

Town of Beaufort
Parking Committee
Tuesday, January 20, 2009
Train Depot
8:00am

The Parking Committee had their first meeting on Tuesday, January 20, 2009 at 8:00 a.m. in the Train Depot at 614 Broad Street, Beaufort, North Carolina. The meeting was called to order by Chief Steve Lewis. He welcomed and thanked everyone for coming out and being a part of the Parking Committee. Before going any further, he introduced the members of the Beaufort Police Department, which will be a part of the committee:

Capt. Steve Guthrie
Lt. Joseph Washington
Lt. Robert Dunn
Major Marvin Knox
Melissa Oden – minutes

Chief Lewis said there is a list going around that he wants all the board members to sign and put their name, phone number and email address so that when the minutes are completed they can be emailed to you.

Chief Lewis asked Commissioner Hollinshed if she would like to say anything; at which time she thanked everyone for wanting to participate. Not only this board but other boards have tried to grapple with parking issues for years. As Beaufort becomes more and more a destination during the day and evening, we have different parking issues going on that needs addressing. Some things will be real simple such as signage, and others might require more thoughts. Commissioner Hollinshed noted that everyone will not agree with what comes out of here. It might work for you one day but she asked everyone to come to a consensus and try it, put forth an effort on it and see what we can do. She proceeded to thank everyone for being here.

Chief Lewis agreed with Commission Hollinshed. He alluded to the fact that none of us will agree 100 percent all the time, but with this committee it is important that we agree to be able to disagree and that it be done in a nice way.

Chief Lewis stated that there are some short range things that can be handled before the summer, and some long range things that will take longer. Our goals are to get as much done before the tourist start coming back in town. One thing Chief Lewis plans to do is to bring on board Johnny O'Shall with the street department, to keep our signage up to date. This issue has been taken up with the town manager. One reason Chief Lewis wanted the town employees involved so they can get the information first hand since they will be working with this.

Chief Lewis presented a power point on Phase One of the parking solutions, which was compiled by Catherine Reeve, the consultant that was hired by the town. She did an excellent job. Her recommendations included:

- Web page for information
- Parking maps
- Expand motorcycle parking areas
- Develop and implement a special events parking plan
 - Potential Partners – CCATS and Maritime Museum
- Direct vehicles to parking areas adjacent to downtown area
- Enhance signage for parking and way finding
- Update signage (talked with John Young about contracting out, and stated to keep this in mind)
- Ensure handicapped parking is properly located and update signs
- Keep pedestrian paths accessible and clear

- Encourage bicycling and provide adequate amenities (Chief Lewis is on the bicycle committee; this is one thing they are putting all over town and you might want to address that too.)
- Designate commercial vehicle loading zones, provide consistent parking enforcement and communication policies

As Chief Lewis wrapped up the presentation, he turned the meeting over to the parking committee to organize and select a chairperson and vice-chairperson, set meeting date and times and open to the committee for discussion.

Commissioner Hollinshed asked chief if the board members could introduce themselves and tell what business or organization they are with. Those persons were as follows:

- Micah Shepard – Beaufort Business Association
- Crystal Wattets – Big Rock Big Marlin Tournament
- Susan Sanders – Harbor Specialties
- Allison Brooks – Hand Scape Gallery
- Nan O’Pray – Citizen
- Doreen Warner- Scuttlebutt
- Marianna Hollinshed – Town of Beaufort
- Cynthia Barber – Boys and Girls Club and Barts Fishing Tournament
- Eddy Myers-Eddy Myers Real Estate and Friends of the Museum
- Jay Bumpus - Peddler

Allison Brooks nominated Susan Sanders to be the chairperson, seconded by Nan O’Pray; there were no other nominees and the board voted unanimously. Chairperson Susan Sanders open the floor for a vice-chairperson, Allison Brooks was nominated by Susan Sanders seconded by Nan O’Pray. There were no other nominees and the board voted unanimously.

Allison Brooks wanted to let Chief Lewis know that last summer the parking worked much better downtown because of the enforcement. It was the first time in a long time there was parking available. In the event of someone coming in to complain about the tickets, she stated that if the parking was not enforced, then they would not have been able to find a parking space at all on Front Street. Primarily employee’s issues was the biggest problem. They seem to understand that much better. She went on to express her appreciation.

The question was asked if the parking fund was designated to go anywhere special. Chief Lewis stated it goes directly to the Town’s General Fund. He went on to explain that this was one of the things asked of the town manager, if the fund could go back into sidewalk improvement, trees, or a fund to start building to go back into the town for essentials.

Susan Sanders asked if the board’s mission was to implement and address these recommendations. Commissioner Hollinshed responded that it was to implement where we can but it’s also to get it done in a fast pace, so that when March comes around a lot of these things are already in place. She suggested that someone would need to contact CCATS to move people in and out of Front Street during the fishing tournaments. Everybody here has their own turf except for Nan. She went on to say that the parking committee would have to come up with some thing to overcome some of those turf issues.

The parking signage is something that is straight forward and could be addressed immediately and some safety issues. Susan asked Commissioner Hollinshed if that would be better done with subcommittees. Commissioner Hollinshed said she thought things would probably move faster in a subcommittee; maybe that’s the way; they need to make sure that they have the consensus of the whole group so they won’t say they didn’t know about that. Then the subcommittee can get thing rolling and bring it back to get the committee to sign off on. There are some safety issues for instance like where you cross. In order to cross

one would have to go to the front of the street to make sure the way is clear at First Citizens and at Craven, then you have to creep out. You are in the crossway at that point. Commissioner Hollinshed stated that she had ideas on how to correct this problem; it would tear up the street to do it she stated.

Susan asked if anyone be interested in that committee, Allison volunteered Jeff Adams for the signage committee for the fact that much of the work had been done by this study already.

Jay Bumpus stated that he had been doing this longer than anyone at this table. He stated that he had spoke with Ms. Reeve and asked her if he could work with her. During this time a lot of these thoughts were addressed. He also informed the board of his experience of working on committees for over 11 years. He reported that Reeve had real nice file compiled on this information. Much of it being the same material we had done prior having the Town Manager, John Young, and Businessmen on board. During this time numbers were crunched, and they went over it four times and for some reason it was dropped. Two years later they hired someone and in looking back at the first plans and Ms. Reeve are almost mirrored; when placed out in different piles and reviewed.

Some of the enforcement issues were:

- Non-payment of parking tickets
- “Boots” for cars in violation (hire private company)
- Liens on tags for violators
- Publish “Losers” (non-payers) in news papers
- Construction Dumpsters on streets – Charge Daily fee
- Boaters at Docks need loading zone
- Craven/Middle lane parking lot is for sale – check into the town purchasing for parking (approx. 15 spaces)
- Boat Excursion passengers need loading zone
- Parking Kiosk for “Pay for Parking by the hour”
- Church Parking lots – keep in touch with churches – Eddy Myers to check with churches
- Flyers
- Signage (uniform, easily identified)

Longer Term Issues

- Information Booth/Greeter
- Restroom
- Construction Issues
- Development of Front Street
- Boaters

Commissioner Hollinshed addressed the issue with Crystal and Cindy because of their need to be able to get there literature out for the two big upcoming events soon. The town definitely doesn’t want to lose their business and they want to avoid being penalized or penalized the merchants on the other hand, she explained. It was also suggested that it would be great to use the Gallant Channel parking lot.

Eddie Myers stated that if all parking was treated equal that will eliminate the parking issue.

Mr. Bumpus stated that the 200 plus employees are not parking in front of the businesses because if they do then they know it will affect their businesses. Melissa Oden stated that she would like to bring it to the board’s attention that one business called and said their employees would not be paying the tickets; a total of 2 businesses expressed this same rationale. The question was asked to Chief Lewis what would happen if the tickets were not paid. He responded that nothing would happen because of it being a civil offense. He stated that it had previously been addressed with the Town’s Attorney. The chief went on to say that he

was unsure of the number of unpaid tickets that the police department obtained deferring that response to Melissa; with her response being that there were approximately 700 of these unpaid tickets in the department's possessions while having collected for over 1200. Someone then made the comment that the town could be rich had all these tickets been paid. It was also noted that Haywood Week alone had paid \$2200.00 for parking tickets last year and commented that he would not be doing that again. The statement was made that enforcement should be the 4th issue .

Chairman Sanders requested that everyone sign up for what committee they wish to service on by the end of the week.

Subcommittees by Priority:

1. Signage
 - a. Nan O'Pray
 - b. Jeff Adams
2. Safety
 - a. Nan O'Pray
 - b. Jay Bumpus
3. Events
 - a. Cynthia Barber
 - b. Crystal Watters
 - c. Dannye Proctor
 - d. Doreen Werner
 - e. Nan O'Pray
 - f. Susan Sanders
4. Enforcement
 - a. Doreen Werner

Chairperson Susan Sanders thanked everyone for attending.
The meeting ended at 9:30am

Respectfully submitted by Melissa Oden, Police Administrative Support Specialist