

**TOWN OF DUCK
TOWN COUNCIL
RETREAT
February 24 & 25, 2026**

The Town Council for the Town of Duck convened at the Paul F. Keller Meeting Hall at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 24, 2026.

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Town Manager Drew Havens, Infrastructure Director/Assistant Town Manager Connor Winstead; Town Attorney Robert Hobbs; Fire Chief Matthew Dudek; Deputy Fire Chief Jeffrey Del Monte; Police Chief Jeffrey Ackerman; Deputy Police Chief Melissa Clark; Public Information and Events Director Kristiana Nickens; Planning & Permits Manager Sandy Cross; Donna Creef of the Dare Housing Foundation; Senator Bobby Hanig; Clay Dills of Dills Architects; Bob Woodard of Dare County Board of Commissioners; Matthew Foreman of the Town of Duck Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee; Finance Administrator Lauren Creech; Deputy Town Clerk Christy Hanks; and Town Clerk Lori Ackerman.

ABSENT: None.

Mayor Thibodeau called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the Retreat. She stated that the Retreat was held on an annual basis over the course of two days and was a working session between the Town Council and Town staff, refining direction for the budgeting for the upcoming year as well as the Town's longer-term vision. She noted that around noon Council and staff would recess for a lunch and other business with no food provided for the public this year, adding that snacks were available throughout the day.

DARE HOUSING FOUNDATION

Donna Creef of the Dare Housing Foundation was recognized to speak. Ms. Creef went on to give a short presentation on the work completed by the Dare Community Housing Task Force as well as the work completed since the Dare Housing Foundation was formed to Council and the audience. She then took questions from Council.

Mayor Thibodeau thanked Donna Creef for her presentation.

SEPTIC HEALTH INITIATIVE

Planning and Permits Manager Sandy Cross was recognized to speak. Manager Cross went on to give a short presentation on the septic health inspection program, noting that the Outer Banks Association of Realtors secured a grant for a septic health initiative and wished to pilot an inspection program as well as wanting to present the Town with a \$5,000 grant award for the work that has been completed since 2023. She then took questions from Council.

Councilor Chasen moved to accept the \$5,000 grant from the Outer Banks Association of Realtors to launch a pilot inspection program.

Motion carried 5-0.

Councilor Chasen moved to authorize Town staff to accept the \$5,000 grant from the Outer Banks Association of Realtors to begin launching a marketing campaign for the septic initiative and sign the contracts with the vendors.

Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor Thibodeau thanked Manager Cross for her presentation.

NC SENATE UPDATE

Senator Bobby Hanig was recognized to speak. Senator Hanig went on to give a short presentation on the work of the Senate and General Assembly to Council and the audience. He then took questions from Council.

Mayor Thibodeau thanked Senator Hanig for his presentation. She called for a 10-minute break. The time was 10:29 a.m.

Mayor Thibodeau reconvened the meeting.

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING DESIGN UPDATE

Mayor Thibodeau stated that before the presentation, she wanted to read a statement that would set the stage as well as keeping everyone informed. She went on to read the following statement to Council and the audience:

“Public safety is foundational to the quality of life that defines Duck. The daily presence of our public safety administration, Fire Department, Police Department, and Surf Rescue provide the safety, stability, and confidence on which the community depends. As the Town continues to grow and service demands increase, so, too, does the importance of ensuring that these essential professionals are supported by facilities that meet current standards and regulations. We know this issue matters to the community, and we want to

provide a straightforward update on the land lease and the steps we're taking to protect public safety while responsibly managing taxpayer dollars.

The current public safety facility has operated on Federally owned land since 1982 under an agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). While volunteers originally constructed the building to support a small, all-volunteer fire department, it now serves three public safety departments with more than 30 full-time personnel, volunteers, and seasonal lifeguards. The facility no longer meets modern space, safety, or operational standards, and the underlying land lease has expired.

Since 2017, the Town has worked cooperatively with the USACE to secure a long-term land lease that would allow the Town to replace or substantially improve the public safety facility. During this process, we have followed Federal guidance, completed required environmental reviews, commissioned appraisals, and paid associated fees. To date, more than \$115,000 in taxpayer funds has been expended in pursuit of a long-term solution.

Despite these efforts, the lease process has remained unresolved for more than eight years. Throughout that time, the Town has negotiated in good faith and responded promptly to all requests from the USACE. Unfortunately, the Town has recently been informed that only a short-term arrangement will be available, after which the Town would be required to vacate the property. The Town is deeply concerned about the impact this sudden reversal by the USACE has on public safety, fiscal responsibility, and long-term planning.

This recent development is frustrating and disappointing. Like you, we want a clear and lasting solution for the future of the public safety building. Our mission goes beyond constructing a new facility. It is about ensuring that Duck's residents and visitors continue to receive reliable, professional public safety services every day.

We will continue to advocate for a fair, lawful, and efficient resolution that protects essential public safety services and respects taxpayer investment. To that end, the Town has elevated this matter to senior Federal leadership and requested assistance in identifying a durable, common-sense solution. Concurrently, we are seeking other solutions to allow for the construction of a facility from which our public safety professionals can serve the community.

The men and women of our Fire Department, Police Department, and Surf Rescue put themselves on the line for this community every day. They deserve a safe and properly equipped facility that allows them to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. We cannot claim to prioritize public safety without also prioritizing the needs of the public safety professionals who make that safety possible. Supporting them with appropriate facilities is not optional; it is fundamental to maintaining the quality of life our community expects and deserves.

To shorten the time between securing land and beginning construction of a facility, the Town contracted with Dills Architects to conduct a space needs assessment and prepare a preliminary design of a facility. We are pleased to have Clay Dills and his team here this morning to explain the current plan of the public safety building.

To that end, all of us here at the Town will continue to keep the community informed as discussions progress. We remain committed to transparency, responsible stewardship of public resources, and the safety of the Duck community.”

Clay Dills of Dills Architects recognized to speak. Mr. Dills gave a short presentation on the design of the Public Safety building, sharing current floor plans, a site plan and exterior elevations that followed input from Public Safety staff as well as multiple iterations of the floor plans to Council and the audience. He then took questions from Council.

Mayor Thibodeau thanked Clay Dills for his presentation.

COUNTY UPDATE

Dare County Chairman Bob Woodard was recognized to speak. Chairman Woodard gave a short County update to Council and the audience. He then took questions from Council.

Mayor Thibodeau thanked Chairman Woodard for his presentation. She recessed the meeting for lunch. The time was 12:05 p.m.

At approximately 12:07 p.m., Town Attorney Hobbs arrived for the meeting.

Mayor Thibodeau reconvened the meeting.

ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

Manager Cross gave a short update on the zoning ordinance update that will be needed to Council and the audience. She then took questions from Council.

Mayor Thibodeau thanked Manager Cross for her presentation.

DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Community Development

Infrastructure Director/Assistant Town Manager Connor Winstead was recognized to speak. Assistant Town Manager Winstead and Manager Cross went on to give a short presentation on what the Community Development department has been doing and what projects and potential projects are coming up to Council and the audience. They then took questions from Council.

Mayor Thibodeau thanked Assistant Town Manager Winstead and Manager Cross for their presentation. She called for a 25-minute break. The time was 1:41 p.m.

Mayor Thibodeau reconvened the meeting.

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Matt Foreman, Chairman for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee was recognized to speak. Mr. Foreman went on to give a presentation on the work of the Committee as well as the recommendations for improvements to the butterfly garden and decking at the boardwalk entrance off the north parking lot to Council and the audience. He then took questions from Council.

Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman moved to provide \$8,000 to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee for the gardens at the Town park.

Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor Thibodeau thanked Matt Foreman for his presentation.

ORDINANCE UPDATE DISCUSSION

Assistant Town Manager Winstead, Manager Cross, and Town Manager Havens gave a presentation on potential efforts to revise ordinances with regard to peddlers and vendors; noise, Town park use; and protests to Council and the audience. They then took questions from Council.

Mayor Thibodeau thanked Assistant Town Manager Winstead, Manager Cross, and Town Manager Havens for their presentation.

TERESA COURT STORMWATER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Manager Cross gave an update on the current status of the Teresa Court stormwater improvement project to Council and the audience. She then took questions from Council.

It was *consensus* of Council to defer starting the project until October 1, 2026. Town Manager Havens stated that Council needed to make a motion to approve the contract. Manager Cross pointed out that the contract that was provided to Council will need to be modified if the Town can extend it to October, so there will be revisions to the contract. Town Manager Havens stated that there will need to be a second motion to approve the budget amendment as well.

Councilor Lingard moved to authorize the Town Manager to approve the Town entering into a contract and to negotiate remaining changes related to the timing of the contract between the Town and H & H Development.

Motion carried 5-0.

Councilor Lingard moved to approve budget amendment #6 as presented.

Motion carried 5-0.

Mayor Thibodeau thanked Manager Cross for her presentation.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Mayor Thibodeau asked Council if they had anything else they wished to discuss.

Councilor Lingard stated that that Town of Manteo holds a very successful First Friday event. He stated that he would like Council to think about doing a Third Thursday event, which would be similar to First Friday and would have to be organized by the Town, but he hoped it would be led by the business community. He explained that in Manteo, the bars have bands, have special food, a lot of the businesses will have special sales, and the book shop often has an author signing. He added that it brings a lot of people into Manteo for the event. He thought it was something, with the layout of the Town, which would require the social district and probably meet the changes the Town was doing to the vendors that Council had discussed earlier. He didn't think it could be done this year and thought it was something to think about in the future because it will need a lot of setting up. He pointed out that he chose Thursday because the Town has the Band on the Green on Thursdays and thought it could be tied in with that. He thought as a Town, working with the business community, it was something that Duck could excel at and would be a major event on the beach.

Mayor Thibodeau thought it was a great idea, adding that she agreed that it could not happen this year. She pointed out that there were already so many of the elements in place currently, adding that it was exciting to think about.

Councilor Lingard thought it would require input from the Town, adding that he would love to see the business community take the lead on it and the Town and business community forming a committee to bring it to fruition. Mayor Thibodeau asked about the social district. Councilor Lingard stated that it was discussed early on, adding that it wasn't here yet but was discussed.

Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman asked Kevin Wright of the DCBA if they would be willing to sponsor the event. Kevin Wright of the DCBA was recognized to speak. Mr. Wright stated that it was an active topic they had been considering within the organization, adding that they have been working with Public Information and Events Director Kay Nickens and Community Engagement Coordinator Betsy Trimble on engaging the business community, which organizationally has been dormant. He stated that their focus has been on looking for some type of shoulder season event to attract more business, but this has a lot of merit and something they have been actively engaged on. He thought the

DCBA would be very excited about some sort of committee where they could work collectively on it.

Councilor Lingard thought if the Town talked about it, people will know what Duck was talking about, adding that the Town was not reinventing the wheel.

Councilor Murray stated that he and Director Nickens were discussing the idea of expanding the jazz festival. He thought if Council was able to help Director Nickens, she may be able to help community members out to expand it over the same weekend, by paying for a portion of a larger bill for one of the venues.

Director Nickens stated that the jazz festival continues to grow each year and is something that she wants to see because it brings a lot of economic drivers to Duck and the Outer Banks community in general. She stated that something she had started to look into was the idea of making it a two-day festival as well as looking further ahead and preparing for when it becomes something that requires more and having satellite stages. She pointed out that Councilor Murray had a great idea of looking at other places to have these types of concerts on the Outer Banks. She didn't think it would be fair to the community or the jazz festival to look at the current model and keep it that way because it has the potential to be more.

Councilor Lingard thought the Town could work with the venues Duck has and make them an official jazz festival partner and publicize that. Director Nickens explained that other venues have expressed an interest in doing something like that. She thought it was inevitable in a good way, adding that she thought that opportunity was there and would be something the Town could take advantage of. Councilor Lingard pointed out that the bluegrass festival in Raleigh, North Carolina has a main venue as well as smaller venues all over the city at the same time. Mayor Thibodeau pointed out that Duck has built up a nice community of artists that have performed previously who may want to return to perform in a smaller group. Director Nickens stated that she and Engagement Coordinator Trimble had discussed having some smaller jazz groups scattered throughout the year as teaser events to expose more people to it.

Walker Allen of 107 Pamela Court was recognized to speak. Mr. Allen stated that, with regard to the noise ordinance, it wasn't a new issue as every town deals with it, it was just trying to get the Code to where it would be workable. He stated that having some kind of measurement would be helpful because there were 10-12 homes around Town that have similar issues, along with his with regard to noise, but there was a stigma about calling the police on venues that have music playing regularly. He thought that kind of reporting has not worked for some of the venues and having a measurement would make it easier for them to know what it should or should not be as well as easier for the venue to self-monitor.

Walker Allen thought the issue was where the noise should be measured. He pointed out that the property line was a good place and he understood that 50 feet from the property line had been discussed, but his porch and most homes were 50 feet from the property

line due to the lot being 100 feet wide. He noted that if it was 75 decibels on a porch, it would be like sitting in a vehicle with the music on at 80%. He added that one could not talk to another person or hear their television and children cannot sleep. He stated that it produces an issue for people renting a home. He stated that people want to coexist with the businesses because they were vital to the community. He stated that as a homeowner and a short-term rental entrepreneur, he has a vested interest in it and there were other people that were similarly situated in Town who haven't said anything. He thought over time without having the objective limits, the music venues have done what they wanted, which they can do, but it has gotten to a point where it was really loud and having some reasonable limits would be helpful.

Bob Wetzel of 141 Betsy Court was recognized to speak. Mr. Wetzel thanked Town Manager Havens and Town staff for the Retreat. He stated that with regard to the noise ordinance, he didn't know what 80 decibels sounded like, adding that he heard it was loud. He noted that loud was in the ear of the beholder, adding that what was loud to a teenager in their bedroom was different from what a parent may consider as loud. He stated that his home backs up to the Dive Bar and one thing he noticed was that if there was a northeast or easterly wind, he rarely hears any noise but when it was a strong southwest wind, he frequently hears not only the Dive Bar but also Aqua Restaurant. He pointed out that this wasn't something that was cut and dry, adding that he did not know how loud 80 decibels was. He suggested that before Council puts 80 decibels into an ordinance, that in the spring, take the decimeter and walk around Town to see what kind of noise levels were being generated by the various restaurants that have music. He stated that the Thursday evening concerts on the Town green and the jazz festival should also be subject to the same regulations and constraints.

Councilor Lingard explained that three decibels equated to a normal noise level; chamber music in a small auditorium equated to 75-85 decibels; and city traffic equated to 85 decibels. He stated that 85 decibels at a property line, depending on where the noise source came from, could be 80 decibels at 30 feet further out. He pointed out that noise is a difficult thing to understand and measure.

Councilor Murray asked if any member of Council owned a decibel meter. Councilor Chasen stated that she has one. Councilor Lingard noted that someone could purchase one for \$25.00. Councilor Murray thought Council could take a field trip in the spring to test noise throughout Town.

Mayor Thibodeau stated that she would be late to the Retreat on Wednesday due to an appointment, but that Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman would be handling the meeting in her absence. She thanked everyone that participated in the Retreat.

Mayor Thibodeau recessed the meeting until Wednesday, February 25, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.

The time was 4:28 p.m.

RECONVENE

The Town Council for the Town of Duck reconvened at the Paul F. Keller Meeting Hall at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, February 25, 2026.

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

COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Town Manager Drew Havens, Infrastructure Director/Assistant Town Manager Connor Winstead; Fire Chief Matthew Dudek; Deputy Fire Chief Jeffrey Del Monte; Police Chief Jeffrey Ackerman; Deputy Police Chief Melissa Clark; Public Information and Events Director Kristiana Nickens; Ken Willson of Coastal Protection Engineering; Charles Archer of Freese and Nichols; Finance Administrator Lauren Creech; Deputy Town Clerk Christy Hanks; and Town Clerk Lori Ackerman.

ABSENT: Town Attorney Robert Hobbs.

Mayor Pro Tempore Sandy Whitman called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. He welcomed everyone to the Retreat and noted that Mayor Thibodeau would be late to the Retreat due to a previous appointment. He noted that at 11:50 a.m., Council and staff would recess for a lunch and other business with no food provided for the public, adding that snacks were available throughout the day.

DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Public Information and Events

Public Information and Events Director Kristiana Nickens was recognized to speak. Director Nickens gave a presentation on advertising, communications and upcoming events to Council and the audience. She then took questions from Council.

Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman thanked Director Nickens for her presentation.

BEACH NOURISHMENT AND MANAGEMENT

Ken Willson of Coastal Protection Engineering was recognized to speak. Mr. Willson gave a short presentation on the completed annual beach/dune survey, the borrow area study, the beach management plans, and the upcoming beach nourishment project to Council and the audience. He then took questions from Council.

Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman thanked Ken Willson for his presentation.

He called for a 15-minute break. The time was 10:15 a.m.

Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman reconvened the meeting.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Fire Department

Fire Matthew Dudek and Deputy Fire Chief Jeffrey Del Monte were recognized to speak. Fire Chief Dudek and Deputy Fire Chief Del Monte gave a presentation on the Duck Fire Department's activities and what they were looking to accomplish in the future to Council and the audience. They then took questions from Council.

Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman thanked Fire Chief Dudek and Deputy Fire Chief Del Monte for their presentation.

Police Department

Police Chief Jeffrey Ackerman was recognized to speak. Police Chief Ackerman gave a presentation on the Duck Police Department's activities as well as what they hope to accomplish in the future to Council and the audience. He then took questions from Council.

At approximately 11:20 a.m., Mayor Thibodeau arrived for the meeting.

Mayor Pro Tempore Whitman thanked Police Chief Ackerman for his presentation. He recessed the meeting for lunch. The time was 12:00 p.m.

Mayor Thibodeau reconvened the meeting. She pointed out that the lifeguard service update would be tabled for a future meeting.

HERRON LAND PLANNING UPDATE

Charles Archer of Freese and Nichols was recognized to speak. Mr. Archer went on to give a presentation on the results of the community engagement process regarding the potential uses of the Herron property, including conceptual design options that were developed based upon community input to Council and the audience. He then took questions from Council.

Mayor Thibodeau thanked Charles Archer for his presentation.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN DRAFT REVIEW AND FINANCIAL UPDATE

Assistant Town Manager Winstead and Town Manager Havens gave a presentation on the draft 2026-2030 Capital Improvement Plan as well as a review of debt ratios and a financial update to Council and the audience. They then took questions from Council.

Mayor Thibodeau thanked Assistant Town Manager Winstead and Town Manager Havens for their presentation. She called for a 25-minute break. The time was 1:51 p.m.

Mayor Thibodeau reconvened the meeting. She explained that Council was going to follow up on the discussion regarding the opportunity to purchase a used fire truck, adding that Council needed to take some action so that if the opportunity was available for the Town, Council would be authorizing the Town Manager to take the necessary steps.

Councilor Chasen moved to authorize the Town Manager or designee to negotiate for the purchase of a pre-owned aerial fire apparatus for the purchase price not to exceed \$1,700,000, subject to Town Council approval of the final purchase price and making financial arrangements to reimburse the Town's accounts and associated budget amendments.

Motion carried 5-0.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Mayor Thibodeau asked Council if they had anything else they wished to discuss. She thought there were some great discussions over the past two days.

Ben Vorndran of 104 Sea Hawk Drive West was recognized to speak. Mr. Vorndran thanked Council for the Retreat, adding that he thought more people would have been in the audience. He stated that with regard to the park, he liked the idea of doing it in phases, adding that it was just open green space and would be shocked if it was going to be a restroom stop for people traveling north or south. He hoped that there would be something added to draw people in other than having a picnic table area. He pointed out that a lot of the picnic table areas were not used, noting that a lot of people that come to Duck were at the beach or shopping. He thought it would be nice to have a place for people to convene and do something with their families other than staring at the television. He stated that if it was going to be land with restrooms, it would be a really expensive restroom facility, adding that there should be some kind of function to the property.

Ben Vorndran stated that in his hometown, they installed a fire pit system with chairs around it, which was gas operated and on a timer. He stated that when he visits his hometown, there are always people at this park, but he wasn't sure if it was due to the fire pits.

Councilor Lingard explained that Council will be thinking of things as they go with regard to the Herron property. He thought that trails would most likely be installed in the first year, adding that he didn't think restrooms would be installed right away. He stated that Council could then look at how well the property was used. He thought doing things slowly was the best option and thought the fire pit idea was great. He thought Council

would be coming up with a number of ways to use the property. He wasn't sure if the Town would keep all of the trees on the property as it was fairly wooded, adding that once the trails were installed, Council would have a good idea of what could be added. Mayor Thibodeau agreed with Councilor Lingard's comments, adding that she agreed that some low-cost improvements would be good. She didn't think it had to be fully developed because things will come up as time goes on.

Karen Blöse of 105 Waxwing Court was recognized to speak. Ms. Blöse thought it was great to be conservative, adding that as a full-time resident of Duck, many have wondered why Council planned to purchase the land without a plan. She thought having heard some of the needs, she asked Council to think about both in the short-term and long-term. She stated that she found it trenchant Police Chief Ackerman's comments about the needs and support of the Town's public service employees and the people that are needed in Duck. She thought that, as a community, it should be thought of in a longer-term range because what has been seen in other communities throughout the state as well as in Dare County, was to do something that may provide Duck with something such as workforce housing for the people that the citizens want to help them thrive in Town. She noted that it takes a very long time, so the temporary pin was one thing, but she implored Council not to give up the strategic thinking about what could be done to help in a place where it was landlocked that all the people that allow the citizens to live in comfort as retirees because the Town has fire and police, could live a little bit closer than to spend an hour commuting to work. She thought the Town should be visionaries for that because Police Chief Ackerman's needs will continue over time as will others, that the Town could not go out to fundraise to buy a new truck.

Councilor Lingard agreed it was important to look at workforce housing and have the Town do something. He thought the way he would approach it, if the Town was to go that route, would be to look somewhere just outside of Town or in Town as there were a couple of townhome communities, which in terms of Duck prices were quite reasonable. He thought if the Town did take that route, rather than building something from scratch, that Council would look at buying some property. He pointed out that there were areas in Kitty Hawk, adding that there was no reason the Town could not buy somewhere outside of Duck to house the employees. He thought if the Town did decide to buy in Duck, the Georgetown Sands subdivision or Nantucket on Jaycrest Road had generally reasonably priced small family homes that may be an option.

Councilor Murray stated that he was not opposed to the Town getting into workforce housing but thought the mechanism to do that was with a land trust. He pointed out to Council and Police Chief Ackerman that he wanted everyone to try and help Council understand that there is a problem and the Town's mechanism to solve it was to send money its way. He explained that workforce housing through the mechanism of a land trust might be the way to do that, but it also brings up the equity issue that Police Chief Ackerman had mentioned in that there were established families who would not see the benefit from it. He thought the alternative was salary and benefits, which was money that would have been put into a project. He thought Council needed to think hard about how to best serve the people that serve the Town but do it in a data-driven way. He noted that

there were things that make a difference and there were things that feel good but don't make a difference. He stated that Council needed to drill down on what would make a difference in those individual's lives and make that happen for retention and recruitment. He thought it could be either one but thought a cost benefit analysis would be needed for both options.

Councilor Murray stated that he did not have a problem with the Town owning land in or outside of Duck and thought Council should make that investment in any opportunity it has. He added that it was so unavailable in Duck and he understood that it was expensive, but he works with people every day that spend a lot of money on land and construction who very seldom regret it.

Councilor Lingard agreed with Councilor Murray's comments, adding that there was a need for long-term rental properties, which was the issue. He stated that if the Town were to buy somewhere that could be rented, it could solve the issue.

Mayor Thibodeau stated that she was grateful to hear from the Police and Fire Chiefs who were struggling with retention and recruitment, adding that she wanted to hear what their thoughts were in whether they could offer anything, what it would be and how it would look so Council was more informed. She thought it was great to think about using the Herron property for that purpose if it was something that everyone from a management standpoint thought would move the needle, adding that it was definitely something that should be looked at. She stated that the nice thing about the Herron property plan was that it was leaving some options open.

Walker Allen of 107 Pamela Court was recognized to speak. Mr. Allen stated that he appreciated Council putting on the Retreat as it was very educational and informative. He thanked Council for their discussion on the noise ordinance. He pointed out that the discussion on the noise ordinance the day before talked of where to measure. He noted that it was implied that noise would be measured at 50 feet over the property line, adding that he interpreted it to be 50 feet into the next property line, which he thought was not correct. He stated that the Town of Southern Shores' noise ordinance read as follows: "...except for noise within multi family or multi tenanted structures, all noise measurements shall be made at or beyond the property line of the property from which the noise originates to determine if the noise creates a disturbance. For purposes of measurement, the back of the curb, the outside edges of the driveways, fences, hedges, or other physical features commonly associated with the property boundaries are presumed to be at a point which is at or beyond the property line...." He thought beyond the property line meant further inside a property of the originating noise and not 50 feet on the other side. He stated that someone had mentioned about completing some measurements in Town. He stated that he would be happy to donate his DBA measurement device if anyone on Council or staff was interested in using it.

Walker Allen stated that it struck a chord with him when Police Chief Ackerman had discussed how to get people to want to work for the Town. He noted that they could be paid a lot more money, but there could be another department that would pay even more,

which was an escalating problem that wasn't durable. He pointed out that his house sits empty for five months of the year, adding that there were probably a lot of other rental homes that sat empty as well. He hoped that there would be a way to coalesce a group of all the homeowners who may have some availability with their houses to be used as short-term rentals for police officers and firefighters when the homes were not rented.

Dennis Zaenger of 116 Cook Drive was recognized to speak. Mr. Zaenger stated he was impressed with the Police presentation on Project Lifesaver. He thought it needed to be used as a promotional item for renters and people coming to Duck for vacation that may have a family member that has autism or dementia.

Ben Vorndran stated that there was a situation in the Osprey Ridge subdivision last year where a child went missing, adding that a lot of people and other agencies helped to locate the child. He thought the drone that the Police Department has was great. He stated that with regard to Project Lifesaver, he knows people that have children with autism and their lives are stressful enough and it would be a nice thing to let the public know that the police department has the equipment if it is needed.

Police Chief Ackerman thanked Dennis Zaenger and Ben Vorndran for their comments, pointing out that Duck was the first community that Project Lifesaver was able to identify that offers Project Lifesaver temporarily to any visitor that comes to the police department. He added that he would be sure to see that the service is marketed better.

Councilor Lingard asked Police Chief Ackerman if anyone would see the e-bikes that were purchased for the police department over the summer. Police Chief Ackerman stated that he was working on an enforcement strategy that would include the Department's e-bikes, adding that his officers were still completing training on driving e-bikes to become certified.


Mayor Thibodeau thanked the audience for attending the Retreat, further thanking staff and all of the presenters for their work. She felt that everyone did a great job. She noted that the next meeting would be the Regular Meeting on Wednesday, March 4, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

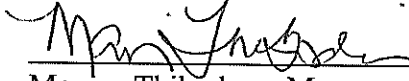
Mayor Thibodeau adjourned the meeting.

There was no vote.

The time was 2:43 p.m.


Lori A. Ackerman, Town Clerk

Approved: April 1, 2026



Monica Thibodeau, Mayor

