

**River Bend Town Council
Work Session Minutes
January 9, 2025
Town Hall
5:00 p.m.**

Present Council Members: Mayor Mark Bledsoe
Buddy Sheffield
Lisa Benton
Brian Leonard
Kathy Noonan
Jeff Weaver

Town Manager: Delane Jackson
Town Clerk: Kristie Nobles
Police Chief: Sean Joll
Finance Director: Mandy Gilbert
Town Attorney: Trey Ferguson

Members of the Public Present: 8

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bledsoe called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 9, 2025, at the River Bend Town Hall with a quorum present.

VOTE – Approval of Agenda

Councilman Weaver motioned to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion – Update on BIRM Media Project

The Town Manager stated that the BIRM media replacement has been ordered and is expected to be delivered the following week. He stated that changing out the BIRM is not a fast process but he expects it to be completed within 60 days of the delivery. Councilwoman Benton asked the Town Manager if he expects an interruption of water service for the residents of River Bend and he stated that he does not anticipate any disruption of service unless there is a problem. Councilman Leonard asked if the removed BIRM media would be disposed of at a licensed facility and the Town Manager stated that it would and there would be cost involved. Councilman Weaver asked the Town Manager if this was the normal length of the process from ordering the BIRM media to receiving and installing it and the Town Manager stated that it is and nothing has prolonged the process as of yet.

Discussion – Pickle Ball Courts Design

The Town Manager stated that the Council had requested a designed plan for a pickleball court for the town and he presented the plan to the Council. He stated that Kevin Avolis had designed the court, and this design fulfills their request. Councilman Leonard asked the Town Manager if the estimate would be half of the cost presented if the Council only built one court, and the Town Manager stated that he thought it would be more than half of the presented estimate. Councilman Leonard asked the Town Manager if there are specifications that state the required for municipal type court and are there standards. The Town Manager stated that there are no standards. Councilman Leonard asked what was used to develop the fencing and the landscaping and the Town Manager stated that Mr. Avolis designed the pickleball courts for Trent Woods and that did not set the standard, and he is not aware of any standards other than court size. Councilman Leonard stated that absent grant money this looks like something the

Council would have to budget for a number of cycles unless the Council wanted to dip in some place else because this is not something the Council has budgeted for. The Town Manager stated that there is no money in the current budget but there are some options. Councilman Sheffield asked what the odds were of getting a recreational grant for this project and the Town Manager stated that it is possible, but he understands the process is demanding and there may be a cost to apply. Councilman Weaver stated that since it is almost budget season that the Council table this topic until the budget meetings and he stated he would also like to have a discussion regarding a Capital Improvement Project to include the playground issue. The Mayor asked if the Council wanted to discuss this further at the next Council meeting or table it until the budget workshops. The Council discussed that they needed more information and a recommendation from Parks and Recreation regarding the playground equipment prior to budget season. Councilman Weaver stated that he would discuss this with Parks and Recreation and provide more information to the Council. The Council agreed.

Discussion – Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan 5-Year Update

The Manager stated the current Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan is set to expire this year and needs to be updated. He presented an updated plan to the Council.

Discussion – 2025-2026 Legislative Goals “Top 10”

The Manager stated that the North Carolina League of Municipalities requested that the Council submit their top ten legislative goals. He stated that those goals were included in the agenda package.

Discussion – 2025-2026 Budget Kick-Off (next week)

The Manager stated that the official budget kickoff presentation will be at next week’s regular council meeting.

DISCUSSION – Messaging Sign

Councilman Leonard asked the Town Manager how much money is remaining in the Council’s Discretionary Fund, and he stated around \$25,000. Councilman Leonard stated that the Council has discussed the town getting an electronic digital sign for a while and it would not be only for Public Safety. He then called on the Police Chief for more information. Chief Joll stated that every time they have used a digital sign, it has been this exact sign and from the City of New Bern. Councilman Leonard stated that this sign could be used not just for Police Department functions but for town events also.

VOTE – Messaging Sign


Councilman Leonard motioned to use the Council’s Discretionary Fund to purchase the mobile sign unit for \$15,121.08 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

REVIEW – Agenda for the January 16, 2025, Council Meeting

The Council reviewed the agenda for the January 16, 2025, Council Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT/RECESS

There being no further business, *Councilman Sheffield moved to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.* The meeting was adjourned at 5:44 p.m.



Kristie J. Nobles, MMC, NCCMC
Town Clerk