

TOWN OF BISCOE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
March 20, 2020

The Biscoe Town Board of Commissioners met in a Board Retreat on Friday, March 20, 2020 at 11 am at the Municipal Building.

Board Members Present:

Mayor Eddie Reynolds, Commissioner Gene Anderson, Commissioner Kay Kinch, Commissioner Lashaunda Ryan, and Commissioner Barry Jackson.

Board Members Absent:

Commissioner Dutch Anliker was absent due to sickness.

Members of Management Present:

Town Manager Brandon Holland, Town Clerk Laura Morton, and Police Chief Shane Armstrong.

It is important to note the Board continued their retreat taking into consideration social distancing requirements as recommended by the CDC.

Lunch from Subway of Biscoe was served.

Call to Order

Mayor Reynolds called the meeting to order at 11:00 am. He welcomed everyone and turned the meeting over to Town Manager Brandon Holland. Manager Holland welcomed Chris Aycock, with the Aycock Group who was the facilitator for the retreat.

Mr. Aycock explained the process for the day.

Purpose of Retreat

- State of The Town by Manager (including review of main projects and topics).
- SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats.)
- Create priorities/goals for The Town of Biscoe.
- Develop measurable objectives to support goals.

Ground Rules for Effective Groups

- State views and ask genuine questions
- Share all relevant information
- Use specific examples and agree on what important words mean
- Explain reasoning and intent
- Test assumptions and inferences
- Discuss undiscussable issue (from 2008 Roger Schwarz and Associates, Inc.)

Opportunities: What are the external factors that could affect The Town in a positive way?

Threats/Challenges: What are the external factors that could affect The Town in a negative way?

Strengths: What are The Town's internal strengths that could help The Town with its opportunities and threats/challenges?

Challenges: What are the internal challenges that could hinder opportunities and/or not address threats?

Question: What are the priorities/goals for the town in the next 3 years?

- Create priorities/goals and Develop Objectives that support goals

State of The Town by Manager

Mr. Aycock asked Manager Holland to present his State of the Town to the Board. Manager Holland presented the following report:

Businesses and Recruitment of Businesses

Manager Holland said a focus for him has been businesses and recruitment of businesses. He talked about attending an expo of businesses and surprisingly there were not many government representatives there. He spoke with representatives from Dairy Queen, Burger King, Taco Bell, and Dunk'n Donuts while he was there. Two of the four have built or are building in Biscoe. He said he also had the opportunity through a Small Business Retreat to be able to reach out to Buzz David who has provided a lot of recommendations for the Town of Biscoe. He said he was the opportunity to contact the Keenan Center regarding a study and research of possible funding for the Old Biscoe School. Holland said former retired Economic Development Director Judy Stevens is going to be assisting us with business retention and relationships. He said we are fortunate to have this EDC Director of the Year on our side.

Finance

Manager Holland said we are doing more in 2020 than in 2009. We are doing more for less. He said this is a revaluation year and he will be presenting that to the Board when we received the numbers. Holland said since he arrived in 2016 the budget has consistently been adding to the fund balance. He said even with emergency projects that were surprises.

He said in 2017 we learned the high school would be closing when the new Central High School is opened. He said that water bill equals to 10% the water sewer revenues. He said the Board at the time approved adding \$2 to every water bill to help brace for this loss. There is major debt that will be dropping off in the next few years and the Town needs to invest in infrastructure because lines are old.

An example of this is Bruton Street. The Town received a \$1.8 million CDBG for Bruton Street for infrastructure. Those lines date back to the 1940/1950s.

We have received the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report from the Governmental Finance Officers Association for two years. He further reported that staffing is currently full. Police Chief Armstrong has applied for a grant that will pay for 75% of the cost of an additional officer. He said staff is attending more training and reading books to help develop leadership skills. We hold regular department head meetings where we discuss how to improve leadership.

Leadership

He said we have a new police chief and a majority of our Town Board is new.

We are working toward a Future Land Use Plan which will be our Bible for Zoning and Land Use. The Board will be appointing a brand new Biscoe Planning Board as required by law.

Our Departments have various projects going on at the current time.

Administration

- Minute Books are being updated, indexed, and sent to Archives in Raleigh.
- Resolution Book, Policy Book, Ordinance Book, and Proclamation Books are being created
- Cross-training is an important priority of Administration.

Police Department

- The Police Department has begun reading in the schools to the children
- They are searching for grant opportunities

Fire Department

- The Fire Department has recently gone through the ISO inspection through the NC Dept. of Insurance. They were well prepared for this inspection.
- We now have had retired firefighters come back and have brought their experience.
- We also provide a Supplemental Retirement Payment to retired firemen that meet the guidelines.
- Firemen are continuing to stay on top of their required training hours and are having great numbers responding to calls.

Holland said he is working on the budget and will be presenting a balanced budget to the Board.

Mayor Pro-tem Anderson thanked Manager Holland for the progress he has brought to the Town.

Mayor Reynolds said he feels we have a great situation here. We have good department heads and good staff members. We are making progress.

Mayor Pro-tem Anderson thanked Manager Holland for not dipping into fund balance as much.

Mayor Reynolds asked Manager Holland if he would be attending the Business Recruitment meeting again and marketing the Mega Site/Industrial Park. Holland answered yes.

S.W.O.T.

Opportunities

Chris Aycock asked the Board what are opportunities that Biscoe has. Board and staff answers are as follows:

- Location
- Growth in Retail business because of location
- Grants like the CDBG-Infrastructure for Bruton Street
- Parks & Rec Board could lead to grants such as the PARTF
- Public Safety Grants help strengthen budget and departments
- Possible industry because of the Mega Park
- Perception of the Town has improved
- Good relationship between the Board, Staff, and Citizens has improved
- We are small enough we know one another
- Great Park and Pool
- EV Charging Station in the Park
- Potential for more programs in the park such as Music in the Park, Basketball Tournaments, Pickle Ball, Fun Day in the Park, Foundry Day
- We have more visibility, diversity, and transparency
- More Athletics are needed and a Summer Program for kids
- Communication with our citizens is better – we are doing a better job
- The possibility of the need of a Parks & Recreation Director – possible help from the county may be possible. Bringing back a Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.
- The Soccer League was discussed. Bleachers at the soccer field are being refurbished. The problem is the soccer field is private property.

Threats/Challenges

Chris Aycock asked the Board what are opportunities that Biscoe has. Board and staff answers are as follows:

- A challenge is land, offering prices, and resources. We have had the Credit Union want to located here, but the land is too expensive. Montgomery Motors is going to build here in Biscoe; but it is a slow process because of dealer licenses.
- Quality of Workforce (the New CTE Building will help this, but we will not see that for several years)
- Volunteerism
- Quality Police Officers
- A lot of Companies have openings
- Affordable Housing
- Cleaning up the Town
- Get people/youth involved and occupied so it will keep them away from crim³ and keep them occupied.
- Mental Health is also a challenge. People need it and don't realize the need it.
- Only one hotel and it is not good and need to be held accountable. Tourism Development Authority would help.
- Obesity Rate
- Solar Farm is great but they get a huge tax incentive

Strengths

- Accessibility
- Interest in the Town
- Good staff
- Police Department is much better and headed in the right direction
- Public Works Director has a ton of knowledge
- Buildings are in good shape
- Roads are in good shape
- New sewer facility and upgrades to sewer on Bruton Street
- Online presence
- Board is relatable to citizens
- Financial Health
- Leadership, Department Heads, Staff are all good
- A lot of good dependable staff with a lot of knowledge

Challenges

- We need more police officers
- We need a Parks & Recreation Director
- The Board discussed the status of the East Montgomery High School Campus.
- Manager Holland said if it all works out the Town would own it, the State would pay for the upkeep, and MCC would schedule courses and instructors. The Town would be able to use some of the space along with the community. It would have to be annexed.
- Old Biscoe High School discussion is it an asset or liability. It was the first state funded High School. It is managed by a committee. There are a few tenants (church, library, First Health). It was built in 1906. The Committee wants the town to take the building. Money will come with the building. A lot of renovation is needed. Parks & Recreation Director could look after it. The Board agreed all points are valid and that the Town needs to play some kind of role in it. It was also suggested the Town talk with the developers of Star Works to see how they started. A Historic Committee would need to be formed if it is designated a Historical Site.
- Board discussed asking our Code Enforcement Director to look at the Old School and possibly getting a structural engineer to inspect it.
- Need to do more with older population but we are hurting youth because we aren't doing anything. We have to stop the cycle.

The Board then worked on creating priorities and goals for the Town of Biscoe for the next three years. These goals would include short term goals. Aycock went Board member by Board member and asked them what their objectives would be. He then categorized these ideas into goals. Mr. Aycock ended the day and explained that he would create a document for the Board to review and approve that included all of the ideas the Board discussed.

The Board then had a couple of action items.

Planning Board Formation

Manager Holland explained that as part of the Future Land Use Plan a Planning Board would need to be appointed. He said term limits will need to be set in the future. Laura Jordan will act as the secretary for the Planning Board. Two ETJ members who were appointed by the County are Ryan Leach and Sabrina Conrad. Planning Board meeting will be held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 5:30 pm. Manager Holland provided a list of names to the Board for consideration. (Mayor Pro-tem Anderson abstained because of a conflict of interest).

After some discussion, the Board delayed the vote until the next day at the last day of the Board retreat.

Waving Late Fees and Disconnections Due to COVID-19

A motion was made by Commissioner Jackson, second by Commissioner Kinch, and so the motion carried unanimously to wave all late fees and disconnection for the present time.

AYES: 5; NAYS: 0

Meeting Recessed

Mayor Reynolds recessed the meeting to Saturday morning, March 21st at 8:30 am.

Mayor



Town Clerk

**TOWN OF BISCOE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
March 21, 2020**

The Biscoe Town Board of Commissioners met in a Board Retreat on Saturday, March 21, 2020 at 8:30 am at the Municipal Building.

Board Members Present:

Mayor Eddie Reynolds, Commissioner Gene Anderson, Commissioner Kay Kinch, Commissioner Dutch Anliker, Commissioner Lashaunda Ryan, and Commissioner Barry Jackson.

Members of Management Present:

Town Manager Brandon Holland, Town Clerk Laura Morton, and Police Chief Shane Armstrong.

It is important to note the Board continued their retreat taking into consideration social distancing requirements as recommended by the CDC.

Breakfast from Bojangles of Biscoe was served.

Facilitator Chris Aycock reviewed what was discussed on the previous day during the retreat.

The Board discussed getting a list of properties together, a plan in order and a plan in place for potential businesses.

The Board also discussed plans to enhance the internet usage, keeping an online presence, and marketing the town for business/housing.

Other important topics that were discussed was physical appeal of the Town, financial health (continue to search for grants), increase the number of police officers and improving the quality of life for the residents of Biscoe.

Planning Board Formation

This topic was continued to today's meeting from the Friday, March 20, 2020 first day of the Board retreat.

Manager Holland reminded the Board that as part of the Future Land Use Plan a Planning Board would need to be appointed. He said term limits will need to be set in the future. Laura Jordan will act as the secretary for the Planning Board. Manager Holland provided a list of names to the Board for consideration. Two ETJ members who were appointed by the County are Ryan Leach and Sabrina Conrad. Planning Board meeting will be held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 5:30 pm. (Mayor Pro-tem Anderson abstained because of a conflict of interest).

A motion was made by Commissioner Anliker, seconded by Commissioner Kinch, and so the motion carried to appoint the following to serve on the newly formed Biscoe Planning Board:

Elsa De Los Angeles
Mary Anderson
Benjy Dunn
Johnny Mac
John West

AYES: 4; NAYS: 0

Meeting Recessed

Mayor Reynolds adjourned the meeting to Saturday morning, March 21st at 8:30 am.

Mayor



Town Clerk