



**1018 Second Avenue South, North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**RESULTS – AUGUST 17 CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

*North Myrtle Beach, SC – August 18, 2020* – City Council met August 17 at City Hall for a 6:30 p.m. executive session and a 7:00 p.m. meeting.

***During the executive session,*** City Council discussed the appointment of three new members to the Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee and received a legal briefing regarding the lawsuit between the City of Myrtle Beach and Horry County concerning local accommodations and hospitality taxes. City Council took no action.



***During the meeting,*** Coast RTA General Manager/CEO Brian Piascik offered City Council an overview of the company's status. He said that Coast RTA ridership increased by 32% since 2015. Over the past five years, Coast RTA has replaced almost all of its fleet and its new management views North Myrtle Beach as a critical part of its service area and identifies the city as their most requested destination.

In recent months, Piascik met with North Myrtle Beach officials to plan on Coast RTA service enhancements for the city. On October 1, 2020, Coast RTA will establish service between its Myrtle Beach transit hub and North Myrtle Beach, completing a final link in its regional service route that will be of benefit to those who work in the city and those visiting the city.

In June 2021, Coast RTA will introduce a summer shuttle in North Myrtle Beach, providing residents and visitors with a transportation alternative to many of the shopping and other venues in the city.

***City Council extended its*** COVID-19 oriented Declaration of State of Emergency and Emergency Ordinance for another 60 days.

The declaration and ordinance were set to expire September 6, however, since the August 17 meeting is the last regularly scheduled City Council meeting before the September 6 expiration date, the documents were renewed.

**City Council passed second (final) reading of an ordinance** amending Chapter 21, Article II, Stopping, Standing and Parking, Section 21-40, Annual Parking Fee Exemption.

The term “property owner” as defined by the state caused confusion with regard to nonresident property owners. A second paragraph is added to Section 21-40 (a) to define the words “property owner” as it pertains to this ordinance.

Section 21-40 (a) paragraph 2: The words “property owner” shall mean any person who holds legal title to lands, upon which a residential structure sits, lying within the City of North Myrtle Beach. This shall include any person who owns a unit/apartment within a horizontal property regime; any person who owns a townhouse or other residential living unit sharing and owning in common the surrounding grounds; any person who holds equitable shares in a housing cooperative; and any person who owns the land or owns the land in common on which their permanently affixed mobile home sits.

Although a protocol for decal replacement was in place for the past two parking seasons, the ordinance did not specifically address the procedure, which became a point of confusion for a couple of citizens. Inserting Section 21-40 (c) would clearly explain the protocol and circumstances under which a replacement decal would be issued.

Section 21-40 (c): Decals may not be traded, sold or given away, and shall be removed upon expiration or sale of the vehicle. If a vehicle is sold or otherwise disposed of, the decal shall be removed and returned to the city to receive a replacement decal. A replacement decal shall not be issued, if the decal is not returned

**City Council adopted a Resolution approving** the annual assessment report and updated assessment roll for the Cherry Grove Improvement District related to the Cherry Grove dredging project. The report is the fourth in a series of annual updates to the Cherry Grove Municipal Improvement District Assessment Roll and sets the amount of assessments for FY 2020-21.

**City Council adopted a Resolution authorizing** a pre-annexation agreement for Lot L located at 1757 Cenith Drive. The lot is not contiguous to the City limits but the owners requested water and sewer service. To receive it, the lot owners consented to pre-annexation restrictive covenants, requiring them to annex the lot into the City with R-1 (Single-Family Residential Low Density) zoning when it becomes contiguous to the City.

**City Council passed first reading of a proposed ordinance** amending Chapter 23, Zoning of the Code of Ordinances for establishing a minimum driveway length of 24 feet.

In recent months, there has been increasing concern about vehicles parked in private residential driveways overhanging and obstructing sidewalks due to inadequate driveway length.

City staff is proposing a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance establishing a minimum driveway length of 24 feet for residential uses, measured from the property line. There are also provisions for how the standard applies when side-loaded garages are in play, or when there is no garage. This minimum standard would affect newly built homes accessed by individual driveways, and may affect structures that are voluntarily altered. The standard may also affect

expansions of structures in the sense that one could not decrease the length of an already non-conforming driveway.

**City Council passed first reading of an ordinance** to repeal Article III, Towing and Wrecker Services, from Chapter 22 of the NMB Code in its entirety and to adopt new language for Article III, Wrecker Services and Non-Consensual Towing, Chapter 22.

In passing first reading, City Council members made it clear they would like Public Safety and other personnel to meet with all towing companies doing business in North Myrtle Beach to discuss and, if possible, resolve outstanding issues. Once that is accomplished, City Council intends to schedule a workshop where Council members can learn of the results of the meeting and discuss the proposed towing ordinance further.

The proposed new towing ordinance contains the following new language, among other changes:

“Before towing a vehicle from private property without authorization from the vehicle owner, the private property owner or agent of record shall first call the public safety department for a police officer or other official within the department to appear at the location of the nonconsensual tow. Upon arrival, the police officer or other official within the department of public safety shall provide an authorization number and a form provided by the city, to be signed by the private property owner or agent of record and the wrecker service.”

The proposed new towing ordinance also prohibits any wrecker company or operator from charging any fees of any kind (example: administrative fees, processing fees, or fuel surcharges) other than the fees set forth in the ordinance, for the owner of the vehicle to retrieve the vehicle towed by the wrecker company or operator.

Those changes and others seek to reduce opportunities for price gouging and unscrupulous towing.

The proposed new ordinance contains language that allows for the suspension/revocation of the business license for any towing company/operator if the towing operator has, among other things, failed to comply with the provisions of Article III.

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