

**CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA  
NORTH MYRTLE BEACH CITY HALL  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
Monday, January 6, 2025, 6:15 PM**

**Minutes**

**1. ROLL CALL:**

Mayor Hatley called the meeting to order and asked the Clerk to call the roll.

Marilyn Hatley

JO Baldwin

Bubba Collins

Fred Coyne

Nicole Fontana

Trey Skidmore

Hank Thomas, Absent for roll call

A quorum was established.

**1B. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Mayor Hatley called for a motion to go into Executive Session for a discussion regarding the performance review of the City Attorney and a discussion regarding a potential property acquisition. The motion was made by Councilman Collins and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin. The motion passed 6-0. Councilman Thomas joined the Executive Session. The Council returned to Chambers at 7:00 PM. Mayor Hatley announced that no votes were taken. The regular meeting started at 7:02 PM.

**1C. CONTINUATION OF CALL TO ORDER:**

Jay Ortiz, Public Safety Chaplain, delivered the invocation.

Mayor Hatley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. MINUTES:**

The motion to approve the minutes for the City Council Meeting of Monday, December 2, 2024, as presented, was made by Councilwoman Fontana and seconded by Councilman Collins. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

**3. COMMUNICATIONS:**

Mayor Hatley presented a proclamation declaring January as Back the Blue Month to the North Myrtle Beach Police Foundation committee members in memory of Sgt. Gordon Best, who lost his life while on duty. Mayor Hatley explained that the committee put up blue ribbons throughout the City in memory of Sgt. Best and to show support for the officers who actively or have previously served. Dana Crowell, Chief of Police, thanked the members for their dedication and the help they provide for all officers.

Ryan Fabbri, Interim City Manager, recognized Roger Marques and Dawna Rosati for 5 years of service with the City and presented them with a check in appreciation for their service and dedication.

Matt Gibbons, Parks and Recreation Director, presented Mayor Hatley with the South Carolina Recreation and Parks Association's 2024 Community Champion Award. Director Gibbons stated this award was presented to a person outside the Parks and Recreation profession who recognized, supported, and promoted initiatives throughout the state. Director Gibbons read the summary of the award highlighting some of Mayor Hatley's contributions during her term as Mayor including dedicating over \$1 million dollars in funding for parks and recreation projects and programs. Mayor Hatley stated it was her honor to receive the award and added that it was a joint venture with Council and staff.

Amanda Player Wofford, Parks and Recreation Athletics & Sports Tourism Manager, congratulated the 15 & Under District Champion All-Star Soccer Team, the 12 & Under District Champion All-Star Volleyball Team, and the 14 & Under State Champion All-Star Volleyball Team and presented the players with challenge coins from the City. Ms. Player Wofford also thanked the parents and coaches for their dedication.

Mayor Hatley stated the Department Monthly Reports for November 2024 were available online.

4. **ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL:**

Councilman Skidmore commended the First Responders for the excellent job they did fighting a fire in his neighborhood over the weekend. He thanked the firefighters and police officers for an amazing job. Billy Floyd, Fire Chief, thanked Councilman Skidmore and his neighbors for their help and stated the situation could have been much worse without their assistance before crews arrived. Councilwoman Fontana asked that the City recognize Sonny Owens, a North Myrtle Beach native, who was a CW3 helicopter pilot and was shot down 35 years ago on December 20 as part of the Panama invasion. Councilwoman Fontana asked Mr. Owens be honored at the Sports Park in some way. Mayor Hatley asked Interim City Manager Fabbri to look into it and get back with Council.

5. **CONSENT:**

RESOLUTION: Memorandum of Understanding between the City of North Myrtle Beach and the City of Myrtle Beach. Mayor Hatley read the resolution by title and called for a motion. The motion to approve was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin and seconded by Councilwoman Fontana. Mayor Hatley stated this agreement would allow both cities to assist each other with public safety when needed.

Having no further comment from the Council or public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

6. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

A. ORDINANCE/SECOND READING: Petition for Annexation and Zoning Designation for ±13.32 acres on Tom E Chestnut Road. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion. The motion to approve was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Collins. Councilman Thomas stated the Developer had made the Council's suggested adjustments and Mayor Hatley agreed.

Having no further comment from the Council or public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

B. ORDINANCE/SECOND READING: Amendment to Chapter 6, Buildings; Construction; Related Activities, of the Code of Ordinances of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, addressing reinspection fees. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion.

Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin, Councilman Coyne, and Councilman Skidmore recused themselves from the discussion and vote and left the Chambers. The motion to approve was made by Councilman Collins and seconded by Councilwoman Fontana. Councilwoman Fontana stated this was a needed update to the Codes.

Having no further comment from the Council or public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 4-0.

- C. ORDINANCE/SECOND READING: Amendment to Chapter 23, Zoning, of the Code of Ordinances of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, addressing tree replacement value. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion. The motion to approve was made by Councilman Thomas and seconded by Councilman Skidmore. Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin stated he felt any time Council could take action to save trees in the City, he felt they should. Councilman Thomas asked if there would be no charge if the tree was in the footprint of a residential structure and if there was also an exception for a commercial structure. Jim Wood, Planning and Development Director, stated that was correct. Suzanne Pritchard, Planning and Development Assistant Director, clarified that anything over 24” had to go before the Board of Zoning Appeals and may have a replacement value associated with it.

Having no further comment from the Council or public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

7. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. ORDINANCE/FIRST READING: Amendment to the Parkway Group Planned Development District (POD) revising The Preserve. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion. The motion to approve was made by Councilwoman Fontana and seconded by Councilman Thomas. Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin stated that the Applicant was asking to increase density and remove green space, open space, and commercial space. He added that he did not know how this had gotten to Council and he would not vote to approve this. Councilman Coyne, Councilman Collins, and Mayor Hatley agreed. Mayor Hatley stated she understood that all PDD’s were required to have a commercial element. Director Wood stated the Planning Commission was concerned with the viability of the commercial element and they felt it was unlikely to succeed in this area. Councilman Skidmore stated he did not have an appetite to open up the PDD and increase density and eliminate the commercial element. Mayor Hatley stated the Developer would have known that when he made the request for the commercial element.

Josh Hughes, the Developer, stated they had not reduced green space and were almost double what the PDD required. He stated they never wanted a commercial element and that it was the brainchild of Aaron Rucker, who wanted a bar and coffee shop in the area. Mr. Hughes stated the density was increasing but it was falling in line where the commercial element would have been. He added the amendment would take the commercial element out and fill the strip with more housing that would match better. Mr. Hughes stated the green space was in excess of what Council approved. Councilman Collins stated the concern was the green space between the units. Mr. Hughes stated he did not write that and it was inaccurate. He added there was a bigger change that had been submitted to staff but had not made it through the Planning Commission that would reduce the density by 175 units. He stated there were a lot of moving pieces and he could not submit the entire package at once for the PDD. He explained that this amendment was build-to-rent and the next step would be multi-family which would be reduced from 350 units to 150 units. Mr. Hughes stated the Planning Commission was comfortable with the future plans after their discussions.

Mayor Hatley stated the Council could not vote on something not knowing what was coming behind it. She added that Mr. Hughes could ask the Council to table this or vote on it. Councilman Thomas stated he saw several issues that needed more study and details. He added that the conception was voted on in 2022 but now more details were needed. Councilman Thomas stated he saw potential challenges specifically with parking. Mr. Hughes stated there was 2.0 parking spaces for every house and that far exceeded what the City had in parking. Mayor Hatley stated she would not argue the point but could not vote with the information provided. Councilman Thomas encouraged Mr. Hughes to go back and work on the details instead of asking Council to vote on this amendment tonight. Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin agreed and stated he could not vote to approve this with the information presented which increased density and removed the commercial element. He added that the presentation was poor and not clear on what was being proposed. Mr. Hughes stated he did not know where to go from here and felt they were beating a dead horse. Councilman Thomas stated one issue was changing the setback from 10' to 5'. Mr. Hughes stated the setbacks had not changed from a design perspective and he felt a workshop might be needed. Mayor Hatley stated she felt Mr. Hughes had heard Council's concerns and had work to do. Interim City Manager Fabbri suggested including The Preserve in the upcoming workshop for Waterside. Councilman Thomas stated Council approved a preliminary design in 2022 and asked if setbacks and road widths were included in that submission. Mr. Hughes stated they were included. Councilman Thomas asked Director Wood what details were included in the 2022 approval. Director Wood suggested bringing the original plan to the workshop for a side by side comparison.

Councilwoman Fontana amended the original motion and motioned to postpone to a workshop and was seconded by Councilman Thomas.

Having no further comment from the Council or public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to postpone to a workshop passed 7-0.

- B. SECOND PUBLIC HEARING: Regarding the First Amendment to the Separate and Independent Amendment to the Parkway Group POD Development Agreement revising The Preserve.
- C. ORDINANCE/FIRST READING: First Amendment to the Separate and Independent Amendment to the Parkway Group POD Development Agreement revising The Preserve and to authorize the Interim City Manager to sign the document on behalf of the City.

Mayor Hatley took Items B and C together, read them by title and asked for a motion to postpone. The motion was made by Councilwoman Fontana and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin.

Having no further comment from the Council or public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to postpone Items B and C to a workshop passed 7-0.

- D. ORDINANCE/FIRST READING: Amendments to Chapter 20, Land Development Regulations, of the Code of Ordinances of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, creating a sketch plan step for major subdivisions and in-common residential developments. Mayor Hatley read the ordinance by title and called for a motion. The motion to approve was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin and seconded by Councilwoman Fontana. Director Wood stated the amendment would allow staff to engage in meaningful design dialogue with Developers at the early stages before they committed significant engineering dollars in an effort to preserve trees. Mayor Pro Tempore thanked staff and stated this was a great move. Councilman Collins asked why pine trees were exempt. Director Wood stated an ordinance had been brought before

Council approximately 10 years prior to preserve Loblolly pine trees but it had not passed. Mayor Hatley added there had always been an issue with pine trees dying especially after hurricanes. Councilman Thomas stated he agreed with Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin and felt this was a good ordinance.

Having no further comment from the Council or public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

- E. MOTION TO APPROVE: Changing the City Council meeting time from 7:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Mayor Hatley called for a motion to approve. The motion was made by Councilman Collins and seconded by Councilman Thomas. Mayor Hatley stated this would make meetings easier on the staff. The Council discussed whether to hold Executive Sessions before or after the meetings. Councilman Coyne asked that Executive Sessions remain prior to the meeting and after a discussion, Council agreed. Interim City Manager Fabbri stated Executive Session times could also be decided individually.

Having no further comment from the Council or public, Mayor Hatley called for a vote. The motion to approve passed 7-0.

8. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Harry Oehler, 3624 Pitchers Place, Little River, stated staff did an excellent job with the Christmas light show and it seemed to get better each year.

Councilman Thomas stated that the issue with paper bags needed to be brought back up and dealt with. Mayor Hatley stated paper bags were a very frustrating issue. Councilman Collins stated the answer was for everyone to bring their own bag. Interim City Manager Fabbri stated that the committee had met 3 times over the summer and had a recommendation for Council that would be submitted in the new year.

9. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Mayor Hatley wished Councilman Thomas a happy birthday and called for a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Baldwin and seconded by Councilwoman Fontana. The motion passed 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison K. Galbreath, City Clerk

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MARILYN HATLEY, MAYOR

Minutes approved and adopted this 3<sup>RD</sup> day of February 2025