheduled a Hurricane Fair for Saturday 18 June. This is a great program that CERT makes available. Guest speakers address a wide range of emergency planning that citizens should implement prior to the occurrence of a hurricane. It is of particular value to new residents that have not lived through a hurricane while living in River Bend. Again we all thank the CERT members for planning this event we are all indebted to you for this work.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Councilman Sheffield **moved to adjourn**. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Ann H. Katsuyoshi
Town Clerk