



Minutes  
**KITTY HAWK TOWN COUNCIL**  
Monday, March 2, 2026  
Kitty Hawk Town Hall, Smith Room  
5:00 PM

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Presentation –**
  - a) **Introduction to new Police Officers Mason Kennedy and Michael Reinke**
  - b) **Dune Analysis Presentation- Coastal Protection Engineering**
5. **Public Comment** – The public is invited to address the Town Council on any topic. Please sign up with the Town Clerk before the meeting and when your name is called, come forward and speak into the microphone at the lectern. Please limit comments to 3 minutes.
6. **Consent Agenda** – Items on the consent agenda are considered to be non-controversial, routine in nature, or items not requiring a presentation to discuss by the Town Council in order to consider the items(s). Any item may be removed for discussion by the council or by any member of the audience who wants to hear the item presented and discussed.
  - a) **Approval of January 5, 2026, Regular Session Council Minutes** – Approval of the consent agenda will approve these minutes.
  - b) **Budget Amendment #12** – Outer Banks Community Foundation Funding for Icarus Monument
  - c) **Budget Amendment #13** – Police Department Donations
  - d) **Budget Amendment #14** – Replace Fire Department HVAC Unit
  - e) **Budget Amendment # 15** – Insurance claim reimbursement
  - f) **Budget Amendment #16** – Dare County Tourism Board Grant Award
  - g) **Authorization to Proceed with Beach Nourishment Task 2B**
  - h) **Approval Order for 5416 N Croatan Hwy SUP** – Royal Farms
  - i) **Denial Order for 4352 B The Woods Rd SUP** – RV Park
  - j) **GEACC Current TV FY 2026-2027 Budget for Approval**
7. **Items Removed from Consent Agenda –**
8. **Planning –**
9. **Schedule Public Hearing –**
  - a) **Zoning Text Amendment** – Sec. 42-528. Accessory dwelling units - size and setback requirements
  - b) **Zoning Text Amendment** – Sec. 42-504 (i) Setbacks associated with pool decking
10. **New Business –**



**a) Appointment of Recreation Committee Member**

**11. Old Business –**

- a) Fleet Management Policy**
- b) Travel and Expense Policy**
- c) Discussion to Explore Town Hall Renovation**

**12. Reports/General Comments from Town Manager**

**13. Reports/General Comments from Town Attorney**

**14. Reports/General Comments from Town Council**

**15. Recess to March 20, 2026. Budget Workshop, 9 am at Kitty Hawk Police Department at 5200A North Croatan Highway, Kitty Hawk, NC 27949.**

**Council Members Present:** Mayor Charlotte Walker, Mayor Pro Tem Jeff Pruitt, Councilman David Hines, Councilman Peter Mantz, Councilman Dylan Tillett

**Staff Members Present:** Town Manager Melody Clopton, Finance Director Liliana Noble, Police Lieutenant Jimmy Helms, PIO/Town Clerk Lauren Garrett, Public Works Director Willie Midgett, Police Chief Palkovics, Fire Chief Talley, Town Attorney Casey Varnell

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Walker called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM in the Smith Room, welcoming everyone to the March 2nd Town Council meeting.

**2. Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Walker led a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, inviting attendees to stand if they wished.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Motion: Councilman Tillett moved to approve tonight's agenda. Councilman Mantz seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**4. Presentation**

Introduction to new Police Officers Mason Kennedy and Michael Reinke

Chief Palkovic introduced two new members of the Kitty Hawk Police Department. Mason Kennedy comes from Norfolk Police Department where he served for a few years before relocating with his wife and starting with Kitty Hawk in October. Within 3-4 weeks of starting, he welcomed his newest child. He is currently working on the street while attending Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) as a partial student, with expected completion this summer.

Michael Reinke represents a different approach as a brand-new officer who previously worked at Target. He is described as energetic and excited, currently attending full-time BLET. The Chief noted that Michael is significant as the seventeenth sworn officer, making this the largest complement the department has ever had, which wouldn't be possible without Council's support.



### Dune Analysis Presentation- Coastal Protection Engineering

Ken Willson from Coastal Protection Engineering was delayed due to an accident at the Alligator River Bridge but arrived later in the meeting to provide his presentation on dune vulnerability analysis and beach nourishment planning.

Willson explained the beach nourishment project lifecycle, showing how initial construction involves placing both design sand (the red arrows in his graphics) and advanced fill (green arrows) on the upper beach profile. Over time, wave action moves this material offshore to create the intended protective profile. The design sand remains in place while the advanced fill erodes over the maintenance cycle.

He reviewed Kitty Hawk's progress since the original project, showing how the small "starter dune" constructed as a speed bump has grown significantly through sand fencing and vegetation. Photos demonstrated the dramatic improvement from pre-project conditions where houses were threatened, and Highway 12 was regularly overtopped.

The updated vulnerability analysis showed remarkable progress in protecting oceanfront structures. Originally, 126 structures were identified as vulnerable to an Isabel-level storm. By 2021, this number had dropped to 70 structures, and the most recent 2025 analysis shows only 15 structures remain vulnerable - an 88% reduction from the original baseline.

For the upcoming 2027 project, Willson outlined several key considerations:

**Project Scope:** All four towns (Kitty Hawk, Duck, Kill Devil Hills, and Southern Shores) plan to build to the same extent as the 2022 project, with volumes ranging from 2.3 to 3.1 million cubic yards depending on the maintenance cycle chosen.

**Maintenance Cycle Options:** The team is evaluating extending from the current 5-year cycle to either 6 or 7 years. For Kitty Hawk specifically, a 5-year cycle would require 721,600 cubic yards at a total cost of \$12.7 million (annualized at \$2.549 million per year). A 6-year cycle would increase to 865,900 cubic yards, costing \$14.6 million but reduce the annual cost to \$2.43 million. A 7-year cycle would further reduce annual costs to \$2.34 million despite requiring more initial sand volume.

**Variable Fill Densities:** Rather than spreading sand evenly, the team proposes concentrating more material in erosion "hot spots" while reducing density in areas that perform well, optimizing protection throughout the maintenance cycle.

**Dune Repairs:** Limited dune reconstruction is planned for areas showing significant scarping, particularly between the bathhouse area south of Kitty Hawk Road down to near White Street, like repairs made in 2022.

**Borrow Sites:** New offshore sand sources have been identified through a study funded jointly by Dare County and North Carolina grants, providing approximately 19.3 million cubic yards of available material - sufficient for this project and several future cycles.

Willson emphasized that all towns must agree on the same maintenance cycle for the economics to work, with a final decision expected around July after collecting updated survey data in May.

Councilman Mantz asked about the criteria for determining structure vulnerability. Willson explained their modeling uses the SBEACH simulation to predict storm impacts, with structures considered vulnerable if they fall landward of the point where the beach profile drops one foot in elevation during an Isabel-level storm simulation.



### **5. Public Comment**

Charlotte Pedigo from the League of Women Voters of Dare presented copies of the 2026 Citizens Guide to Community Services, an annual publication distributed since 1988 containing contact information for governmental agencies, voting information, and emergency numbers. She thanked town staff for helping update information and noted that 6,400 copies are being distributed, with local municipalities and businesses acknowledged on the back cover for supporting publication expenses.

Steve House spoke on behalf of the Outer Banks Jeep Invasion, requesting permission for their annual beach ride on September 18th and 19th. The event typically involves about 100 jeeps each day from 8 AM to 9 AM, with proceeds benefiting local police and fire departments. House noted the event's popularity, with last year's registration selling out within seven hours of opening at midnight.

Motion: Councilman Pruitt moved to grant approval to OBX Jeep Invasion for permission to ride on the beach. Councilman Mantz seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### **6. Consent Agenda**

Motion: Councilman Mantz moved to approve the consent agenda. Councilman Pruitt seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The consent agenda included approval of January 5, 2026, regular session council minutes, multiple budget amendments (12 - 16) for various purposes including Outer Banks Community Foundation funding for Icarus Monument, police department donations, fire department HVAC replacement, insurance claim reimbursement, and Dare County Tourism Board grant award. Also approved were authorization to proceed with Beach Nourishment Task 2B, approval and denial orders for special use permits, and the GEACC Current TV FY budget 2026-2027.

### **7. Items Removed from Consent Agenda**

No items were removed from the consent agenda.

### **8. Planning**

No planning items were discussed.

### **9. Schedule Public Hearing**

Zoning Text Amendment – Sec. 42-528. Accessory dwelling units - size and setback requirements

Motion: Councilman Tillett moved to set a public hearing at the Town Council meeting on April 6, 2026, to consider the proposed text amendment to section 42-528. Councilman Mantz seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Zoning Text Amendment – Sec. 42-504 (i) Setbacks associated with pool decking

Motion: Councilman Pruitt moved to set a public hearing at the town council meeting on April 6, 2026, to consider the proposed text amendment to section 42-504(i). Councilman Tillett seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### **10. New Business**

Appointment of Recreation Committee Member

Motion: Councilman Mantz moved to appoint Grace Anlauf as a member of the Recreation Committee. Councilman Pruitt seconded. Motion passed unanimously.



Grace Anlauf was present in the audience and acknowledged by Mayor Walker.

## 11. Old Business

### Fleet Management Policy

Town Manager Melody Clopton presented the comprehensive Fleet Management Policy, noting this was the town's first written policy for vehicle operations despite practicing many standards informally. The policy establishes uniform standards for operation, purchase, assignment, maintenance, and disposal of town vehicles.

Key policy components include:

**Vehicle Operations:** Vehicles are for official town business only, with departments responsible for assigned vehicles. Professional and defensive driving courses are required, with driving records verified upon hire and annually. Vehicles must display government plates and town markings except unmarked police vehicles, with white as the standard color.

**Replacement Standards:** Current thresholds remain at 80,000 miles or 8 years for police, fire, public works, and administrative vehicles. Fire engines maintain a 25-year lifecycle, though reducing this threshold will be discussed at the budget workshop. Heavy trucks use mileage or hour-based thresholds.

**Procurement Process:** All purchases are reviewed through the annual budget and CIP process, with Council approval required for replacements, capital purchases, and policy exceptions. Vehicles may be acquired through purchase, donation, transfer, rental/lease, government surplus, or court confiscation.

**Disposal:** Vehicles are typically sold through government auction (GovDeals), though reduced-cost sales to other departments may be approved by Council. Timing balances service needs with cost control.

Councilman Hines raised concerns about liability language regarding employees taking prescription medications that may affect driving, questioning whether department heads should authorize such decisions. Town Manager Melody Clopton acknowledged this concern but emphasized the trust placed in department heads while noting the policy aims to address potential liability issues.

**Motion:** Councilman Pruitt moved to approve the fleet management policy, including affirmation of the replacement philosophy and life cycle standards, and support ongoing improvement and updates of policies. Councilman Tillett seconded. Motion passed with a 4 to 1 vote: Walker, Pruitt, Tillett and Mantz aye and Hines nay.

### Travel and Expense Policy

Town Manager Melody Clopton presented updates to the existing travel and expense policy, addressing inconsistencies and abuse issues that had been identified. The updated policy clarifies authority, expands meal and per diem guidance, standardizes reimbursement procedures, improves financial controls, and ensures Fair Labor Standards Act compliance.

Key Changes:

- Town Council has authority to approve requests by elected and appointed officials
- Travel time paid for actual time via most direct route per Google Maps
- Travel advances eliminated in favor of reimbursement system, though exceptions may be approved for financial hardship



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- Spouses and family members may travel at their own expense but cannot use town vehicles due to liability concerns
- Per diem only provided for qualifying travel (overnight stays, away from duty station 12+ hours, or approved advance travel)

Per Diem Eligibility: Breakfast eligible if travel begins before 6 AM, lunch if travel occurs between 10 AM-2 PM, dinner if return is after 7 PM. Lunch per diem excluded from same-day trips as employees can eat normal meals during regular work hours.

The policy uses federal per diem rates and excludes payment for personal days taken during travel or when meals are provided by event organizers.

Councilman Mantz asked about the leadership team involvement, with Town Manager confirming all department heads participated in policy development and were comfortable with implementation requirements.

Motion: Councilman Mantz moved to approve the updated travel and expense policy as presented. Councilman Pruitt seconded. Motion passed with a 4 to 1 vote: Walker, Pruitt, Tillett and Mantz aye and Hines nay.

### Discussion to Explore Town Hall Renovation

Town Manager presented preliminary information about potential Town Hall renovation needs. The current 5,580 square foot, two-story building built in 1987-88 has reached capacity and lacks full ADA accessibility.

#### Identified Needs:

- Move three offices from upstairs to downstairs for accessibility
- Achieve full ADA compliance
- Add additional bathrooms to meet building code requirements
- Create dedicated break space separate from conference room
- Add offices for future growth
- Design distinct suite for planning staff

#### Two architectural proposals were received:

- Beacon Architects: \$8,000 for budget-friendly, limited feasibility study, though lacking detailed cost estimating and multiple design options
- Dills Architects: \$14,500 for comprehensive approach including programming, multiple design iterations, and cost estimates

Town Manager Melody Clopton noted either cost would require budget amendment and transfer from fund balance.

Councilman Pruitt recommended waiting until the March 20th budget workshop to better understand the town's financial position regarding upcoming vehicle replacements and other capital needs before committing to architectural studies. Other Council members agreed with this approach.

Consensus: Discussion will continue at the budget workshop to evaluate the town's overall financial capacity before moving forward with architectural planning.



### **12. Reports/General Comments from Town Manager**

Town Manager Melody Clopton provided several updates:

Community Cleanup: March 21st "Keep It Clean Kitty Hawk" event from 10 AM-12 PM, with registration available on the town website. Lunch and snacks will be provided.

Town Tree Designation: Highlighted the 2025 designation of the Live Oak as Kitty Hawk's official town tree, initiated by resident Ron Tumolo. A video created with the local government access channel was shown, featuring Lauren Garrett's voiceover work and emphasizing how individual civic engagement can create positive community change.

Infrastructure Updates: Dune walkover at Kitty Hawk Road is complete and receiving positive public feedback. Recent installation of satellite internet systems for town buildings will help maintain operations during severe weather or service outages, with cost savings achieved through fire department and public work assistance with installation.

### **13. Reports/General Comments from Town Attorney**

Town Attorney Casey Varnell had no reports.

### **14. Reports/General Comments from Town Council**

Councilman Tillett welcomed the new police officers and thanked Mr. Willson for the educational beach nourishment presentation. He asked for an update on White Street beach access, Attorney Casey Varnell noted continued information gathering with potential closed session discussion at a future meeting to address certain confidential aspects.

Councilman Pruitt thanked the new officers, Charlotte Pedigo from Dare County League of Women Voters for the voter guide, and Steve House for the OBX Jeep Invasion's community contributions. He praised the Coastal Protection Engineering firm's educational work and noted how the beach nourishment focus on saving houses and infrastructure has proven successful. He announced his reappointment to the Dare County Tourism Board, replacing Councilman David Hines, and mentioned the March 14th OBX Taste of the Beach Chowder Cook-Off at Outer Banks Brew Station. He highlighted the valuable North Carolina School of Government training attended by Mayor Walker, Councilman Mantz and himself, noting how well-managed Kitty Hawk is compared to other municipalities, and gave recognition to former town employee Betty Moore Williams, who is now mayor of Jamesville.

Councilman Hines echoed thanks to new officers and community members. He particularly commended Steve House's participation in the polar plunge for Special Olympics, noting the good turnout for the event. He asked Town Attorney Casey about the easement location behind the bathhouse, confirming it runs from Two Roads along the postal property line to the bathhouse, primarily for access purposes with potential for improvements like gravel or pavement.

Councilman Mantz thanked staff for setting up the North Carolina School of Government training, emphasizing the value of professional development and the excellent resources UNC provides to local governments. He provided Recreation Committee updates, welcoming newly appointed Grace Anlauf and highlighting trail maintenance around town hall, potential Halloween events using the trails, and strategic planning work. He reported progress on the lifesaving memorial at the bathhouse, with pillars installed and educational panels in development for April opening, plus a model boat addition planned for June. He also noted participation in the Northeast North Carolina Trail Association for regional trail connectivity and tourism benefits.

Mayor Walker announced her appointment to the Dare County Housing Foundation, currently in early stages of housekeeping and property identification. She praised the School of Government training for



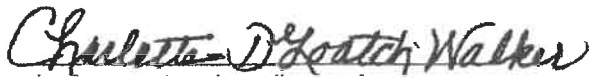
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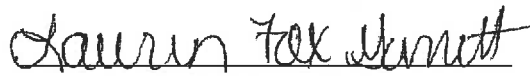
providing valuable contacts and resources. She thanked the tourist bureau for their grant supporting the lifesaving service memorial project.

**15. Recess to March 20, 2026. Budget Workshop, 9 am at Kitty Hawk Police Department at 5200A North Croatan Highway, Kitty Hawk, NC 27949**

Motion: Councilman Pruitt moved to recess until March 20th budget workshop at 9 AM at the Kitty Hawk Police Department. Councilman Mantz seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The Minutes of the March 2, 2026, Kitty Hawk Town Council Meeting are approved at the April 6, 2026, Kitty Hawk Town Council Meeting.

  
Charlotte DeLoatch Walker, Mayor

  
Lauren Fox Garrett, Town Clerk

