TOWN OF SOUTHERN SHORES

TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING

5375 N. Virginia Dare Trail, Southern Shores, NC 27949
Phone 252-261-2394 / Fax 252-255-0876
www.southernshores-nc.gov

PITTS CENTER

Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 9:00 AM

AGENDA

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance
Moment of Silence

Amendments to / Approval of Agenda

General Public Comment (Limit: 3 minutes per speaker.)

Business Items

1. Presentation-College of the Albemarle New Facility & Program Update-President Jack Bagwell & Tim Sweeney
2. Beach Nourishment Project Design Update-Ken Willson
3. Town Code Amendment -21-05 Noises Prohibited
4. Bike & Pedestrian Safety-NC12 Speed Limit Reduction Request-Councilman Conners
5. FY 21-22 Budget Workshop Discussion Items

Council Comments

Adjourn

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE

COA – DARE

NEW CAMPUS

COMING WINTER 2022

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



Southside – Main Building

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



Southside – MAIN BUILDING

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



Southside – MAIN BUILDING

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



Southside – MAIN BUILDING

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



Northside – MAIN BUILDING

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



Arial View – NEW CAMPUS

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



East View of Lobby – MAIN BUILDING

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



East View of Lobby – MAIN BUILDING

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



Sitting Area, Lobby – MAIN BUILDING

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



2nd Floor Balcony (Southside) – MAIN BUILDING

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



Exterior Colors – MAIN BUILDING

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



Exterior–
PROFESSIONAL ARTS BUILDING

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE

COLLEGE TRANSFER DEGREES



- ASSOCIATE IN ARTS
- ASSOCIATE IN ENGINEERING
- ASSOCIATE IN FINE ARTS IN THEATRE
- ASSOCIATE IN FINE ARTS IN VISUAL ARTS
- ASSOCIATE IN GENERAL EDUCATION
- ASSOCIATE IN GE–NURSING
- ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE



SCHOLARSHIPS FUNDING GRANTS

- **Federal & State Financial Aid** (FAFSA)
- **Pell Grants**
- **Dare Guarantee** (*Qualify: Start 24 months of graduating from Dare HS)
- **COA Foundation Scholarships**
- **Outer Banks Community Foundation Scholarship**
- **COA Cares**
- **NC Works**

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

Workforce Development Certification

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE



- **CURRITUCK**
  - **Aviation Systems Technology** (FAA Certified Program)
  - **Computer-Aided Drafting Technology**
  - **Computer Integrated Machining**
- **EDENTON-CHOWAN**
  - **Culinary**
  - **Truck Driving**
- **ELIZABETH CITY**
  - **Cosmetology**

PROGRAMS OF STUDY OFFERED AT OTHER COA CAMPUSES

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE

CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION

- Hospitality Leadership
- HVAC Technology
- Marine Diesel Engine Repair
- Welding Technology
- Professional Crafts: Jewelry
- Captain's License
- Drones
- Pool & Spa
- Construction, Electrical, Plumbing
- Certified Nursing Assistant I & II



COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE

ELECTRICAL

- In 2018, there were 267 Electrician and Helper jobs and 31 annual openings within the COA service area. (EMSI)
- Electrician Helpers - $15.78 per hour / $32,830 and a projected 3% growth (OOH)
- Electricians - $27.01 per hour / $56,180 and a projected 8% growth in job outlook between 2019 - 2029 (OOH)

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE

PLUMBING

- In 2018, there were 208 Plumbing / Pipefitter Jobs and 25 annual openings within COA's service area (EMSI)
- 2019 Median Pay $22.52 per hour / $55,160 (OOH)
- Job Outlook 2019-29 - 4% Increase (OOH)



CERTIFIED NURSE AIDE

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE

HOSPITALITY LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATION

Courses Now Offered ONLINE



HOSPITALITY LEADERSHIP CERTIFICATION



HVAC TECHNOLOGY

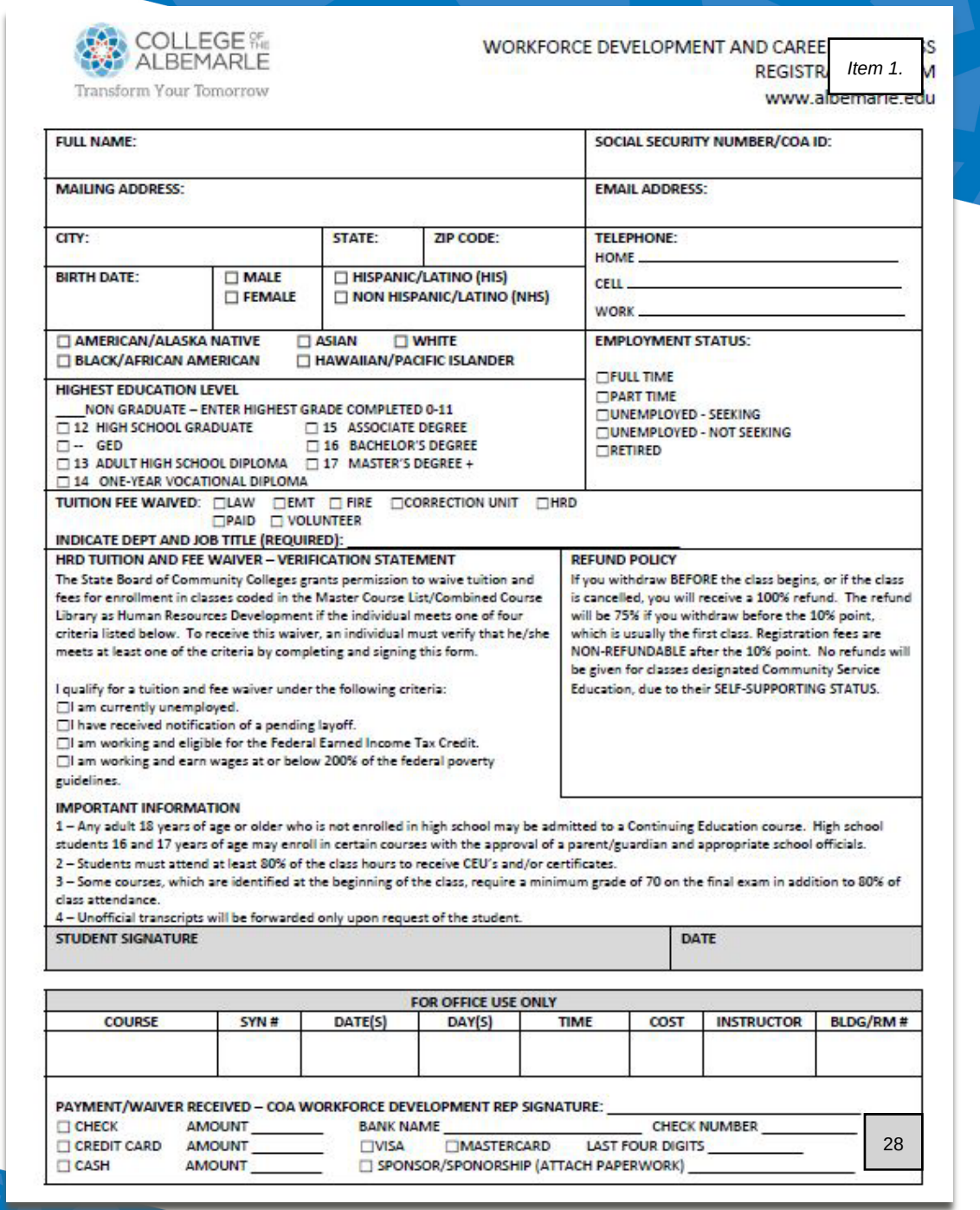
WELDING TECHNOLOGY

PROFESSIONAL CRAFT: JEWELRY

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE

Registration for Hospitality Leadership Courses

VIA FAX BY EMAIL OR PHONE



COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE
Transform Your Tomorrow

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND CAREE S
REGISTR M
www.albemarle.edu

Item 1.

FULL NAME:			SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER/COA ID:
MAILING ADDRESS:			EMAIL ADDRESS:
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP CODE:	TELEPHONE: HOME _____ CELL _____ WORK _____
BIRTH DATE:	☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE	☐ HISPANIC/LATINO (HIS) ☐ NON HISPANIC/LATINO (NHS)	
☐ AMERICAN/ALASKA NATIVE ☐ ASIAN ☐ WHITE ☐ BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN ☐ HAWAIIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER			EMPLOYMENT STATUS: ☐FULL TIME ☐PART TIME ☐UNEMPLOYED - SEEKING ☐UNEMPLOYED - NOT SEEKING ☐RETIRED

HIGHEST EDUCATION LEVEL
____NON GRADUATE – ENTER HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED 0-11
☐ 12 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE ☐ 15 ASSOCIATE DEGREE
☐ -- GED ☐ 16 BACHELOR'S DEGREE
☐ 13 ADULT HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA ☐ 17 MASTER'S DEGREE +
☐ 14 ONE-YEAR VOCATIONAL DIPLOMA

TUITION FEE WAIVED: ☐LAW ☐EMT ☐ FIRE ☐CORRECTION UNIT ☐HRD ☐PAID ☐ VOLUNTEER

INDICATE DEPT AND JOB TITLE (REQUIRED): _____

HRD TUITION AND FEE WAIVER – VERIFICATION STATEMENT

The State Board of Community Colleges grants permission to waive tuition and fees for enrollment in classes coded in the Master Course List/Combined Course Library as Human Resources Development if the individual meets one of four criteria listed below. To receive this waiver, an individual must verify that he/she meets at least one of the criteria by completing and signing this form.

I qualify for a tuition and fee waiver under the following criteria:
☐I am currently unemployed.
☐I have received notification of a pending layoff.
☐I am working and eligible for the Federal Earned Income Tax Credit.
☐I am working and earn wages at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines.

REFUND POLICY

If you withdraw BEFORE the class begins, or if the class is cancelled, you will receive a 100% refund. The refund will be 75% if you withdraw before the 10% point, which is usually the first class. Registration fees are NON-REFUNDABLE after the 10% point. No refunds will be given for classes designated Community Service Education, due to their SELF-SUPPORTING STATUS.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

1 – Any adult 18 years of age or older who is not enrolled in high school may be admitted to a Continuing Education course. High school students 16 and 17 years of age may enroll in certain courses with the approval of a parent/guardian and appropriate school officials.
2 – Students must attend at least 80% of the class hours to receive CEU's and/or certificates.
3 – Some courses, which are identified at the beginning of the class, require a minimum grade of 70 on the final exam in addition to 80% of class attendance.
4 – Unofficial transcripts will be forwarded only upon request of the student.

STUDENT SIGNATURE	DATE

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

COURSE	SYN #	DATE(S)	DAY(S)	TIME	COST	INSTRUCTOR	BLDG/RM #

PAYMENT/WAIVER RECEIVED – COA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT REP SIGNATURE: _____
☐ CHECK AMOUNT _____ BANK NAME _____ CHECK NUMBER _____
☐ CREDIT CARD AMOUNT _____ ☐VISA ☐MASTERCARD LAST FOUR DIGITS _____
☐ CASH AMOUNT _____ ☐ SPONSOR/SPONORSHIP (ATTACH PAPERWORK) _____

COLLEGE OF THE ALBEMARLE

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY FORM

MEETING DATE: May 4, 2021

ITEM TITLE: Beach Nourishment Project Design Update-Ken Willson

ITEM SUMMARY:

Ken Willson with CPE-NC will provide a project design update at the meeting.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

REQUESTED ACTION:

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY FORM

MEETING DATE: May 18, 2021

ITEM TITLE: Town Code Amendment -21-05 Noises Prohibited

ITEM SUMMARY:

At the March 2, 2021 Town Council meeting, Council directed Town Staff to take valuable elements out of the adoption draft of the Town Code Update written by CodeWright for review by the Planning Board and the Town Council for future consideration. At the April 13, 2021 Town Council meeting, Council tabled consideration of the proposed amendments to the Town's Noise Ordinance in TCA-21-02 so that Councilmembers Holland and Neal could meet with Town Staff to review and discuss it. TCA-21-05 is a revised TCA that incorporates the comments received during discussion.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approval of TCA-21-02.

REQUESTED ACTION:

Motion to approve TCA-21-02.

Town of Southern Shores
5375 N. Virginia Dare Trail, Southern Shores, NC 27949
Phone 252-261-2394 / Fax 252-255-0876
info@southernshores-nc.gov
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TCA-21-05

Ordinance 2021-05-06

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES
OF THE TOWN OF SOUTHERN SHORES, NORTH CAROLINA

ARTICLE I. Purpose(s) and Authority.

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.C.G.S. Chap. 160A, the Town has duly codified the Town's Code of Ordinances (the "Town Code"); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes § 160A-174 the Town may enact and amend ordinances that define, prohibit, regulate, or abate acts, omissions, or conditions, detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of its citizens and the peace and dignity of the Town, and may define and abate nuisances; and

WHEREAS, the Town further finds that in accordance with the findings above it is in the interest of and not contrary to the public's health, safety and general welfare for the Town to amend the Town Code of Ordinances as stated below.

ARTICLE II. Construction.

For purposes of this ordinance amendment, underlined words (underline) shall be considered as additions to existing Town Code language and strikethrough words (~~strikethrough~~) shall be considered deletions to existing language. Any portions of the adopted Town Code which are not repeated herein, but are instead replaced by an ellipses ("...") shall remain as they currently exist within the Town Code.

ARTICLE III. Amendment of Town Code.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Town Council of the Town of Southern Shores, North Carolina, that the Town Code shall be amended as follows:

PART I. That **Chapter 22 Sec. 22-3. Noises Prohibited.** be replaced in its entirety as follows:

Sec. 22-3. Noises prohibited.

The purpose of these standards is to protect citizens from excessive sound (noise), which is detrimental to the health and peaceful enjoyment of property. No use shall be operated or permitted to be operated in a manner that creates prohibited forms of noise or sound that exceeds the maximum sound levels in this section. Except for uses and activities identified in Section 22-3 (b), the standards in this Section shall apply to all uses and activities taking place on lands and waters located within the corporate limits of the Town and its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

(a) Definitions. The following definitions shall apply to all portions of the Town Code relating to noises within the Town.

(1) A weighting scale: The sound pressure level, in decibels, as measured with the sound level meter using the "A" weighted network (scale). The standard unit of notation is dB(A).
(2) Daytime hours: 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., local time.
(3) Decibel (dB(A)): The decibel is a unit of measure of sound (noise) level relative to a standard reference sound on a logarithmic scale.
(4) Emergency work: Work necessary to restore property to a safe condition following a public calamity or work required to protect persons or property from an imminent exposure to danger by private or public utilities when restoring utility service.
(5) Motor vehicle: For purposes of this section, the term motor vehicle includes any vehicle which is propelled or drawn on land by a motor, including but not limited to motorcycles, passenger cars, trucks, truck-trailers, semitrailers, campers, go-carts, amphibious craft on land, dune buggies, racing vehicles, mopeds, motorized bicycles or motorized scooters or skateboards.
(6) Nighttime hours: 10:01 p.m. to 6:59 a.m., local time.
(7) Noise: Any sound which annoys or disturbs humans or which causes or tends to cause an adverse psychological or physiological effect on humans.
(8) Noise disturbance: Any sound which endangers or injures the safety or health of humans or animals; a noise that disturbs a reasonable person with normal sensitivities; endangers or injures personal or real property; or is unreasonably loud, disturbing or excessive noise.
(9) Noise sensitive zone: Any area designated by the town for the purpose of ensuring exceptional quiet.
(10) Owner of real property: The owner or listed owner, of real property as defined in North Carolina General Statute 105-302.
(11) Person: A person, firm, association, co-partnership, joint venture, corporation, or any entity, public or private in nature.

(12) Real property boundary: A line along the ground surface and its vertical extension, which separates the real property owned by one person from that owned by another, but not including intra-budding real property divisions.
(13) Right of way: Any street, avenue, boulevard, highway, sidewalk or alley or similar plan which is owned or controlled by a governmental entity.
(14) Sound amplification devices: Any radio, tape player, compact disc player, MP3 player, loud speaker, amplifier, or other device used for the amplification of sound.
(15) Sound level (noise level) in decibels: The level measured on the A-weighted scale as defined in the American National Standards S-1.4-1983.
(16) Sound level meter: An instrument designed for the measuring of sound levels and a means of displaying the sound level using the A-weighting network.
(17) Tenant: One who resides on or has the temporary use or occupancy of real property owned by another person. In the case of residential property, the term "tenant" shall be considered to mean any individual actually residing at the residential location, whether such person is listed on a lease or not.
(18) Unreasonably loud, disturbing or excessive noise: Any sound which because of its volume, level, duration or character disturbs, discomforts, injures or endangers the health, peace or safety of a reasonable person with normal sensitivities. For purposes of this chapter, such a sound shall be deemed to be a noise disturbance.
(19) Zoning districts: Means land classification within the Town that regulate the uses and the locations of structures. Zoning Districts are established in Chapter 36 of this Code.

(b) Exemptions.

The standards in this section shall not apply to the following uses or activities:

(1) Emergency work;
(2) Generators for production of electricity at times when electrical service has been interrupted due to natural calamity or accidental disruption. Generators used for the production of electricity not exempted by this chapter shall be operated in accordance with the maximum decibel requirements of the zoning district where located;
(3) Parades, fairs, circuses, or other similar public entertainment, sporting events taking place during the daytime hours in areas set aside for such activities, or any activities normally associated with any of the above, including use of a loud speaker or public address system;
(4) Musical chimes or the sounding of bells emanating from a public, educational, or religious institution or facility provided the sound is of reasonable duration and frequency;

(5) The intentional sounding or permitting the sounding of any fire, burglar, or civil defense alarm, siren, whistle or similar stationary emergency signaling device for emergency purposes or for routine testing;
(6) Any activity to the extent regulation thereof has been pre-empted by State or federal law;
(7) Noise resulting from the loading and unloading, opening, closing or other handling of boxes, crates, containers, building materials, or similar objects between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.; and
(8) The playing of a musical instrument between the hours of 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays provided said sound does not exceed 65 dB(A) at the property line of the property from which the sound emanates;
(9) Agencies of the United States government, law enforcement agencies, fire departments, ocean rescue services, emergency medical services, and Town refuse collection vehicles or apparatuses, engaged in their official duties are exempt from the provisions of this section; and
(10) Noises and activity associated with public beach nourishment projects undertaken at the Town's direction.

(c) Maximum Permitted Sound Levels

It shall be unlawful to create, cause, or allow the continuance of a noise disturbance that exceeds the following maximum thresholds:

(1) Sounds Affecting Residential and Special Districts:

In the Single-Family Residential (RS-1), Multifamily (RS-8), Residential (RS-10), Low Density Residential (R-1) and Ocean and Sound Waters (OSW) Districts, it shall be unlawful to create, cause, or allow any mechanical, amplified or sound from any source which registers more than 60 dB(A) during daytime hours or 55 dB(A) during nighttime hours at or beyond the property line of the property from which the sound originates.

(2) Sounds Affecting Commercial and Institutional Zones:

In the Government & Institutional (G&I) and General Commercial (C) Districts, it shall be unlawful to create, cause, or allow any mechanical, amplified, or sound from any source which registers more than 75 dB(A) during daytime hours or 65 dB(A) during nighttime hours at or beyond the property line from which the sound originates.

(3) Sounds Crossing Zoning District Boundaries:

When the zoning classification of the property where the sound originates differs from the zoning classification of the adjoining sound receiving property, then the maximum permitted sound level which will apply will be the higher of the two.

(4) Noise Sensitive Zones:

(a) Notwithstanding their location, healthcare facilities, places of worship, educational institutions, and day care facilities are noise sensitive zones and it shall be unlawful for any person to cause or allow the emission of sound onto said facilities during the facilities' operating hours which exceeds the noise limitations or reasonableness standards for sound levels affecting residential zones established by this chapter.

(b) For purposes of this section, measurements shall be made at the real property boundary of the noise sensitive zone facility nearest the real property boundary of the property from which the noise originates.

(d) Prohibited Noise

It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in the following acts, which are declared to be a prohibited noise in violation of this chapter:

1. The keeping of an animal which, by causing frequent or long continued noise, shall disturb the quiet, comfort, or repose of the immediate area to such an extent as to constitute a nuisance;
2. The loading, unloading, opening, closing, or other handling of boxes, crates, containers, building materials, garbage cans, dumpsters of similar objects between the hours of 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. the following day, in such a manner as to cause a noise disturbance across a residential real property boundary or within a noise sensitive zone is prohibited as set forth in the maximum decibel levels set for each zone at the times of day consistent with this chapter;

3. It shall be unlawful for any person to play, use, or permit to be played any sound amplification device which generates a sound level exceeding the decibel limits set forth in this chapter for the zoning district in which it is located for any of the following:

   i. Any public property including any public street, highway, building, sidewalk, park, or thoroughfare; or
   ii. Any motor vehicle on a public street, highway, public space, or commercial space.

4. Possession by a person of any machines or devices which may be classified as an electronic sound amplification system enumerated and defined in this chapter shall be prima facie evidence that person or those persons operated that machine or device.

5. Except as allowed in this section, noise caused by the erection (including excavation), demolition, alteration, or repair of any building other than between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on weekdays and Saturdays shall be prohibited.

   i. Erection, excavation, demolition, alteration, or repair of a building may take place outside the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on weekdays or Saturdays, only in the case of urgent necessity in the interest of public health and safety, subject to an emergency construction permit issued by the Town Manager (or a designee).

   ii. If the inability to erect, demolish, alter, or repair a building or excavate streets and highways between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. would result in loss or inconvenience to any party in interest, the Town Manager (or a designee) may permit such work.

(e) Obtaining Warrants

(a) Nothing in this section shall preclude any citizen, without the benefit of noise measuring equipment or contacting a law enforcement officer, from appearing before a judicial officer to obtain a warrant based on this chapter.

(f) Noise Measurement Techniques

(1) Sound Level Meters

(a) For the purpose of determining decibels, (dB(A)'s) as referred to in this chapter, noise shall be measured on the A-weighting scale on a sound level meter of standard design and quality having characteristics established by the American National Standards Institute.

(b) The sound level meter should be certified to meet or exceed the American National Standards Institute or its successor bodies and shall be serviced, calibrated and operated as recommended by the manufacturer.

(c) Persons utilizing the sound level meter for purposes of this chapter shall be familiar with sound level measurement and the operation of

sound level measurement equipment, and shall operate the sound level meter in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

(2) Alternative Measurement Techniques

(a) In the event that the noise cannot be measured on a sound level meter operated on the "A" weighting network (scale) or it is otherwise impractical to utilize this measurement technique under the circumstances:

i. The complaints of numerous persons, at least one of whom resides in a different location from the other complaining person or persons, when combined with the complaint of an authorized investigating officer, shall be prima facie evidence that the sound is unreasonably loud, disturbing, or excessive noise; or

ii. If the noise is of such a nature that a reasonable person with normal sensitivities should have known that the noise was creating an unreasonably loud, disturbing or excessive noise the same shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of this chapter.

(b) Sound emission decibel measurements shall not be required for establishment of a violation under the circumstances set out above and the same shall be deemed to be a noise disturbance.

(c) In determining whether a noise, under this section, is of such character as to be noise disturbance the investigating officer shall consider the following non-exclusive list of factors:

i. Whether the noise crosses property lines;
ii. Complaints of neighbors regarding the noise;
iii. Effect on neighbors complaining of the noise;
iv. Time of day at which the noise takes place;
v. The intensity and duration of the noise;
vi. The type of noise produced;
vii. The reason or reasons for the noise; and
viii. The alternative means available which will not produce excessive noise.

(3) Location of Measurement

(a) Except for noise within multi-family or multi-tenanted structures, all noise measurements shall be made at or beyond the lot line of the property from which the noise originates to determine if the noise creates a noise disturbance. For purposes of measurement, the back of the curb, the outside edges of driveways, fences, hedges or other physical features commonly associated with property boundaries are presumed to be at a point which is at or beyond the lot line.

(b) In the case of noise within multi-family or multi-tenanted structures, noise measurements shall be made in the complaining unit with all windows and doors closed and at a point that is approximately the center of the room in the complaining unit that is nearest the unit from which the noise originates. If access to the complaining unit is not possible, then the measurement shall be at least 25 feet from the nearest point of habitable space of the unit from which the noise originates.

ARTICLE IV. Severability.

All Town ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance amendment are hereby repealed. Should a court of competent jurisdiction declare this ordinance amendment or any part thereof to be invalid, such decision shall not affect the remaining provisions of this ordinance amendment nor the Zoning Ordinance or Town Code of the Town of Southern Shores, North Carolina which shall remain in full force and effect.

ARTICLE V. Effective Date.

This ordinance amendment shall be in full force and effect from and after the ____day of _____, 2021.

_____
Tom Bennett, Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
Town Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____
Town Attorney

Date adopted:

_____
Motion to adopt by Councilmember:

_____
Motion seconded by Councilmember:

Vote:___AYES___NAYS

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY FORM

MEETING DATE: May 18, 2021

ITEM TITLE: Bike & Pedestrian Safety-NC12 Speed Limit Reduction Request

ITEM SUMMARY:

Councilman Conners has provided the attached narrative to explain the impetus and intent of the resolution.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

REQUESTED ACTION:

Council consideration and possible adoption of the attached resolution.

ATTACHMENTS

Draft Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan –

https://www.southernshores-nc.gov/draft-comprehensive-bicycle-pedestrian-plan/

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

This narrative is prepared in the hope that a serious discussion within our community can be had with the goal of enhancing primarily pedestrian, but also cyclist safety along our roads. As a design professional I believe that many different ideas and perspectives contribute to make the solution to a goal/problem much better and stronger. This subject should not be one person's effort.

In recent years we've witnessed a child being seriously injured while she was riding her bike. A jogger was sideswiped by a car. A car ran off NC 12 near the cell tower while heading south and just missed some pedestrians. And tragically, a pedestrian was recently killed while trying to cross NC 12 while he was heading to the beach. As referenced in the following paragraph, there have been others as well.

The 2014 Draft Bike and Pedestrian Plan, which was **not** adopted by Southern Shores, stated that during the timeframe of 2007-2011 there were 9 cyclist-motor vehicles incidents and 1 pedestrian-motor vehicle incident. That plan later refers to 3 cyclist/pedestrian incidents with cars, but 2 were in parking lots. The *majority* of these incidences occurred along 158 but the exact locations are unclear in that plan.

I think it's worth noting though, that while the Town never adopted this plan, many of its' recommendations have been implemented by the Town, such as the extension of the walkway along South and East Dogwood Trails. There are other recommendations, such as signage types, verbiage and locations that have not yet been implemented.

I think it's past time that we as a community, elected officials, government employees, and public safety/first responders give serious thought to what we can do to increase pedestrian and cyclist safety. In the hope of initiating that discussion, I'd like to offer the following:

Speed limit on NC 12

Adopt a resolution asking NCDOT to reduce the speed limit on NC 12 year-round to 35 mph.

This has been done in the past but NCDOT declined to lower the speed limit year-round. Traffic year-round has only gotten worse and a recent study/analysis by a consultant told us that traffic on NC 12 was at or near maximum capacity even during non-vacation season. A strong case by our Town should be made to NCDOT and if they balk, we should petition our State representatives on this subject. Having been declined in the past should not serve as an excuse for inaction now.

And as a reminder, the recent fatality happened well before the vacation season begins for this year.

Signage

Lowering the year-round speed limit on NC 12 would also allow us to treat that section of NC 12 like Virginia Dare Trail (also NC 12). Signage informing drivers to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks could be added along NC 12 in Southern Shores. Better warnings of pedestrian crosswalks, flashing warning lights and even pedestrian oriented signage could be added. The time for a pedestrian to cross the road could also be increased since many of these crosswalks don't accommodate the large numbers of pedestrians. And as noted above, the 2014 Bicyclist and Pedestrian Plan had numerous recommendations for placement of signage to enhance cyclist and pedestrian safety.

There are no fewer than 18 crosswalks along NC 12 in Southern Shores. There have been periodic requests for additional crosswalks at other streets like Hickory Trail where significant numbers of people also cross NC 12 on their way to the beach. The 2014 Bicyclist and Pedestrian Plan recommended a crosswalk at the NC 12/Hickory Trail intersection. Some features that could be added to enhance pedestrian safety along NC 12 could include raised medians at the crosswalks and/or pedestrian refugee islands, yet again, another recommendation by the 2014 Bicyclist and Pedestrian Plan.

Timing of Crosswalks

Give pedestrians enough time to cross NC 12.

Obstructions in Right of Ways

Better enforcement of obstruction in the right of ways.

A road right of way is a part of the road. In addition to being a utility corridor, right of ways also serve as a 'recovery zone' in the event a vehicle needs to quickly go off pavement to avoid a hazard.

Overgrown or inappropriate vegetation in the right of ways not only obstructs driver visibility, it also can prevent a driver from even having a place to veer off pavement in a quick moment. NCDOT, as well as virtually every local government entity with a planning department has standards for encroachments within the right of ways. Sight triangles are one example. Other standards exist for hard structures and their need to be 'break-away' items or set back certain distances from the edge of pavement.

Hedges of russian olives, boulders at the edge of pavement, and post/rope demarcations, again at the edge of pavement are types of obstructions that hinder sight visibility or the recovery zone for vehicles.

Education and Outreach

I think it could be very beneficial to educate our residents and visitors about cyclist and pedestrian safety. Obvious methods could be through our newsletter and Facebook page. Additionally, printed information regarding our walkways (recently prepared map), crosswalks locations, and safety measures could be disseminated through the rental agencies to benefit vacationers. There are state laws applicable to cyclists and pedestrians. I would guess that most of us do not know them.

Conclusion

1. I hope is that Southern Shores pass a resolution asking the NCDOT to lower the speed limit on NC 12 to 35 mph year-round.

2. We all should review the 2014 Bicyclist and Pedestrian Plan and implement those safety related items that have already been recommended to our town, specifically, but not limited to, the recommended signage verbiage and locations.

3. Work t*ogether* on pedestrian safety in our town. NC 12 is a State Road and their assistance and cooperation in making NC 12 a safe road is needed. The NC 12 corridor thru Southern Shores is much more than a vehicular transportation route. Large numbers of pedestrians and cyclists use the NC 12 corridor in addition to the vehicular traffic.

There are currently four members of our Town Council or Town staff that were on the committee that worked with the consultant who prepared the 2014 Bicyclist and Pedestrian Plan. Their input could be very fruitful and appreciated.

Town of Southern Shores

5375 N. Virginia Dare Trail, Southern Shores, NC 27949
Phone 252-261-2394 / Fax 252-255-0876
www.southernshores-nc.gov

RESOLUTION 2021-05-02

RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO LOWER SPEED LIMIT ALONG A PORTION OF NC HIGHWAY 12

Whereas Safety on NC 12 is always a concern of the Town of Southern Shores,

Whereas the Town of Southern Shores has an interest in the safety and well-being of both pedestrians and vehicle drivers and passengers utilizing NC State Highway 12; and

Whereas The population in the Town of Southern Shores is increasing year-round and NC 12 traffic at or over capacity even during non-vacation season: and

Whereas There have been numerous documented crashes related to pedestrians and bicyclists; and

Whereas Lowering the speed limit to 35 MPH on NC 12 within the Town Limits is important to the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists as well as vehicles: and

Whereas the North Carolina Department of Transportation controls and administers traffic regulations and speed limits through established policies and best engineering practices along North Carolina State Highway 12 in the Town of Southern Shores, NC; and

Whereas the speed of vehicles travelling NC State Highway 12, especially during low-light times of the mornings, late afternoons, and evenings, is a concern for the safety of large numbers of pedestrians seeking to cross the highway travelling to and from the beach; and

Whereas a majority of the 18 crosswalks on NC State Highway 12 in Southern Shores are not "signalized" and are located in "mid-block" areas between the state highway's intersection width,

Now, Therefore, the Southern Shores Town Council does hereby resolve that the North Carolina Department of Transportation is requested and urged to lower the speed limit along NC State Highway 12 throughout the Town limits to 35 mph, install signage and/or lighting focusing on pedestrian safety, allow for longer pedestrian crossing times, repaint faded crosswalks and treat the NC 12 corridor as a major pedestrian and vehicular corridor with special, and additional steps that could be taken to enhance pedestrian safety and still keep vehicular traffic moving in a safe, though slightly slower mode.

This the 18th day of May 2021.

Attest:

_____ _____

Thomas G. Bennett, Mayor Sheila Kane, Town Clerk

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY FORM

MEETING DATE: May 18, 2021

ITEM TITLE: FY 21-22 Budget Workshop Discussion Items

ITEM SUMMARY:

In addition to any Council questions or requested items for discussion, staff will be prepared to present the follow topics:

1. Use of Fund Balance

   Please see the attached document that assumes the estimated numbers for the current fiscal year will come in close to the same as 6/30/20 for encumbrances and accounts receivables. The amount currently used for budget amendments in the current fiscal year is $1,281,688. Town Staff is confident we will not need to use the full amount currently budgeted due to revenues coming in higher than originally budgeted, but for planning purposes (as of today), that needs to be taken into consideration when trying to determine the amount of UFB available. The amount recommended to be used to fund beach nourishment and balance the FY 22 budget is $1,223,392. After these 2 deductions, a balance of $490,466 is remaining, in addition to the $3,000,000 which is required by Council policy.

2. Revenue Projections – The Finance Officer will explain rationale used in recommending revenues

3. Department Budgets – Department Heads will be available to answer any questions the Town Council may have regarding their budget requests.

4. Health Insurance – as indicated in the budget message, a 10% increase in premiums is budgeted next FY. The below shows rate adjustments since 2017.

	Health Insurance
2022	+10%
2021	-9%
2020	+.05%
2019	+1%
2018	+6%

5. State Retirement Contributions – see attached document that explains how the State Retirement System determines employer rates.

	SR general	Rate	SR LEO	Rate
2022	+1.19	11.39	+1.09	12.05
2021	+1.22	10.2	+1.25	10.95
2020	+1.23	8.98	+1.20	9.7
2019	+0.25	7.75	+0.25	8.5
2018	+0.25	7.5	+0.25	8.25

6. Pay and Classification Study Results – staff will provide an explanation of what methodology was applied in determining the recommendations for the pay and classification study.

7. Street Improvements – The recommended amount for street improvements is a large portion of the budget. This funding may serve as an earmark until Council can review the results of the Pavement Conditions Study and CIP. The amount budget is equal to the cost estimate for the next street improvement listed on the 2019 Capital Infrastructure Improvement Plan, Hillcrest Drive. The Council may recall directing the Town Engineer to design the improvements to extend the project all the way to NC 12 from the Hickory Trail intersection.

8. Seasonal Cut Thru Traffic – Funds are recommended to conduct eight “no-left turn” events at the US 158 and South Dogwood intersection beginning the weekend of June 26 and 27. There may be other measures the Council wishes to take which would require additional budgeted funds.

9. Beach Nourishment Tax Rates – Staff will be prepared to illustrate impact of assigning different tax rates based on Council input.

Attachments

Estimated fund balance

Department line-item budgets

Article referencing State Retirement rate changes

Town of Southern Shores
Analysis of Unassigned Fund Balance 6-30-20

	6/30/2019	CY Revenues over Expenses	Other Changes	6/30/2020
Stabilization by State Statute:				
Accounts receivable	544,646	-	83,357	628,003
Encumbrances	29,017	-	35,092	64,109
	573,663	-	118,449	692,112
Prepaid expenses	5,566	-	14,563	20,129
Capital reserve fund	164,114	-	23,279	187,393
Drug enforcement	9,459	32	-	9,491
Subsequent year's budget	1,325,614	-	(1,325,614)	-
LEOSSA	236,891	8,040	-	244,931
Unassigned	4,173,321	629,623	1,192,602	5,995,546
Total GF fund balance	6,488,628	637,695	23,279	7,149,602

Unassigned fund balance	5,995,546
Working capital/fund balance policy	(3,000,000)
To Balance FY 20-21 Amended Budget	(1,281,688)
Balance FY 21-22 Budget	(1,223,392)
	490,466

Planning & Code Enforcement

Mission

The Planning and Code Enforcement Department is responsible for planning, permitting, and code enforcement services for the Town. The primary goal of the Department is to provide citizens with timely and efficient permit issuance and administration and enforcement of building regulations, flood regulations, nuisances, subdivision regulations, zoning regulations, CAMA regulations, and hazard mitigation.

FY 21-22 Budget Highlights

Contracted Services

- Annual funding for Citizenserve permitting software.

Printing

- Funding for printing services for cards, signage, and applications.

Advertising

- Funding for public/legal notice publications.

Travel

- Funding for meals and overnight accommodations usually associated with training.

Dues/Subscriptions

- Funding for media subscriptions and employee certifications.

Training

- Funding for continuing education.

Supplies

- Funding for materials and equipment.

Uniforms

- Funding for Town shirts.

Vehicle Maintenance and Repair

- Funding for maintenance and repairs for the Department's only vehicle.

Vehicle Operations

- Funding for vehicle fuel.

Homeowners Recovery Fee

- Funding for payment to the North Carolina Homeowner Recovery Fund as required by § 87, Article 1 A (payment of $9 per permit issued for work performed by a licensed general contractor associated with a single-family dwelling that is over $30,000).

Historic Landmarks Commission

- Funding for plaques/monuments for designated Historic Landmarks.

Flood Zone Map Mailing

- Funding for printing and mailing of annual Community Rating System outreach projects to all property owners.

Misc.

- Funding for unexpected expenses.

Police Department

FY 2021-22

Mission

The Police Department supports the core of Community Policing, and accepts its definition as both a philosophy and an organizational strategy that will allow the police and the community to work closely together. Together, we will work to establish and maintain mutual trust among all entities to improve the quality of life while enforcing the law.

Budget Highlights and Line Item Explanations

(Below are basic examples and explanations, and do not represent the entire list)

Personnel Maintained by Finance Dept.

Operation

- *Career Development* – advanced educational incentive program, 2 year degree, 4 year degree, master degree, etc. % pay incentives for accomplishment in higher Ed. Also include Senior and master Police Officer options.
- *Computer Services* – Records Management System software maintenance, covers SoShin's non-contractual maintenance of MDT/Laptops, software & hardware etc. Cloud storage for numerous police platforms, BWC, In-car Cameras, LPR data.
- *Printing* – Business cards, letterhead stationery, envelopes, parking brochures, parking tickets, etc.
- *Advertising* – Job openings, website, etc.
- *Travel* – covers travel time (fuel cost), cost for training, schools, certifications, housing/accommodations, and meals in accordance with GSA.
- *Dues/Subscriptions* – Professional associations & dues, NCACP, FBINA, etc.
- *Training* - numerous schools, training & certifications classes, including School Resource Officer refresher, DARE, Firearms Cert school, In-service schools not covered by NCJA, Gym Memberships, Taser certs, radar school certs, etc.
- *Medical Testing* – required for potential new hires and exposures.
- *Uniforms* – covers replacement of damaged/worn uniform/equipment, also includes basic dry-cleaning cost. Current (2021) avg. cost of replacement Class A uniform is; $800.00 per officer-(2-pr pants, 2 s/s shirts, 2 l/s shirts, 1pr shoes, 1pr boots), Class B uniform is additional $400.00 per officer.

Current Approx. cost:
Class A

Pants	$100.00
L/S Shirts	$65.00
S/S Shirts	$60.00
Shoes	$100-150.00
Boots	$120 – 150.00
Jackets	$250.00

Outer vest carrier $95.00 x3

- *Supplies* – cleaning, toiletries, office supplies, paper, ink, etc. training ammunition, SRO (School Resource Officer supplies, Taser training cartridges, Crime Scene supplies, thermal paper, etc.
- *Contracted Services* – DCI state contract, OSSI RMS Dare Co. CAD Maintenance, F/A Range fees, Water coolers, Taser Assurance program, COP TRAX in-car camera cloud storage fees x 14 cameras, Southern Software – Records Mgt. software license, etc. LPR-license maint.(6 cams 8?) (includes Spectrum access) BWC (Body Worn Cameras) cloud and annual licensing fees.
- *Equipment Lease/Maintenance* – UTV/ATV lease UTV= 4 year lease, ATV= 6 mos. Lease.
- *Equipment* – in-car cameras, MDT's (laptops), Traffic counters & software, message board, surveillance equip, duty equipment as needed ie; flashlights, handcuffs, etc. in-car printers. Body Cams. Interview room system, radar trailers. Portable/mobil radios, weapons, LPR's.
- *Vehicle Maintenance* – routine repairs, tires, brakes, inspections, radio, emergency lighting repairs and replacement.
- *Vehicle operation* – Fuel cost
- *Contingency* – Misc. (grant matches, specialized schools available, etc)
- *Capital Outlay* – Vehicle Replacement – purchase and rotate minimum of two vehicles per year, to maintain lower vehicle maintenance costs and ensure the best equipped and safest conditioned vehicles remain in operation.
- *CRO* – Community Resource Officer – part-time non-sworn position, assists with summer influx of tourist, duties include beach patrol, parking enforcement etc, works approx. 25-30 hrs per week, from Mid-May thru Sept.
- *Grants* – Dependent upon what may be available.
  ie; GHSP – Governors Highway Safety Program – normally matching grants for equipment such as MDT/Laptops, In-car Cameras, etc.
  GCC – Governors Crime Commission – sometimes matching sometimes no match grants are required, for Training equipment, weapons, etc., Body Worn Cameras.

Streets, Bridges and Canals

FY 21-22 Budget Highlights

Streets, Bridges, and Canals is budgeted as a separate budget component and is administered by the Public Works Department. The purpose is to implement projects for and administer repairs and capital improvements to the Town's major street, bridge, and canal infrastructures.

Streets, Bridges and Canals

- *Street Sign Maintenance*- $7,000 requested for street sign replacement budget
- *Engineering and Arborist Services*- $5,000 for engineering services for small repair and drainage projects completed in-house; arborist services for evaluation of trees being considered for removal due to damage, disease or proximity to a Town asset.
- *Street Maintenance*- $57,202 requested for contracted minor road maintenance repairs throughout the Town including repair of asphalt failures, edge failures, small full depth repairs and cracking due to root upheaval, pothole patching product, and thermoplastic striping materials for a Town-wide refreshing of crosswalks and stop bars.
- *Brush Trimming*: $20,000 proposed for tree removal in Town rights-of way and at the cemetery, and brush removal and disposal in the interior canals as needed. This work is performed under our Limb and Branch Removal service contract as an hourly rate service with Atlantic Tree Experts.
- *Bridge Maintenance*: $2,125 proposed for any minor bridge repairs required due to DOT bridge inspections.
- *Waterway Maintenance and Repair*: $400 proposed as contribution to the Boat Club for buoys and channel marker maintenance.
- *Storm Debris Cleanup*: $20,00 proposed for post-storm debris cleanup and disposal in the Town streets, rights-of-way, beaches and canals.
- *Hillcrest Drive*: $1,070,180 engineer's estimated cost.
- *Bulkhead Maintenance and Repair*: $25,000 proposed for structural repairs/replacement of Town-owned bulkheads.

Public Works Department

Mission

Public Works, through its dedicated employees, strives to protect and maintain the Town of Southern Shores' infrastructure and assets, including its streets, sidewalks, rights-of-way, canals, beach, parking areas and buildings, in the most environmentally respectful, financially efficient and highest quality manner possible. We are committed to being courteous and respectful to citizens, and to providing a safe, pleasant, respectful and productive workplace to our employees, and will always encourage education and training opportunities to further our staff's talents.

FY 21-22 Budget Highlights

Public Works

- *Training/Professional Development*: $3,000 is requested for pesticide training class, continuing education classes for pesticide license, and training through the UNC School of Government.
- *Printing*: $200 is requested to cover mailing costs for routine notice of street rebuild projects, environmental permitting required notices and of any shoreline stabilization measures.
- *Travel*: $2,000 is requested for travel related to attendance of professional development/training classes; this includes any hotel accommodations needed to attend training.
- *Uniforms*: $3,500 is requested for uniform service for the Public Works Maintenance Technicians, purchase of hard toe safety shoes for six employees, and any new uniform needs.
- *Dues and Subscriptions*: $350 is requested for American Public Works Association (APWA) membership renewal, which is a source of free and reduced cost training opportunities for staff.
- *Supplies*: $10,000 is requested for supplies including small hand tools and parts for various repairs. Examples include nuts/bolts/nails, lumber for various projects, paper towels and toilet paper, water and Gatorade for the Maintenance Technicians, etc.
- *Advertising*: $500 is requested for newspaper advertisement of employment positions.
- *Safety Compliance*: $2,000 is requested- $1,400 for emergency exit sign and fire extinguisher repair/replacement, and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for the Public Works employees, including safety glasses, vests, etc.; and $600 for fire hydrant reflectors supplied to the Southern Shores Volunteer Fire Department.
- *Town Buildings Maintenance & Repairs*: $45,300 is requested- $4,384 for service agreement on all heat/ac unit's, $1,000 for lighting supplies; $2,000 for flags; $17,000 to replace the fence at the public works shop; $5,000 for unforeseen repairs on the generator; and $15,616 for miscellaneous repairs and upkeep of aging buildings and associated equipment including the generator service.
- *Beautification*- grounds: $7,000 is requested- includes $3,000 for beautification of the Town Hall complex and Town-maintained medians and parking lots, including new plants and mulch/fertilization/pesticides; and $4,000 for any needed replanting or removal of vegetation following major road projects.
- *Equipment Lease & Maintenance*: $8,000 is requested for lease and maintenance of equipment, including purchase of mower blades, new tires for tractors/mowers, etc., and $2,000 for new flail mower teeth.
- *Vehicle Maintenance & Repair*: $4,500 is requested for regular maintenance and repair of the four Public Works' vehicles (four trucks) and boat.
- *Vehicle Operations*: $10,000 is requested to cover fuel for Public Works' vehicles and equipment. This increase is to cover the fuel costs of added mowing routs for new sidewalks and street improvement projects.
- *Misc.*: $ 1,000 is requested
- *Medical Testing*: $150 is requested for any drug screenings needed.
- *Equipment Purchase*: $60,000 is requested: $37,000 for mini skid steer, $16,000 for attachments and trailer for mini skid steer, $2,000 fir jackhammer, $5,000 for assorted power tools, and for any other equipment needs.
- *Shoreline Stabilization*: $24,000 is requested for dune stabilization measures including beach grass and sea oats planting and fertilization. Funds to come from the Dare County Shoreline Stabilization Fund.
- **Parking Lot Maintenance**: $2,000 is requested for maintenance and improvements to the Town-owned parking lots and beach access parking areas.

Treasurer Folwell and Retirement Boards Lower Assumed Rate of Return to 6.5%

Only 2nd Treasurer in 60 years to Lower the Assumed Rate of Return

Feb 2, 2021

(Raleigh, N.C.) – North Carolina State Treasurer Dale R. Folwell, CPA, and the Retirement Systems Division announced today that the investment return assumption or rate of return (RoR) for the principal North Carolina Retirement Systems (Fund) will be lowered 50 basis points from 7.0% to 6.5% per year. The change will be recognized immediately for financial reporting and calculating the funded percentage level, but for the purpose of determining employer contribution rates, the effect will be phased in over a period of five years.

The rate changes were unanimously approved by the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System and Local Government Employees' Retirement System Boards of Trustees (Boards) at their meeting on Jan. 28. The rate has been lowered twice previously in the past four years. In 2017, it was lowered from 7.25% to 7.20% and in 2018 the rate was lowered further to 7.0%. The changes during the Folwell Administration were only the second lowering of the rates in almost 60 years even though both plans have failed to achieve their assumed rates of return, on average, for the last 20 years.

The move was made as part of a number of recommendations made by the Fund's actuarial consultants Cavanaugh Macdonald Consulting, LLC (CMC). At least once every five years the Fund conducts an actuarial experience study that reviews the differences between a plan's assumed and actual experience over multiple years with the goal of examining the trends related to actual experience and recommending any needed changes to assumptions.

CMC recommended reducing the RoR to 6.5% based primarily on the fact that they believed the previous assumption for inflation underlying the investment returns (3.0% per year) should be reduced by at least 50 basis points. CMC recommended that the total investment return

assumption be set at 2.5% (inflation) plus 4.0% (investment returns exceeding inflation), or 6.5% per year.

"The North Carolina pension fund is one of the best funded in the country," said Treasurer Folwell. "However, we need to make realistic assumptions regarding our ability to achieve expected returns in the future. We owe it to the General Assembly, taxpayers, public employees and future generations to be transparent and realistic about the true valuation of the pension plans. Lowering this assumption will provide the best opportunity to meet the state's long-term obligations as well as maintain its AAA bond rating. I want to thank the Boards for making this decision."

The stability of the Fund relies on maintaining both adequate employer and employee contributions and achieving long-term investment goals. However, on average the Fund has not earned its RoR for the past 20 years. In fact, the estimated 20-year return on the Fund is 6.28% driven by the market declines after 9/11 and the great financial crisis. The new assumption of 6.5% per year represents the Boards' best estimate assumption of long-term future returns.

The Boards' action comes as many states are lowering their expected assumed rate of return to better reflect realistic future investment gains. However, many states remain underfunded despite the change. For example, in 2016, the California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS)—
(https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/data-visualizations/2018/state-retirement-fiscal-health-and-funding-discipline#/state-profiles/california?year=2018)
the nation's largest public pension plan—announced it would decrease its assumed rate of return incrementally from 7.5 percent in 2017 to 7 percent by 2021 yet is only 69% funded with a funding gap of $184 billion.

North Carolina's reduction to 6.5% will occur immediately with respect to the actuarial valuations as of Dec. 31, 2020, which determines contribution rates effective July 1, 2022. However, the impact of the change on actuarially recommended employer contribution rates will be recognized gradually over time.

Contributions to pension plans have three sources of funds: contributions made by employees (6%), contributions made by employers (state agencies, school systems and local governments) and investment gains. When a retirement system lowers its expected investment gains, additional funding for the pension system must come from other sources like the General Assembly and local governments in the form of employer contributions.

North Carolina's conservative pension funding policy has allowed government employers to move beyond the funding requirements that resulted from the 2008-2009 recession, so that those historical requirements do not compound the adjustment to the new actuarial

assumptions. The actuarially required contributions to fund currently promised benefits are expected to remain consistent with current levels in the coming years, as a percentage of employee pay, if the new assumed return of 6.5% per year is achieved.

Contribution rates are set by annual actuarial valuations in combination with the Boards of Trustees' funding policies. These funding policies may call for additional contributions beyond actuarially required amounts in order to ensure long-term budgeting stability for the state and local governments.

Folwell praised the North Carolina League of Municipalities, North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, the Governor and the General Assembly for their support. "We look forward to working with the league and commissioners and others to preserve and protect the pension plans," said Treasurer Folwell said. "They have been great partners in the past. Together we can make sure the pension plans remain solvent for current and future public service workers."

The North Carolina Retirement Systems, the formal name for the pension fund, is the 9th largest public pension fund in the country and is currently valued at almost $116 billion. It provides retirement benefits and savings for more than 950,000 North Carolinians, including teachers, state employees, local governments, firefighters, police officers and other public workers.

For more information, visit www.myncretirement.com (http://www.myncretirement.com) .

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