

Minutes of Meeting
Dagsboro Planning & Zoning Commission
Bethel Center
June 13, 2024

I. Call Meeting to Order

Commissioner Brad Connor called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Those in attendance were: Commissioner Brad Connor, Commissioner Cathy Flowers, Commissioner Cindy Gallimore, Commissioner Janice Kolbeck, Mayor William Chandler, Vice-Mayor Norwood Truitt, Town Administrator Cynthia Brought, and Engineering Consultant Kyle Gulbranson. Commissioner Will Labor was absent. Please see the sign in sheet for others in attendance.

II. Public Comment

No public comment was made.

III. Approval of Minutes
Meeting Minutes May 9, 2024

Commissioner Flowers made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Kolbeck seconded the motion. All were in favor.

IV. New Business

There was no new business.

V. Old Business
Review and Discussion regarding the Comprehensive Plan

Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that at the May 9, 2024 meeting, they had discussed reviewing the goals, implementation of items in the Comp Plan and the survey. He added that everyone should have received a copy of the community survey from the last Comp Plan that was used and a copy of Ocean View's community survey that was used a few years ago. Mr. Gulbranson stated, "With a community survey, you have to identify what information you are looking to get back."

Mr. Gulbranson stated that the items listed on the previous Community Questionnaire were: (1) Demographic Information, (2) Why you live in the Town of Dagsboro, (3) If you could bring one business into the Town what would it be, (4) What one business would you not want to see come to Town, (5) Where would you like to see the following located and would you do business with them, (6) Which attribute/characteristics would you rate highest for preserving the rural community character, (7) What types of development would you like to see in the town, (8) Areas of concern, (9) What other concerns do you have that are not listed, (10) I would like to see the following in Town, (11) Do you agree or disagree with the questions below, and (12) Additional comments. He added that the sample of questions from Ocean View was similar but more of a yes/no survey, whereas the Town of Dagsboro's was more of a ranking survey. He added that Ocean View's response rate was 70% and it helped that they had numerous community events throughout the year and discussed the Comp Plan at the events which helped with the high response rate. Mr. Gulbranson stated that at the last meeting, several people thought promoting the survey at a community event would be a good idea.

Mr. Gulbranson stated that it would be a good idea to move forward with a community survey regardless of how they choose to move forward with the Comp. Plan because it will let them know what the community is thinking in terms of growth and development. He added that they need to decide what information they want to get back from the

residents. Mr. Gulbranson stated, "I think the last survey was good and covered a broad range of topics that people are concerned about."

Mayor Chandler asked, "What was the objective of the last survey?" Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that they wanted to see what the residents thought about the Town, what was important to residents in terms of growth, and preserving the Town. Commissioner Kolbeck stated that she felt Ocean View's survey was easier to fill out than the one they had. She added that the questions they had were good but wasn't sure how much time people want to spend on it. Mr. Gulbranson stated that they can take the questions they have from the last survey and convert it to a yes/no type of answer. Commissioner Connor agreed that a yes/no type of answer would simplify the survey because people do not want to spend a lot of time filling it out. Mr. Gulbranson stated that people do not want to spend more than 10 minutes filling out a survey. Vice-Mayor Truitt stated that with the ranking questionnaire it takes 3 minutes to think about one question. Mayor Chandler stated that he felt their previous questionnaire was hard to read and Ocean View's survey had bolder print and was easier to answer. Mr. Gulbranson added that the questions are very relevant, but the response method needs to be simplified. Town Administrator Brought added that she felt the survey sets up the Town's goals.

Mayor Chandler stated that Ocean View had a lot of questions about public transportation in their survey. Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that is because the OV Town Manager's goal is to have a bus service/transportation center on one of the vacant lots.

Commissioner Kolbeck stated that she liked how Ocean View determined if a resident was full/part-time and if the property owner lived elsewhere. Vice-Mayor Truitt stated that their survey isn't broken down as much as Ocean View's.

Mayor Chandler stated that they need to be able to tell if the residents live within town limits because there are residents on Piney Neck/Vines Creek Rd. that do not live in Town but may fill out the survey. He added that they need to find a way to differentiate between the two. Commissioner Flowers stated that there are people renting in Town and asked how that works for them. Mayor Chandler stated that they would have a right to participate in the survey and they could possibly add renting as an option under demographic information.

Commissioner Flowers stated that she does not like question #7 on the Ocean View survey about classifying communication from the Town and feels it is inappropriate. Mayor Chandler stated that it wouldn't help with the objective of the survey. Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that they were just trying to get feedback.

Commissioner Kolbeck stated that the questions on the previous survey are good to use if they can find a way to simplify them. Commissioner Flowers stated that she felt they should change the age group category and asked if age really matters to them. Vice-Mayor Truitt stated that it lets them know if the younger age category has a different opinion on topics.

Mayor Chandler stated that some of their questions seem duplicative and they could possibly change up #7 which refers to a retirement community and #10 mentions a Senior Center. Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that #7 was specific to residential type units, which is why assisted living and retirement community were listed. Mayor Chandler stated that Ocean View has a big emphasis on sidewalks. Mr. Gulbranson stated that Ocean View doesn't have a lot of sidewalks, so they are trying to push that issue. Vice-Mayor Truitt asked, "Who finances the sidewalks?" Commissioner Kolbeck asked, "Who keeps the sidewalks maintained?" Commissioner Flowers stated that their sidewalks are bad. Town Administrator Brought stated that the property owners are supposed to take care of them.

Mayor Chandler asked, "What is the optimal size of a Town so that it has a small-town feeling? Would it be 5000 residents? 10,000 or more? 500? What is the optimal population if your goal is to preserve a small-town feeling?" He stated that another question that he feels people should be asked is whether the Town should acquire more land to create more public parking space or an additional park to complement Katie Helm Park. He added, "Then we would have to ask if residents mind if their property taxes get raised so we are able to do these things." Commissioner Flowers stated that she would love to see a dog park but doesn't think she would want her taxes to be raised. Commissioner Gallimore stated that it would depend on how much the taxes are being raised. Town Administrator Brought stated that if they buy land for these things, the taxes will go up quite a bit.

Commissioner Kolbeck asked how much the taxes would go up to have a parking lot because there really isn't anywhere to park. Vice-Mayor Truitt asked, "Could we generate revenue with the parking lot?" Mayor Chandler stated that they would have to consider the price of the lot, paving the lot, etc. and could they charge residents to park there, and would residents pay to park? Engineering Consultant Gulbranson added, how long would it take to recover the full amount spent? Commissioner Flowers added that if there are parking meters then they would need the police to monitor it. Mayor Chandler stated that there is a lot to think about because of how much is involved with it.

Mayor Chandler asked Engineering Consultant Gulbranson if he would be able to rework the survey that they currently have. Mr. Gulbranson replied, "Yes, they can change it into a yes/no format and get a draft together for approval."

Amy Mendelson, of AECOM, stated that Commissioner Labor submitted a list of questions if anyone was interested in using any of those. Vice-Mayor Truitt stated that he likes the infrastructure questions under Demographics. Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that he doesn't think the average person knows what an infrastructure is and that could be confusing. Vice-Mayor Truitt stated that he feels like Commissioner Labor described it in the second question. Amy Mendelson stated that instead of using the term infrastructure, they could ask individual questions about how residents feel about roads, utilities, and public facilities.

Commissioner Kolbeck stated that her concern was how long people would pay attention to the survey. Commissioner Connor replied, "Ten minutes." Mayor Chandler stated that Councilwoman Thompson had a suggestion that the survey should be short and easy to read and then suggested having a focus group. The focus group would consist of 6-10 people that were not involved with the Council, P&Z or the survey and ask them to complete the survey and give them their opinions on it. Commissioner Flowers asked if that would delay them in getting the survey out and accomplishing what they need to? Mayor Chandler and Mr. Gulbranson stated that it shouldn't take long to get the results back. Everyone agreed that the focus group would not have to be limited to Town residents since they are only looking for feedback on the survey.

Mr. Gulbranson stated that they would get a draft together quickly and send it back for everyone's feedback. He asked if anyone wanted to talk about how to distribute the survey or wait until they get a draft together. Commissioner Kolbeck replied, "Let's get the draft together first."

Town Administrator Brought stated that they could ask residents that come into Town Hall to pay their water bill to fill out the survey but added that they are usually in a hurry and wouldn't take the time. She added that they could have surveys available for residents to take with them. Town Administrator Brought stated that she received a message from Sherine High, of the WPC, about involving her development in the distribution of the surveys but Councilwoman Thompson stated that this would be against the WPC Declarations. Vice-Mayor Truitt stated that it could be considered as solicitation.

Town Administrator Brought stated that they should have a link on the website and on their Facebook page where the survey can be completed. She added that they can mail the survey with the water bills and give them the incentive of a chance to win a gift card. Vice-Mayor Truitt asked, "Would they would print out the survey from the website?" Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that with Survey Monkey, it would be tallied up through them and then they would send the results. Vice-Mayor Truitt asked if you would complete the survey on the computer. Mr. Gulbranson replied, "Yes, you would click on the link and answer the survey questions and then click Submit." He added that they would give the survey a completion date and then they would receive the results.

Mayor Chandler stated that they have discussed the survey and plan to discuss the distribution process later. He asked, "Is there anything else we need to do?" Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that they had talked about going through the goals that evening, but he thought they needed to get the survey completed first because that would dictate how they respond to the goals they want to set. Vice-Mayor Truitt stated that the goals from the last Comp Plan would be a good starting point. Mr. Gulbranson stated that some of the goals have already been addressed by the Town and based on the survey results, some of the goals listed might not be as important as they were, and some may be more important now. Town Administrator Brought stated that they have made Code changes, preservation of the

Woodlands, and things they have been proactive on would need to be discussed. Mayor Chandler stated that they have created special accounts for the Capital Replacement Fund, Emergency Reserve Fund and Street Repair & Replacement Fund in case they are needed.

Commissioner Flowers asked, "Is the Dagsboro Business Alliance still active?" Commissioner Connor replied, "No." Town Administrator Brought added that they now have the Bethany/Fenwick Chamber of Commerce in Town, and it can be utilized. Mayor Chandler stated that they may be helpful. Town Administrator Brought stated that they have offered to help the Town and would reach out to them about helping with distributing the survey.

Vice-Mayor Truitt asked, "Are we planning to just do a Comp Plan update or a completely new Comp Plan? Engineering Consultant Gulbranson stated that there are three options, (1) Review the Comp Plan and let the State know that they are happy with the way it is currently, (2) Identify parts of the Comp Plan that need modified and complete a modification of the Comp Plan, and (3) Complete a new Comp Plan. Everyone agreed that they need to make modifications to the current Comp Plan.

VI. Public Comment

No public comment was made.

VII. Adjournment

Commissioner Kolbeck made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Gallimore seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Wendy Rayne, Finance Clerk