

**TOWN OF DUCK
TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
December 3, 2025**

The Town Council for the Town of Duck convened at the Paul F. Keller Meeting Hall at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 3, 2025.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Don Kingston; Mayor Pro Tempore Monica Thibodeau; Councilor Sandy Whitman; Councilor Brenda Chasen; Councilor Kevin Lingard; and Councilor-elect Marc Murray.

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Town Manager Drew Havens; Development and Infrastructure Director/Assistant Town Manager Connor Winstead; Town Attorney Robert Hobbs; Police Chief Jeffrey Ackerman; Deputy Fire Chief Jeffrey Del Monte; Public Information and Events Director Kristiana Nickens; Finance Administrator Lauren Creech; Deputy Town Clerk Christy Hanks; and Town Clerk Lori Ackerman.

OTHERS ABSENT: Fire Chief Matthew Dudek.

Mayor Kingston called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Mayor Kingston led the Pledge of Allegiance and the moment of silence.

SWEARING IN OF TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Kingston turned the meeting over to Town Clerk Ackerman, adding that the new Council members would be sworn in followed by the election of the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore.

Town Clerk Lori Ackerman was recognized to speak. Town Clerk Ackerman swore in each Council member one at a time.

ELECTION OF TOWN COUNCIL OFFICERS

Election of Mayor

Town Manager Drew Havens was recognized to speak. Town Manager Havens opened the nominations for Mayor of Duck.

Councilor Whitman moved to nominate Monica Thibodeau as Mayor. Town Manager Havens asked for other nominations. There being no other nominations, Councilor Lingard closed the nominations.

Motion carried 5-0.

Town Manager Havens turned the meeting over to Mayor Thibodeau.

Election of Mayor Pro Tempore

Mayor Thibodeau opened the nominations for Mayor Pro Tempore. Councilor Chasen moved to nominate Sandy Whitman as Mayor Pro Tempore. Mayor Thibodeau asked for other nominations. There being none, she closed the nominations.

Motion carried 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Thibodeau opened the floor for public comments. She noted that comments will be limited to three minutes as there was a timer for the time limit.

Eileen Zaenger of 116 Cook Drive was recognized to speak. Ms. Zaenger stated that she wanted to make sure that Council and the audience were aware of the upcoming meeting on Tuesday, December 9, 2025 that was shared in the Town's December 1, 2025 newsletter regarding a community forum on Project Vesta deployment of the olivine material that was put out in the ocean in front of the Carolina Dunes subdivision. She stated that it happened in July 2024 and the researcher who will be coming was partially supported by Project Vesta. She added that he completed a survey, but she did not see it and wondered if anyone else had seen the survey or participated in it. She stated that he would be sharing the results of the survey as well as collecting the thoughts of the community on how they feel about doing the project going forward. She suspected it would be used by Project Vesta in order to do more of this work in the future.

Eileen Zaenger stated that she was very concerned about it because there has not been any reporting out about any environmental impacts to the community or any other community. She pointed out that there was no report on what happened with the project in New York or anywhere as this was the first time it had been done in the world. She added that the material was put into the ocean and Project Vesta cannot retrieve it and this was now the public's opportunity to share. She stated that she had been sent a summary from the researcher of what he had, adding that she wasn't sure if anyone was interested in the summary before the meeting. She encouraged the public to attend the meeting and get informed on Project Vesta as well as what the olivine was and what the potential implications could be for the community. She stated that she asked the researcher a lot of questions such as who was surveyed, who responded, and what this was about, but she had not heard back yet. She hoped a lot of the members of the community would be showing up to the forum on December 9, 2025.

There being no one else wishing to speak, Mayor Thibodeau closed the time for public comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes from the November 5, 2025, Regular Meeting and Budget Amendments

Councilor Chasen moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Motion carried 5-0.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Employee Recognition Program

Mayor Thibodeau stated that in December 2011, Council adopted an employee service recognition program that would acknowledge the service of employees of the Town at five-year intervals by providing them with a certificate of recognition as well as a gift certificate to a Duck business of their choosing.

Mayor Thibodeau, Town Manager Havens, and Police Chief Jeffrey Ackerman went on to present Deputy Police Chief Melissa Clark with her 15-year service recognition and \$150 gift certificate.

Recognition of Maintenance Technician Kim Pittman on Receiving the Third Quarter Town of Duck SOAR Award

Town Manager Havens stated that on behalf of the SOAR Committee, he presented Maintenance Technician Kim Pittman with the Mighty Duck award.

Mayor Thibodeau and Council congratulated Technician Pittman on his award.

Discussion/Consideration of Resolution 25-17, a Resolution of the Town Council of the Town of Duck, North Carolina, Honoring and Thanking Don Kingston for his Service to the Town of Duck

Town Clerk Ackerman read Resolution 25-17 to Council and the audience that honored and thanked Don Kingston for his service to the Town of Duck.

Mayor Thibodeau moved to adopt Resolution 25-17 as presented.

Motion carried 5-0.

Town Clerk Ackerman went on to present Don Kingston with Resolution 25-17.

Former Mayor Kingston thanked the voters for electing him for eight terms on the Town Council; electing him as Mayor for seven terms; as well as all of the support from the Town Council and Town staff. He stated that he enjoyed his tenure and thanked his wife, Sharon, for her support over the years.

Presentation by Dare County Board of Commissioners Chairman Bob Woodard

Dare County Board of Commissioners Chairman Bob Woodard was recognized to speak. Chair Woodard went on to present former Mayor Kingston with a certificate of appreciation from the Dare County Board of Commissioners for his leadership as Mayor to the Town of Duck.

Former Mayor Kingston thanked Chairman Woodard for the certificate.

Presentation by the Duck Community and Business Alliance

Kevin Wright of the Duck Community and Business Alliance was recognized to speak. Mr. Wright went on to present a certificate of appreciation to former Mayor Kingston from the DCBA.

Former Mayor Kingston thanked Mr. Wright for the certificate.

QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARING

There were no Quasi-judicial public hearings at this time.

LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no Legislative public hearings at this time.

OLD BUSINESS/ITEMS DEFERRED FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Discussion/Consideration of Appointing an Individual to Serve on the Planning Board

Mayor Thibodeau stated that there was an opening on the Planning Board for a term to expire on May 1, 2028 to fill the unexpired term of Marc Murray. She stated that staff advertised the opening and three applications were received. She noted that Tom Burton and Warren Stembridge were currently Alternates on the Board of Adjustment, so if one of them was appointed to the Planning Board, a vacancy on the Board of Adjustment would need to be filled at Council's January 7, 2026 meeting. She asked the applicants to introduce themselves to Council and the audience individually.

Tom Burton of 109 Sandpiper Cove was recognized to speak. Mr. Burton went on to introduce himself to Council and the audience and explained why he wished to be appointed to the Planning Board.

Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman asked Tom Burton if he was the chairman of the Architectural Review Board for South Sanderling. Tom Burton stated that he was, adding that he had been on that board for a couple of years.

Jeannine Cotner of 108 Cook Drive was recognized to speak. Ms. Cotner went on to introduce herself to Council and the audience and explained why she wished to be appointed to the Planning Board.

Warren Stembridge of 106 Beachcomber Court was recognized to speak. Mr. Stembridge went on to introduce himself to Council and the audience and explained why he wished to be appointed to the Planning Board.

Mayor Thibodeau opened the nominations. Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman nominated Tom Burton. Councilor Lingard nominated Warren Stembridge.

Mayor Thibodeau closed the nominations.

Motion to appoint Tom Burton to the Planning Board for a term to expire on May 1, 2028 carried 5-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion/Consideration of the Appointment of Council Members to Serve on/as the Following:

Government Access Channel Committee

Mayor Thibodeau stated that the Government Access Channel was represented by Councilor Kevin Lingard. Councilor Lingard stated that he would like to continue to serve on the committee.

Mayor Thibodeau moved to reappoint Councilor Lingard to the Government Access Channel Committee.

Motion carried 5-0.

Planning Board – Council Liaison

Mayor Thibodeau stated that Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman has been the Council liaison for the Planning Board. Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman stated that he would like to continue to serve as the liaison.

Mayor Thibodeau moved to reappoint Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman as the Town Council liaison.

Motion carried 5-0.

Parks and Recreation Committee – Council Liaison

Mayor Thibodeau stated that the Parks and Recreation Committee was a new committee and having a Council liaison would be beneficial.

Councilor Lingard stated that he was interested in serving. Councilor Chasen stated that she was interested in serving. Councilor Murray stated that he was interested in serving.

Mayor Thibodeau moved to appoint Councilor Lingard to the Parks and Recreation Committee as the Council liaison.

Motion carried 5-0.

Albemarle RPO Rural Transportation Advisory Committee

Mayor Thibodeau moved to appoint Councilor Murray to the Albemarle RPO Rural Transportation Advisory Committee.

Motion carried 5-0.

Check Signatory – Two Council Members

Mayor Thibodeau noted that the check signatory was traditionally the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore. She suggested that she and Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman be the signatories.

Mayor Thibodeau moved to have herself and Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman serve as the check signatories for the Town.

Motion carried 5-0.

Discussion/Consideration of 2026 Council Meeting Date Schedule

Mayor Thibodeau reminded Council that their meetings are the first Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. and then on an as-needed basis on the third Wednesday of each month, also at 1:00 p.m. She pointed out that Council held an annual Retreat, which was set for February 18-19, 2026, as well as some other meeting dates that Council would need to attend, such as the budget discussions. She stated that she has a conflict for the annual Retreat because she will be out of the country. She asked if the meeting could be moved to another date. She asked if Council would be open to moving it to February 23-24, 2026.

Councilor Lingard stated that he was fine with moving the Retreat to February 23-24, 2026. Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman, Councilor Chasen, and Councilor Murray stated that they were fine with moving the Retreat. Mayor Thibodeau asked Town staff if those dates worked. Town Manager Havens stated that staff serves at the pleasure of the Council.

Mayor Thibodeau stated that if Mondays were not good, the Retreat could start on Tuesday instead. Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman stated that he was available the entire week. Councilor Chasen stated she was fine with either date. Councilor Lingard thought having it on Tuesday and Wednesday would be better for staff. Councilor Murray stated he was fine with it.

It was *consensus* of Council to hold the annual Retreat on February 24-25, 2026.

Councilor Chasen stated that she would not be available to attend the January 7, 2026 meeting. Councilor Lingard stated that he will not be available to attend the July 1, 2026 meeting. Mayor Thibodeau stated that the budget should be passed before July 1. Councilor Lingard pointed out that he will not be available to attend the June 17, 2026 meeting. Town Manager Havens stated that, unless Council decided not to adopt the budget at their June 3, 2026 meeting, it would not be an issue. He added that all of the meetings were calendared so staff could advertise them but it did not mean that Council had a mid-month meeting each month.

Councilor Murray moved to adopt the schedule as amended.

Motion carried 5-0.

Discussion/Consideration of the FY 2026-2027 Budget Calendar

Mayor Thibodeau explained that the budget calendar had the dates for the public hearings, the work session that will be held in May, as well as the adoption of the budget on June 3, 2026.

Town Manager Havens pointed out that a change would need to be made to the budget schedule with regard to the annual Retreat.

Councilor Chasen moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 budget calendar as amended.

Motion carried 5-0.

ITEMS REFERRED TO AND PRESENTATIONS FROM THE TOWN ATTORNEY

Town Attorney Robert Hobbs was recognized to speak. Town Attorney Hobbs stated that last week, Dare County lost Tom White, who had been a prominent leader in the legal community. He stated that Mr. White had worked for 42 years as an attorney after serving in the Navy. He added that he was the first Town Attorney for the Town of Southern Shores when it incorporated and served there for 22 years. He stated that he also served as the Town Attorney for the Town of Nags Head for 30 years. He stated that Mr. White was a tremendous mentor to those in the firm of Hornthal, Riley, Ellis & Maland who practiced municipal law because he was the go-to person for all things municipal.

He stated that they were happy to have had him join the firm towards the end of his career as he served as a great resource, adding that he would be missed.

ITEMS REFERRED TO AND PRESENTATIONS FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

Departmental Updates

Deputy Fire Chief Jeffrey Del Monte was recognized to speak. Deputy Fire Chief Del Monte gave a brief overview of the past month's fire activities to Council and the audience.

Development and Infrastructure Director/Assistant Town Manager Connor Winstead was recognized to speak. Assistant Town Manager Winstead gave an overview of the past month's permit activities to Council and the audience.

Public Information and Events Director Kristiana Nickens was recognized to speak. Director Nickens gave a brief overview of activities to Council and the audience.

Police Chief Ackerman Jeffrey Ackerman was recognized to speak. Police Chief Ackerman gave a brief overview of the past month's police activities to Council and the audience.

October FY 2026 Financial Presentation

Finance Administrator Lauren Creech was recognized to speak. Administrator Creech gave a short presentation on the October Fiscal Year 2026 financials to Council and the audience.

MAYOR'S AGENDA

Mayor Thibodeau thanked former Mayor Kingston for his service over the years. She stated that she was looking forward to leading the Town with Council, noting that Council members were always available to the public. She thanked Town staff and the volunteers that helped with National Night Out and that she was glad that the Turkey Trot has returned to Duck. She wished everyone a peaceful holiday season.

COUNCIL MEMBER'S AGENDA

Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman thanked the police and fire departments for the National Night Out event. He thanked former Mayor Kingston for service over the years.

Councilor Chasen thanked former Mayor Kingston for service over the years. She gave a short Outer Banks Visitors Bureau update to Council and the audience. She thanked the public for voting for her and the rest of Council.

Councilor Lingard thanked former Mayor Kingston for his service over the years. He pointed out that Council does receive and read all of the emails from the public and that someone will always reply to them, adding that it would most likely be from a Town staff member. He thanked everyone that helped out with the Turkey Trot.

Councilor Murray thanked Mayor Kingston for his service over the years. He thanked the public for voting for him, adding that he was looking forward to serving.

OTHER BUSINESS

Additional Public Comments

Mayor Thibodeau opened the floor for public comments. There being no one wishing to comment, Mayor Thibodeau closed the time for public comments.


Mayor Thibodeau noted that the next meeting would be the Regular Meeting on Wednesday, January 7, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.

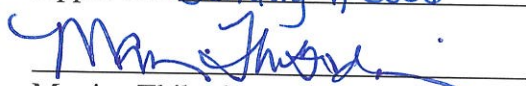
ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman moved to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried 5-0.

The time was 2:26 p.m.


Lori A. Ackerman, Town Clerk

Approved: January 7, 2026

Monica Thibodeau, Mayor

