The Town of Atlantic Beach Town Council meeting was held and recorded at Atlantic Beach Community Center, 1010 32nd Avenue South, Atlantic Beach, South Carolina, on the 6th day of January, 2020, and transcribed by Amanda Godfrey, Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of South Carolina.
APPEARANCES

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Mayor Jake Evans, Chairman
Councilman Lenearl Evans
Councilwoman Josephine Isom
Councilwoman Jacqueline Gore
Councilwoman Glenda Williams

ADMINISTRATION:
Benjamin Quattlebaum Jr., Town Manager
Cheryl Pereira, Town Clerk

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Call to Order:

MAYOR EVANS: This Town Council meeting is called to order this Monday, January 6th, year 2020, at 5:15 p.m. Roll call?

CLERK: Councilman Lenearl Evans?

COUNCILMAN EVANS: Here.

CLERK: Councilwoman Josephine Isom?

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Here.

CLERK: Councilwoman Jacqueline Gore?

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Here.

CLERK: Councilwoman Glenda Williams?

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Here.

CLERK: Mayor Jake Evans?

MAYOR EVANS: Here. Council, seek a motion to go into Executive Session for legal, personnel and contractual matters.

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: So moved ---

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: So moved, Mr. Mayor.

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Second.

MAYOR EVANS: There's a motion and a second to go into Executive Session for legal, personnel and contractual. Any other questions or comments from Council?

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: Mayor and Council, the purpose of the Executive session for legal is to provide
Council an update on the Hospitality Tax lawsuit, County -- Horry County; potential litigation, demolition of property of Mr. Hubert Williams on 30th Avenue. Contractual matters -- proposed contract with Incite Digital Display. And personnel matters.

MAYOR EVANS: Any other questions, or comments?

Roll call?

CLERK: Councilman Lenearl Evans?

COUNCILMAN EVANS: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Josephine Isom?

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Jacqueline Gore?

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Glenda Williams?

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Yea.

CLERK: Mayor Jake Evans?

MAYOR EVANS: Yea. Motion granted.

Executive Session:

(Executive Session.)

MAYOR EVANS: Council, I seek a motion to come out of Executive Session into the General Session please.

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Mr. Mayor, I make a motion that we come out of Executive Session into the
ATLANTIC BEACH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

General Session.

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Second.

MAYOR EVANS: Motion and a second to come out of Executive Session into the General Session.

Any other questions or comments? Roll call?

CLERK: Councilman Lenearl Evans?

COUNCILMAN EVANS: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Josephine Isom?

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Jacqueline Gore?

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Glenda Williams?

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Yea.

CLERK: Mayor Jake Evans?

MAYOR EVANS: Yea. Motion granted.

General Session:

MAYOR EVANS: I want to take this time out to welcome the general public, tell everybody Happy New Year. Thanks for coming out. And at this time, if you would stand for a moment of silence.

(Moment of Silence.)

MAYOR EVANS: Pledge of Allegiance.

(Pledge of Allegiance recited in unison.)

MAYOR EVANS: We're down to ceremonial matters.
ATLANTIC BEACH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Anyone have any ceremonial matters at all? We're down to the approval of the agenda. Council, seek a motion for the approval of the agenda as it is outlined?

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: I seek a motion to approve the agenda as it is outlined.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Second.

MAYOR EVANS: Motion and a second for the approval of the agenda, any other questions or comments? Roll call?

CLERK: Councilman Lenearl Evans?

COUNCILMAN EVANS: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Josephine Isom?

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Jacqueline Gore?

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Glenda Williams?

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Yea.

CLERK: Mayor Jake Evans?

MAYOR EVANS: Yea. Motion granted.

Old Business:

MAYOR EVANS: We're down to Old Business, Town Council meeting minutes. Minutes from Town Council meeting held on November 12th, 2019 and November 25th, 2019 and December 2nd, 2019 as
well as December 16, 2019. Council, seek a motion for approval of those minutes?

COUNCILMAN EVANS: So moved.

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Second.

MAYOR EVANS: There's a motion and a second for the approval of the minutes in question. Any other questions or comments? Roll call?

CLERK: Councilman Lenearl Evans?

COUNCILMAN EVANS: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Josephine Isom?

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Jacqueline Gore?

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Glenda Williams?

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Yea.

CLERK: Mayor Jake Evans?

MAYOR EVANS: Yea. Motion granted.

New Business:

MAYOR EVANS: We're down to New Business. Approval of the 2018-2019 Town of Atlantic Beach financial audit.

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: Mayor and Council and public, I am pleased to present the 2018-2019 Town of Atlantic Beach financial audit. Mr. Gary Bailey is here this evening, who conducted --
from Love Bailey, who conducted the audit for the Town of Atlantic Beach, will give an overview and present the highlights of the audit for 2000 -- fiscal year 2018-2019. Mr. Bailey?

MR. BAILEY: Thank you. Mr. Mayor, Council, nice to be here with you this evening. Happy New Year.

IN UNISON: Happy New Year.

MR. BAILEY: It's always nice -- well, I'm from the Upstate so it's always nice -- I got to see the ocean right before the sun went down (inaudible) nice.

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Nice.

MR. BAILEY: You know, just the kind of things that you might take for granted 'cause you see it all the time (inaudible) beautiful. Anyways, it's nice to be here and present. Did you all have a copy of the financial report?

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Yeah.

COUNCILMAN EVANS: Yes.

MR. BAILEY: I'm not gonna go through everything -- it's kind of thick -- but I'm just gonna kinda get the highlights of really how the Town was doing. This was a good year for the Town. So we audit the financial statements and we issue
an opinion on the financial statements. And this year we issued an unmodified opinion which basically means a clean opinion. That's the opinion we want to get. The reason I'd say that's significant is, up until this point, we (ph) had been issues and growing concern on the Town. So, the Town had finally gotten into a neg -- a positive net position. It had been a negative net position up until this point so that's a good sign. So now you actually have an opinion -- the best opinion you can get so that's a good sign of financial strength the Town's went through over the last several years. I -- this is the first time I've been able to present to the Town so I'm just gonna quickly go over what an audit is and what an audit's not 'cause sometimes there's some confusion as to what -- this is a financial statement audit, basically auditing these numbers so ---

MAYOR EVANS: Can you guys hear him well enough?

COUNCILMAN EVANS: No.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Huh-uh.

MAYOR EVANS: No?

(Inaudible background noise.)
MR. BAILEY: Sorry, I'm really tall.

(Inaudible background noise.)

MR. BAILEY: Is that better?

(Inaudible background noise.)

MR. BAILEY: So, when I come and do an audit, the Town's responsibility is two things. One, you -- I'm looking through your internal controls and your assessments. What that means is, does the Town have proper controls? So, if someone's paying a bill, was it properly approved, was there proper sign-off on the bill? Is payroll -- is there certain controls over payroll to keep someone from paying themselves an extra check or to change their payroll, how much they're getting paid? You know, obviously you're a small town, like a lot of small towns in the state. Having an account -- has an outsourced accountant, that's a good control to have. We recommend that a lot in small towns, and more and more towns are doing that, using an outsourced accountant to sort of reconcile the books at month end. Someone that's really not in the town but on the outside is sort of -- it's a good control so I think that's a good control. So, we didn't
have any findings there. Everything looks -- it's in good shape there. And then the other part is the Town has had good numbers across the audit. So when we come in, you give us the trial balance and we audit that. If we've made a lot of journal entries, that's a sign -- basically, if I'm changing the numbers a lot, that's a sign that financial statements are not in good order. With your town, I had three or four journal entries -- that is not a big deal, it's not a finding. And the reason -- just to give you some background, we've done audits where we've come in and had to make 40 or 50 journal entries. Why that's significant to you as a Council is if you're looking at the financials every month and using those financials to make a decision on how to move forward with the financial decisions of the Town and the numbers aren't correct, it could lead to a bad decision. So, the good news here is you have good numbers every month that you're looking at to make your decisions. And then once we take all that in -- well, as I said to start with, we issue an opinion. And what that opinion is saying is there's
reasonable assurance that these financial statements are materially correct. When I say materially correct, what I mean is this -- we look at a sample (inaudible). We don't look at one hundred percent of every transaction that has occurred because it would -- it would be too expensive and it would be too timely for the Town if, you know, the audit here would be ten times what it is. So, that's every audit you're gonna -- and we do a sample. So, the good news is the Town looks -- the processes are in good shape and, as I will show you, your finances have really improved as well. What the audit doesn't do is we can't tell you how to run your town, I mean, that's why you're the elected officials, to decide which direction the Town's gonna go in. So, sometimes we're asked those kind of questions. All we can really tell you -- say that you're gonna build that $20 million rec center, I'd probably say that's not the best use of cash and you'd probably get in trouble for that. That's about the extent of decisions as far as the direction of the Town. With that being said, your financial statements -- and I'm gonna say some
boring things, but GASB 34 is Governmental Accounting Standards Board. You, as a town -- like every town in a state -- as a town, you keep ---

(Inaudible background noise.)

MR. BAILEY: --- you create the budget every year, and it's basically a fund balance. Basically, it's the cash inflows, the cash outflows of the Town, and that's the way every governmental entity budgets. GASB 34 said why don't all the governmental entities also create a balance sheet and income statement that's more like a business, accrual basis, so it get's very confusing. So the reason I'm saying that is, when you look at your financials, there's like two balance sheets, there's two income statements, and then there's two reconciliations between those two. To keep it not confusing, I'm gonna focus on the one that you budget off of every year 'cause that's what you're used to seeing. So, with that being said, if you'll turn to page 5, it's your fund balance sheet. And I'm just gonna hit some highlights. You'll see that the cash -- the Town's cash on hand at the end of June 30th,
2019 was $510,000. That's a slight decrease from where it was at the end of '18, which was $533,000. Nothing alarming there. You'll see that you essentially paid off $33,000 of accounts payable so that's basically where the cash -- some of that cash went. Your receivables of $66,000, that's a little bit higher than it was last year at $46,000. Again, some of that is just timing. It's intergovernmental funds that you've received from the State that came in in July and August of '19 that actually belong in fiscal year of June 30th, '19. I apologize. I know it gets a little (inaudible). Your accounts payable decreased to $55,000. It was $88,000 last year. What's significant here is you only have $67,000 of liabilities on your books and $510,000 in cash so that's a big, strong number of saying, you know, you're pushing $89 of cash on hand and only $1 of liability. And nothing significant there, that's just regular, ongoing business within the timing of a lot of transactions. Your unearned business licenses of $230,000, basically what that is is it's business licenses that were collected in April,
May, June but they're for the next fiscal year. Last year, that number was $212,000 so it just flows between -- year to year. If you have a question, please just stop me.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Uh-huh.

MR. BAILEY: I'll go on. Your unassigned fund balance -- if you look at the very bottom, the fund balance is $296,000. Unassigned portion was $279,000. What that means is that -- that's funds that the Town has collected over the years that you haven't spent. And so, the Council basically has freedom to allocate those funds how you see fit. They're unassigned, they're unrestricted, so you don't have any restrictions there. I'll say this, the -- in 2015 -- that's June 30th, 2015, four years ago, that number was negative $221,000. So it's went from negative $221,000, which basically meant you needed another $221,000 just to cover the bills, and you went to $279,000 positive. That's a $500,000 swing in four years so that's just showing you the good trajectory of the Town's finances over the last four years. Also, say -- with the cash on hand, the Governmental Financial Officers Association up
in Chicago, they recommend you have about two months of cash on hand. I think you should really have three months of cash on hand, just for various reasons. Like most towns, the first three to four months of your fiscal year you don't collect a lot, and then November through March is when you start collecting more funds. You had 64 percent so, like I said, the GFOA says -- recommends 16.7, we recommend 25, you all exceeded that at 64 percent. Basically means you have about seven months of cash on hand that would cover your current expenditures. So that's another strong financial sign. If you'll flip over two pages to page 7, that's the income statement. Up a little bit, but fairly similar to 2018. Your overall revenue is $803,000 for the year. In fiscal year '18, that was $755,000. Twenty of that -- $20,000 of that changed where -- as insurance proceeds from the police car that got totaled. But then the rest of it is sort of across the board. Property taxes went up about $10,000 collections worth, license and permits were about $15,000. So, nothing significant, just a nice increase in overall revenues.
Total expenditures were also up. They're $795,000 this year. Last year, they were only $736,000, and the reason for that, salaries and benefits, that was your biggest increase. That increased about -- so your expenditures increased $59,000. Salaries and benefits were 60 -- a $65,000 increase. Other than that, retirement taxes were 17 of that 65. I think, outside of taxes and retirement, your salaries and benefits were pretty close to 2017 so I think you maybe had some changes in '18, you had some overtime. Some folks (inaudible) in '18 and full-time in '19 so I think that's what really contributed to the increase. Also, you had $22,000 more in repairs and maintenance. I think you had roof repairs on this building, you had the Town Hall issues, paint and carpet, and some of that that went on. Other than that, outside of those two, all your other expenses as a whole decreased $30,000. So, not bad. You ended up with basically (inaudible) come up a little over $8,000 for the year. When you look at your budget, which I personally think, as a Council, would be one of your most important -- how much money you've
got in the bank and then your budget because you voted on that budget, that's the -- and so a budget that actually I think shows why you're staying within the line of what as a Council voted. So you voted basically in fiscal year '19 to break even, basically your revenues and expenses be equal. So you did a little -- about $8,000 more than that so that was a nice increase on your budget. And then, a few other notes -- if you're familiar that -- it's been talked about a lot, and you've probably talked about it here, the pension liability of the State's -- State retirement pension is underfunded. The South Carolina Retirement System and Police Officers Retirement System as a whole in the State's about $30 billion underfunded right now. So, every year an auditor comes into the State and they allocate a portion of that to every participant, to every town, county or governmental entity that's in the retirement gets a portion so the Town's portion of that liability is $343,000. You don't see that on your fund balance sheet and it's not something that you're gonna have to start making payments to. Where you really
saw the increase is the State -- Chief's increase on how much the Town has to contribute to the retirement. For instance, 30 (ph) years ago in the South Carolina Retirement System, the Town had to contribute 11.56 percent (inaudible). That's now under (ph) 14.56 percent. And I believe fiscal year '20 is over 15.56 percent. I think it's gonna go up another 2 percent over the next two years, so that's a pretty big -- a lot of towns are seeing significant increases in that retirement caused as a result. The other thing I want to note is, if you're looking at the balance sheet, it looks more like a business (inaudible) balance sheet, you know, good term (ph) there. But you had a large land donation from the Housing Authority. It's valued at about $482,000. So if you're looking at the -- that income statement, you'll see revenues in the -- of $482,000, so you had to record that as revenue and then it's land that's now in the property's (ph) ownership. That's kind of quick, and sometimes that can be a little boring maybe? Overwhelming ---

(Inaudible background noise.)
MR. BAILEY: --- numbers being thrown at you. But, I'll be glad to answer any questions that you have. I'll say overall -- sorry -- overall, I think the Town's in much -- has really increased financially (inaudible).

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Sir, I just want to ask you to repeat the part where you were saying the Town liability for the retirement or pension...

MR. BAILEY: Oh, sure.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Did you say 340?

MR. BAILEY: $343,000.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: $343,000, gotcha ---

MR. BAILEY: For the -- just to make note again, it's underfunded at the State level by $30 billion. So your portion's -- which is a lot.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Right.

MR. BAILEY: For the Town. As I said, it's not something that you have to start making payments to, really the State has been trying to correct that by increasing -- one of the ways is by increasing the percentage that you as a town pay for your employees that you -- 'cause yours actually went down to almost $390,000 just in '18, so it's actually down to...
MAYOR EVANS: Any other questions, Council?

(Inaudible background noise.)

MAYOR EVANS: Do you have any questions for him, Ben?

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: No, sir.

MR. BAILEY: If anything pops up, you know, after the fact, I mean, I'll be glad to come back, or e-mail any questions (inaudible) have that come up later. I'll take a look (inaudible).

MAYOR EVANS: Thank you, sir.

MR. BAILEY: Yes, sir. Y'all have a good evening.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Likewise, thank you ---

COUNCILMAN EVANS: You too.

MAYOR EVANS: Council, seek a motion for the approval of the Town of Atlantic Beach financial audit.

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: So moved ---

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: So ...  

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: So moved.

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Second.

MAYOR EVANS: There is a motion and a second for the approval of the 2018-2019 Town of Atlantic Beach financial audit. Any other questions or
comments? Roll call?

CLERK: Councilman Lenearl Evans?

COUNCILMAN EVANS: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Josephine Isom?

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Jacqueline Gore?

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Glenda Williams?

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Yea.

CLERK: Mayor Jake Evans?

MAYOR EVANS: Yea. Motion granted. Item B under New Business, Council, I'm gonna seek a motion to -- for the Town Manager to enter into negotiations with an agreement with Incite Digital Displays to build and operate a gateway sign on Highway 17 in the Town of Atlantic Beach, South Carolina ---

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: Mayor and Council and Public, Mr. Kirk McNabb is here tonight. If you can recall, previously he had presented a proposal to the Town of Atlantic Beach to replace our current gateway sign on Highway 17 with a digital sign containing the logo of the Town of Atlantic Beach, and the ability to change and promote Town activities as well as
advertisements generated by his company. He is making a proposal to the Town to replace the sign with a digital sign and pay a compensation to the Town as a result of permitting him to build the sign on Highway 17 in the Town of Atlantic Beach. At this point, I will turn the presentation over to Mr. Kirk McNabb of Incite Digital Displays, and he can go over in more detail his specific proposal to the Town of Atlantic Beach.

MR. McNABB: Good evening. Thank you, Council. Happy New Year.

IN UNISON: Happy New year.

MR. McNABB: Interesting I'm on the heels of the financing. Our proposal -- just (inaudible) -- the letters that were given to Councilman (sic) Quattlebaum ---

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: Town Manager.

MR. McNABB: --- kind of explains ...

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: Town Manager, not Council. Town Manager.

MR. McNABB: (Inaudible.)

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: Yes, sir.

MR. McNABB: As it states in the letter, we're proposing a 10-year agreement for a fee for the
issuance of the permit -- we'll get to the permit -- to build a gateway sign. The dimensions are mentioned here, but (inaudible) open for discussion. And so one year -- with one automatic renewal of another 10-year period, and a 2 percent compounded annual escalator. I do not know the method -- the actual formula on what it amounts to. It's over the two period -- over the two terms, it amounts to $180,000 plus the compounded 2 percent annual, actually works out to a total of 10 percent. I don't know exactly how the bracket works out (inaudible) $30,000. There are two renderings. The first rendering is the one that I prefer. The second rendering is kinda -- I think monument. I had submitted a permit agreement, a simple -- simple terms. Don't know if this -- the Town's attorney has had a chance to ---

MALE SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

MR. McNABB: Okay. So, I guess we're waiting to hear from the attorney, and I hope that Council has got a lot of questions and interest in the project.

MALE SPEAKER: Mr. McNabb, did you bring any
additional copies of the actual photo of what's being proposed, do you have any additional?

MR. McNABB: You mean for the agreements?

MALE SPEAKER: Yeah. This photo. Do you have 'em?

MR. McNABB: I did have additional copies of that, yes.

MALE SPEAKER: Do you have them with you?

MR. McNABB: I do.

MALE SPEAKER: Can you pass copies to the public?

MR. McNABB: Actually, I have a master copy and I can (ph) hand that out -- it's just got a name on it and -- I only have two ---

MAYOR EVANS: Oh.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Actually, these are extra. We already have what they had gave us ---

(Inaudible background noise.)

MAYOR EVANS: We just didn't have that second picture there ---

MALE SPEAKER: Can you pass these around ---

MAYOR EVANS: But other than that, yeah.

(Inaudible background noise.)

MR. McNABB: The one thing I didn't mention ---

(Inaudible background noise.)

MAYOR EVANS: I'm sorry. You can go ahead.

MR. McNABB: Thank you. We intend to build a
structure and showcase the Town of Atlantic Beach with its seal, its logo, you know, in a very prominent position on the structure, and donate the structure to the City. We expect to spend around $150,000 for the structure. Digital would be maintained by us. It's a piece of equipment that requires constant maintenance so that would be separate as it's discussed in the cover letter.

MAYOR EVANS: Okay.

MR. McNABB: So that's -- the idea is -- number one is to showcase the City, to create a gateway sign for the City. Number two on the digital display, we would do public service announcements. We would do Amber alerts, storm alerts, public service announcements or events to help promote the City, like get involved in a lot of the events and coordinate with the City with the digital sign. So that would add -- that would add a lot of value as well.

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: Can you speak to, in terms of the type of advertisers you're looking for, and whatever restrictions that you have in a type of non-competitive ---

MR. McNABB: Sure.
MR. QUATTLEBAUM: --- of advertisements?

MR. McNABB: Sure. Traditionally in the out-of-home business and -- and I don't like to just call this a blatant outdoor advertising display. I would much prefer that it's sponsorship. And it's sponsorship -- typically, as a rule of thumb in the advertising business and in digital billboards, static billboards, signage, most people don't put offensive things on the signs. This creates controversy. Such as gentlemen's clubs. Some places are not allowed to put hard liquor on the signs, but wine and beer or -- it just depends on what their restrictions are. Most outdoor operators will not put a gentlemen club's on (inaudible) -- on billboards as well because (inaudible). So we're very sensitive to those kind of things. PETA -- that's another one that has problems putting things on boards, digital boards and static signs. Abortions, stuff like that. So we would be very sensitive to that kind of stuff. As far as sponsorships, I guess specifically I can drill into, you know, when you have the bike rally here, I've spoken with your City Manager about this. When you have
the bike rally here, there's sponsors that come
-- that come with the event, that come with the
vendors. We would like to work with those
folks. That's the type of sponsorships we'd
like to do.

MAYOR EVANS: Any other questions from the Council?

COUNCILMAN EVANS: Yeah, I have a question. Before
you presented this sign, the numbers was
different. What was the numbers on the
contract before?

MR. McNABB: Very good question. Before -- and I
don't know if we've figured this out. We're
having a problem figuring out who owns the
property and, from what I can tell, the
existing sign that is there where -- which --
after this sign is put up, if this went
forward, that sign would come down. No point
in having two signs.

MAYOR EVANS: Right.

MR. McNABB: My understanding so far -- and I'm not
clear on this -- is it appears that the
existing sign that's on the street is in the
right-of-way on the -- is in the -- which means
that the State could come take that property at
any time if they want to put a sidewalk there,
if they want to widen the road. So that's why
the numbers changed because I'm at risk. At
any time, that property could be taken. If
there is a different situation that I am
unaware of, then, you know, we would adjust
based on that.

COUNCILMAN EVANS: Okay.

MR. McNABB: It becomes less valuable if I'm at risk
of having a $150,000 piece of equipment has to
be removed at any time. We're willing to take
the risk because obviously you've had the sign
there for quite some time. It doesn't look
like there -- the road's gonna be widened any
time soon. I haven't seen -- I haven't looked
at the past (ph) development from the State.
I could be wrong. That's something that, you
know, something that we should look into.

COUNCILMAN EVANS: So if we own the property, you
can go back to the other numbers. If we own
the property.

MR. McNABB: I would massage the numbers, yes.

COUNCILMAN EVANS: Okay, thank you.

(Inaudible background noise.)

MR. McNABB: Yes.

MAYOR EVANS: So, between now and the next four
years, we're probably definitely looking at maybe sidewalks on 17 so make sure you leave room to allow that.

MR. McNABB: And that makes sense. And I spoke with your City Manager, Mr. Quattlebaum. Typical rule of thumb is 10 feet back from the pavement, curb to pavement. That's what most zoning is, and that leaves sufficient space for a sidewalk. And the other thing is nothing overhanging that space. So the reason that I prefer the design -- the first design on the -- on this paperwork ---

MAYOR EVANS: Uh-huh.

MR. McNABB: I just gave it to you. As you'll see, a wedge cut.

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Uh-huh, right --

MR. McNABB: The wedge cut also allows the fact that you can see through. The second design, the (inaudible) a monument, even 10 feet back could a -- somewhat of an obstruction from line of yield. The one with the V-cut would not be. It's just a -- I think it's more attractive, as I've said, (inaudible) that's my opinion.

MAYOR EVANS: Any other questions, Council? Thank you, sir.
MR. McNABB: Thank you.

MAYOR EVANS: Council, I believe there is a motion on the floor for the Town Manager to be able to enter into the negotiations for an agreement with Incite Digital Displays to operate -- to build and operate a gateway sign on Highway 17 in the Town of Atlantic Beach, South Carolina. Is the motion -- I think is on the floor, Council.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: So moved.

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Second.

MAYOR EVANS: There's a motion and a second for the Town Manager to enter into negotiations with an agreement with Incite Digital Displays. Any other questions or comments? Roll call?

CLERK: Councilman Lenearl Evans?

COUNCILMAN EVANS: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Josephine Isom?

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Jacqueline Gore?

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Glenda Williams?

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Yea.

CLERK: Mayor Jake Evans?

MAYOR EVANS: Yea. Motion granted.
Report:

MAYOR EVANS: We're down to the Town Manager's Report.

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: Mayor, Council, public, residents, I asked the Chief of Police to make a presentation overview of the Police Department's status, to give you, as the community, an understanding of our Police Department, where it's -- it has been, where it's going and what we're projecting to do, providing better police and security services for the residents of the Town. Let me just start in giving an overview, and then I'll turn it over to the Chief. Back in 2015, the Town had one police officer and one vehicle at the time. Then I took over as Town Manager. Over the four-year, four-and-a-half-year period, we've been able to increase the number of police officers to the Town from one officer to a maximum, we've hired four with current funding available to the Town. All of us know, or should know, that nationally there is a shortage of police officers nationally, statewide and even locally. And competing for officers with other larger municipalities makes
it quite a challenge, and I think the Town, given its size, given our budget, has done -- and the Chief -- under the leadership of Chief Robinson, has done an exceptional job of recruiting and bringing in some fine officers to provide police services to the Town of Atlantic Beach. During that time period, we have not only increased our people power, we also have purchased without any debt any -- on our police fleet. Taking it from one unit to four police cars without any debt being incurred by the Town. All the vehicles have been paid off. Needless to say that in the cycle of replacement, we are going to need additional -- more modernized vehicles because of the unit -- usage that they have over time. But it's something that we are looking to address in our long-range plan for increase of personnel as well as equipment. But let me just say emphatically that I believe that, given our size in comparison to other municipal police forces, comparable size and even larger, we stack up very well with them in terms of our technology, in terms of our capability, in terms of our equipment, materials and supplies
that we provide to our officers. Also, I'm a big advocate of training and the Chief is also, and we have sent our existing officers to -- and former officers -- to enhance their police skills. My desire is to be able to fund and provide 24-hour police services to the Town. Given all of the mechanics of time off, court time -- the court time that officers and the Chief will get into, have to do, that will require a number of additional officers to make that possible. It also will require us securing additional funding that the Town pretty much could not fund entirely on its own without any additional resources to bring to bear. So, with that, based on the budget numbers and the figures we've had, I've tried to maximize the number of officers we have on staff, and looking to increase it even more. At this time, I would like to bring the Chief forward just to give a general overview of police functions and process, his staff and what we're doing, and programs and initiatives that we are looking into having -- initiated and are looking to initiate to improve police services to the residents that we have. Chief
POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: How you doing, Mayor, Council, residents of Atlantic Beach? I'm not gonna be here long. I'll go over some stuff. Since I took over, probably end -- part of 2017, I took over as Interim Chief. Became the Chief in 2018. From 2018 to 2019, I'm gonna go over some statistics that we did since I took over. The first thing I want to go over is the major accomplishments that began (ph) since I took over. Just like the Town Manager was talking about, we did buy four vehicles -- two patrol cars and two SUVs. They are up models -- they were up-to-date model vehicles. We used to have problems with breaking our cars, up at night (inaudible) can't -- couldn't catch you guys if I'm running out of time. Now, we could run over here by the (inaudible), they want to test my police car. You think you're gonna break (inaudible) and run out of here, you've got another thing coming. So we updated that. At the same time, the State went to -- they don't do traffic tickets no more, everything's electronic. So now you've got to have computers, scanners and all that in the
We also have those in our cars so now we've got a lot which the State provides. And that opened grants for us to get other stuff. A lot of stuff we do now, it opens the door for us to get grants. And when I came here, there were a lot of grants that were out there that the Police Department that -- well, we couldn't get it because we didn't have our statistics (inaudible). As of later two -- the middle part of 2018, all our statistics had been reported, and we're constantly report to the FBI, to the state. Saying that, we also got a grant this year for body cameras. All officers will be equipped with body cameras. So any time they're out stopping people or talking to anybody, they will have a body camera on them. One of the things that -- we're waiting for that guy to come and program the recorder (ph), and that should be done some time this month. So by the first of February, all my officers will have body cameras on. One of the other -- one of the other things that -- when I took over, the news were badmouthing the Police Department in my -- at the time. As I took over, I felt like we -- we'd kinda mend (ph)
that with the media. We don't get that much to
talk about, but crime does still happen in the
Town. We can't go back on what happened in the
past, only thing we can do is move forward.
And by saying that, we try to make sure that we
do everything by the law. Sometimes some
people don't agree with it but, at the same
time, it's the law and so we're gonna abide by
it. The media -- I do have some media that do
reach out to me. The only thing, it makes --
it doesn't seem worth going (inaudible) to
report something bad just to see if they
(inaudible). Some of the media is working --
I'm kind of proud of that 'cause when I first
took over (inaudible) everything that was
coming was the reports on bad (inaudible).
Now, we're turning the page on that. Now,
they're coming, trying to see what Atlantic
Beach is all about, how we've improved. I want
to talk about some of our statistics. From --
and these are statistics from 2018 and the
statistics from 2019. I'm just gonna go over
a few of 'em and just kind of get you to
understand why the number may have went up or
the number may have went down. Domestic
violence. 2018, we had 54 calls of domestic violence. 2019, we had 94. That don't necessarily mean we had 94 domestic violences in the Town. That basically means somebody called and reported a domestic violence, and it could've been something simple, for a child arguing with their mother, and didn't want to do it, but we had to go out there and respond. So, our statistics were not for domestic violence because of that, again, high so we had to answer that. One of the biggest things are B&E auto. 2018, it was 11. 2019, it went down to 9. And this -- and one of the main reasons, because our officers are out there and patrol all the time. If they see any blue lights riding the street constantly, they're not gonna try to break into houses, breaking into cars. So that's good. 2018, we had one robbery in the Town, one of the businesses. 2019, we had zero. So we do got a good handle on that, nobody's really breaking into nobody's business in town so -- and a lot of business owners, they come and talk to me a lot of times about they love to see the officers out patrolling, they do property checks. Some of the residents
-- I started a program back in 2018 -- they call it vacation watch. You can go to the Town and fill out the paper. If you're going out of town and you want your property watched, you can fill out the paper, and one of my officers will check on it daily, make sure nobody's breaking into your place, nobody's taking something while you're not there. I know I've got a couple residents that participate in the program. Any of y'all in here now that you want to participate in that program, go to the Town Hall or the Police Department, ask for one of the forms, fill it out and we'll be glad to take care of that. One of the biggest compliments -- some people -- all depends on how you look at it. One of the biggest drug spots in Atlantic Beach, we shut that down. It was one of the biggest nuisances in town where people were hanging out, playing loud music, selling drugs, prostituting, all of that. We shut the building down. We're not in the business of (inaudible) somebody's home, but if you don't abide by the law in town, we will come out. It's a different type of police department -- it's not the old one, it's better
today. We are -- we're straightforward. We
don't cater to every kind -- and no offense,
Council and Mayor, we don't cater to you. We
cater to the people, we cater to law. You
break a law, no matter the Mayor, Council, Town
Manager or one of my police officers, you break
the law, we're gonna come. Probably -- if
y'all see me breaking the law, report it to
somebody. Because if I'm not doing my job, how
can I expect my officers or anybody to do their
job. I want the community to feel comfortable
with the Police Department. If any of y'all
have a problem, all you've gotta do is call.
We -- don't call the Chief. And one of the
reasons I say don't call the Chief is because
when we go out for grants and try to get new
cars, equipment, getting grants for -- to hire
more officers, they go off the statistics.
They don't go off of because we say we need it.
They look at the numbers and say that, oh, you
all have got a hundred calls of domestic
violence, y'all do need a domestic violence
investigator because the number says for a
small like y'all, y'all shouldn't be having
that big a problem. So now when I go to the
State and ask for a grant for a domestic violence investigator, I've got a good chance of getting it. And some of y'all might not understand it, but this -- the Department of Public Safety do a grant every year for law. There's so many different grants out there that you get officers, cars, investigators, a traffic unit, but you've got to show the numbers to match what you're asking for. So that's why we want y'all to report it. If, I mean, you feel like you need to call me, call me -- my phone'll always be open but, at the same time, call 9-1-1 for it to be (inaudible) for we go -- that 9-1-1 call, we get information and we -- we will properly (inaudible) everything that is going on in the Town. One of the biggest things for 2020 -- I made a list of some goals that we -- we're looking forward to in 2020. One of the biggest things -- I'm still working on it, but it's the staffing. Our policy -- depart -- our Police Department policy (inaudible) all of our (inaudible). One of the things, I want to become accredited (inaudible). Right now, we're not. But that don't mean that we don't
do what we're supposed to. A lot of
departments in the State is not credited, but
I want our Department to be accredited because
that opens, again, to more grants than one a
year for the Police Department and other areas.
At the same time, I plan to fully staff the
2020 -- fully staff the Police Department by
2022. And when I say fully staff, which still
has to be approved through the Council, to hire
a couple more officers. I'm trying to go to
the 24-hour officers so y'all can feel safe,
there's somebody out there 24/7. And then you
don't have to worry about Horry County, North
Myrtle Beach Sheriff's Office. I'm trying to
get to the point that we do everything that
Horry County or the Sheriff of North Myrtle
Beach do, we do it right here in our own town.
We don't have to depend on nobody else to come
in and work anything around town, which is
gonna take time and money. And that's why
we're looking -- really hard looking at grants.
I am -- some of my guys (inaudible) grants,
they have other people looking at 'em. But,
we're working toward that. And right now, I'm
looking to increase by 2022 at least two to
three more officers because we talked about
another issue, general session. I know you all
seen the report in the newspaper that came out
talking about the general session cases that
been with dropped from 2015 to 2018 (ph). I'm
not gonna speak or blame it on people. Since
I took over, we've changed a whole lot. And
some of these cases, they're still gonna get
dropped, and not because my officers are not
doing they job. Sometimes a solicitor'll look
at a case and say, well, I don't feel like
we've got enough to win so we're gonna make a
deal with them now. And my officer could write
him 10 different citations, and they pick one
out and say you did good with this, forget
about the rest of them. So now, I've got 10
out of -- one out of 10 so now look -- make the
statistics look bad. Looks like we're doing
about 10 percent of cases solved. In the
overall picture, you've got to (inaudible) but,
at the same time, those numbers don't look
good. So don't let numbers -- they let --
newspapers, they're gonna tell you different
things that make it look worse than what it is.
You -- if you really ever want to know anything
about the Police Department, you can contact me, come and talk to my clerk, set up an interview and come and talk to me, I'll explain it to you. A lot of these cases, when they get dropped, it's like I said, because of the Solicitor. And sometimes they do because we don't have the technology or the manpower to investigate some of these bigger cases. That's why I'm trying to get to the point that we have investigators here that we work all our cases. Sometimes we have to have Horry County and the Sheriff's Department of North Myrtle Beach help us out investigating that stuff and, if we don't get the manpower to help us out, you know, it's harder for us to investigate a lot of the cases. So sometimes we don't get the proper paperwork in the proper time because we're still trying to figure out what's going on. And we don't have the equipment, but we are moving in the right direction. By 2022, I hope that we could do everything we want to do by ourselves, not with help from anybody else. One of the biggest things, that community service program, I want to start a neighborhood watch program, and I want to start it in town
but it'll take the residents to work with me. I can't -- only thing -- the community tells me what's going on. I can't tell you what goes on if I don't live on your street. We drive by, a lot of them, when they see the police, they run and hide. But everybody's got two eyes for the most part, they're out there seeing what's going on. A neighborhood watch program, if you see something, tell someone. You don't have to give your name all the time. Most of the time, we just want to know where to look at, how to -- what property (ph) is going -- who we need to be looking at. We don't even really need your name and stuff like that, but that's a program (inaudible) I want implement this coming up year. National night out at the beach, that's a program that I want to bring community, the law enforcement and the Town together. We -- we're a small town and we should be a family. We shouldn't be pulling away from each other. The community, the Town Council, the Police Department, all of us need to be together. We need -- we could have cookouts during the summer out here, and everybody get out here and come and tell the
police, hey y'all are doing this good, y'all are not doing this too good because without you all, I don't know what we're missing or what we're not doing. Because y'all see (inaudible) through the inside, y'all need tell me that, oh, why don't y'all patrol this street a little more, I need somebody out here around 8:00 to 10:00 because that's when crimes mostly happen. If y'all don't come and tell me, I don't know, but if this community (inaudible) would help a lot with information, y'all can come up and talk to me. And matter of fact, you don't have to talk to me at midnight, you could come any day, Monday through Friday, between 10:00 to 5:00, you can talk to me about stuff like that. Another thing is movie night out at the beach. The Market Common is doing every night, I think, during the summer for the kids. That's something we've be doing, you know, here in our own town. We want to -- the kids are the future. Right now, all of y'all are watching movies that I wish I was doing. I'm from Lake City. They're killing each other left and right now. They done had two more shootings today, and it's not overcrowded, it's
(inaudible) 'cause they ain't got nothing to do. They don't have no kind of activities to do. If we don't give that to the kids, that's gonna be something (inaudible) soon. I mean 'cause they're taking each other out. So we've got to give the kids something to look forward. During the summer, we could play music out at the cul-de-sacs and let -- maybe have popcorn and have the kids come out, even if sometimes we have it at the Community Center. But that's something I'm looking at to start this year for the summer. Pumpkin carving night, that's something that (inaudible) in November and (inaudible). There are a number of different events that I'm thinking about doing, but Halloween remember -- do a Halloween event and do a Christmas. Any time you want to donate to it, donate to it. I feel like when we have events in town, I shouldn't have to come out and ask everybody to donate. If your heart says you want to donate to one of the events, you can because all the events is for the kids (inaudible). One of the things I think was a -- the Town Manager was talking about hiring -- I don't know if that's that part about hiring
a grant writer. Some of these federal grants -- I can write State grants, but when you're talking about federal grants and stuff, I can't write (inaudible) they're not in my job description to write (inaudible). But we are looking at maybe getting a grant writer to come help us secure the grants and get different stuff in the Town. There's a lot of other stuff that we're talking about implementing, but that will come at -- as we go along throughout the year. I kind of did a brief -- went over some of the stuff. Our statistics, which we've got the new website that should be coming up online soon, and like I'm hoping that we can start putting some of the statistics out there on the website and you all can go and see -- find out what is going on with the Police Department (ph). We do -- got a Facebook page, Atlantic Beach, our police Facebook page. Some of y'all might not even know it, we've got a Facebook page out there now and we do put out information. I said we're gonna start putting (inaudible) start putting stuff on there every -- try to do it every day. Just can't promise it's gonna be updated daily, but at least two
or three times a week, it would be updated. And we're looking for somebody if something happens, need everybody to be on lock down 'cause something crazy went off or we're having a Halloween event or any kind of thing, it will be on our website so make sure y'all start looking for the new website, which I hope will be up by the first of February. That's basically all I've got.

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Thank you.

POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: Got any questions, Council, Mayor?

MAYOR EVANS: Yeah, well I -- you are Ben one. I think now we have yourself and three other full-time officers?

POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: Yes, sir.

MAYOR EVANS: And so, in order for us to have 24-hour coverage, how many more officers that -- are you contemplating on us getting, and possibly to have more than one on a shift sometimes, so how many more officers you guys think we're gonna be in need of, just approximately?

POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: In a perfect world, I'd need 10 officers to run a full -- that's a perfect
world. I know it's not gonna happen here. But for us to at least get the 24 hours, we would need five officers, not counting me. But most of the time, I'd be here (inaudible). That'd put one officer on shift, and you've got one that's basically on standby. Because you've got people that take vacation, they're sick and stuff like that, so you've gotta have somebody to replace officers if something happens. So to really, fully run 24 hours, we need at least five officers to run it. I would love to have two on every shift, to be honest, because we did have a shooting and a police officer just got killed Sunday, and he was doing a routine traffic stop and he got killed got shot in the head four times.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Oh, my God.

POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: So I mean it's -- a lot of people think, well, you've got one officer and one person, you never know -- when you're a police officer, you never know what you're walking into. You're getting out -- everything -- you get out of the car, you're gonna stop somebody, we don't know what we're walking -- we don't know what that person's thinking. Is
he -- he might be saying, well, I don't -- I didn't want to die so I'm taking my chances (ph). Or he could say, well, it could be an old woman saying, well, I didn't -- we're going to church and they stopped me. We don't know what we're gonna run into. So in a perfect world, we would like two, but I know it -- it will take time to get there and I'm -- that's what I'm building towards. And with grants and stuff, I hope we get there.

MAYOR EVANS: Okay, that's fine.

POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: And that's why we're pushing for grants real hard and trying to get different units and stuff. I -- to be honest, I need an investigator that could do -- my guys get tied up. They work 12 hours then they have to come -- they get off at 3:00, 4:00, 5:00 in the morning then they have to get back up at 9:00 to go to the County to get warrants and stuff. And then sometimes that'll take a couple hours so by the time they go back home to get rest, they've gotta come right back out to work. And so we're draining the people we do have here. It's -- I mean it's not like my guys are not working, but sometimes they do get
drained and get tired. So, one of the bigger things I'm -- to be honest, six officers right now would be perfect. But I know it's gonna take a little time to get here, and that's why I'm looking for grants. And that's why I'm going to -- matter of fact, I'm going to this grant thing in Columbia on the 13th, they're talking about State grants that are coming up that start on the 13th, so I'm going up to Columbia and meet with them about what the criteria are, what -- to be able to get some of these grants.

MAYOR EVANS: Thank you.

POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: Did you have a question?

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Yeah, I have a question. Mr. Chief, in light of what you just said, and in hiring two additional officers, I know you said it may take time. Are you open to other ways to like sponsorship or fundraising or whatever it takes to at least raise the salary for at least one other officer? I mean, I know there are stipulations or certain things that you can and cannot do under the By-laws or whatever, I'm not asking you to, you know, cross over any boundaries but -- boundaries,
but what I'm saying is that, other than just relying on the grants, do you have any other ideas or thoughts that perhaps could help you hire additional officers as well?

POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: When you're talking about fundraising or donations, that gets kind of sticky (inaudible) because now you're talking about government money used to hire officers.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: All right (ph).

POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: So that does get kind of sticky a little bit. But at the same time, on my budget -- My budget is -- I don't -- y'all don't know but sometimes my budget goes up throughout the year, but I'm betting it will come down because we started getting better equipment. We don't have to buy equipment every year but, you know, if -- you'll be the first to know, sometimes you're gonna spend more money on the front end while on the back end you'll see a profit, and that same thing will -- my budget -- try to get an officer. I've got a plan to -- a five-year plan that, on the back end, you'll see that we save a lot more money. Our budget is almost lower than
the first year, and we've got four or five more
officers. I think I've got it up to seven --
six officers for good pay, but by us finally
remaining in the middle, it comes down because
when you start getting vehicles that we don't
have to lease -- buy every year. We don't have
to pay $30,000 for a vehicle every year because
now we've got this, and this vehicle could last
maybe 45,000 (ph) miles. So we don't -- we've
done cut down on last year's (inaudible), you
know, as we go on.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Gotcha. And I don't want to
sound like -- I don't want to sound redundant
when I'm talking about the donations, stuff
like that. And I'm just gonna say
hypothetically, if you had a -- like a place of
business or something that's willing to have --
and not so much government money is what -- not
anything coming from the government. So say --
just say for instance -- even if it was a
nonprofit, they're raising money and willing to
do a pass-through to the police -- well, to the
Atlantic Beach -- let's put it that way -- to
Atlantic Beach for the use of hiring another
police, and not so much -- not really to the
Police Department, I'm trying to find out what ---

MALE SPEAKER: I can answer that. How the Town's taking money, I can't -- per se, how they're taking money ---

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Right.

MALE SPEAKER: --- and how they distribute it out. But the Police Department can't take any money. So (inaudible) our budget comes from the Town anyway so that's something you might want to talk to the Town Manager about.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Okay.

MALE SPEAKER: If they donate money to the Town for the Police Department, that's something -- because I just go to him and give him my budget and tell him what I need. So ---

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Gotcha.

MALE SPEAKER: --- as long as the money ain't dirty money, I'm pretty sure we can take it (inaudible).

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Right. And I'm gonna keep asking him 'cause at the end of the day, the weight is on you. If you had wanna go to -- ring a doorbell and tell somebody's wife or somebody's father or whoever, hey, this
person's not coming back home tonight, or ever, right? That's a lot of weight. And I understand as the Chief, that's something you have to bear in mind as well. So what I -- I'm only asking the questions because I understand that grants may take a minute to get, you know, approved and then there's other things going on too, that still -- that still, you know, calls within the Department, your Department, that's the reason why I'm asking the question because people are here and they may have -- I mean they're all citizens and we're all in the town together. They may have a way as well to say, hey, in the back of my mind, or maybe I can offer a way to raise money. You may have somebody that's sitting out here say I can donate $50,000. You never know who's in the audience. Never judge a book by its cover but, still, that's where I'm trying to go at with -- -

POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: Honestly, we're open to any kind of donation if you want to donate to the Town ---

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Thank you, Chief.

POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: But like, again, if you have
question ---

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: I gotcha, I gotcha. Thank you.

POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: 'cause the (inaudible) don't close out right in the middle. (Inaudible) anything for the residents ---

(Inaudible background noise.)

MAYOR EVANS: Chief, after we finish -- after Public Time, we're having the little social there too so they can ask you anything they want to ask you at that time ---

POLICE CHIEF ROBINSON: Oh.

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Thank you.

MAYOR EVANS: You might want to let them know that, you or Ben one.

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: You all are doing a great job. Thank you, sir.

(Inaudible background noise.)

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: Chief Robinson, let me move quickly. Thank you for your patience sitting through the presentation. In April is when we start the budget process for the next fiscal year. Short answer to your question, Council, we are looking to add one additional police officer this year before the end of the fiscal
year. As I said, the challenge is two-fold, not just the fact of having resources to hire someone is to -- finding and competing with other (inaudible). So -- but an -- short answer, yes, we're looking at and hopefully, based on our financial projections, with a new unit -- new housing units coming online, taxes being generated, hoping we're in a better fiscal position come next fiscal year to add on, at least for the (inaudible), two new officers is what I'm shooting for. But let me move on to, in that same vein, as I indicated, and let me just backtrack to the audit. Two things I'm finding on cost, as the audit review pointed out, healthcare costs, pension costs and liability costs. I think in April of 2020, our liability insurance is gonna increase by 20 percent. And our healthcare costs, to make us competitive (inaudible) other police officers, is steadily increasing on an annual basis. So those are the things, the factors that are hindering (ph) us. But to that end, it's gonna require additional funding that we don't have from just property taxes and business taxes, and that's why I'm proposing to the Council
authorization on Item Number 2 from the agenda to go hire a grants writer. Most of you may be familiar that we were successful without a grants writer, relying on Waccamaw COG to assist us in applying for a community development block grant of $150,000 to comprehensively refurbish the playground right -- adjacent to the Community Center. Where we are on that, we've submitted all our documentation to the State, and now they are doing due diligence on some requirement, environmentals that have to done, and some preliminary requirements before we can actually start construction. If I had to give a time line for us trying to get a shovel in the ground, we're looking at probably on -- optimistically some -- around April, no later than June, in order to start construction 'cause all of the red tape in the bureaucratic process you have to go through to get the grant implemented. So I'm asking authorization from the Council to hire a grants writer, not just to sit on staff and bring grants with no result, but tied into positive results and generating some grant dollars to the Town. So,
at this time, I just need a vote from Council to authorize me to go out, do an RP for a grants writer and hopefully put one on within the next 60 days.

MAYOR EVANS: Okay.

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: I need a motion.

MAYOR EVANS: Okay. Council, I seek a motion to give the Town Manager authorization to hire a grants writer for the Town of Atlantic Beach.

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: So moved, Mayor.

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Second.

MAYOR EVANS: There's a motion and a second to authorize -- give the Town Manager authorization to hire a grants writer for the Town of Atlantic Beach. Any other question, comments? Roll call?

CLERK: Councilman Lenearl Evans? Councilwoman Josephine Isom?

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Jacqueline Gore?

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Glenda Williams?

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Yea.

CLERK: Mayor Jake Evans?

MAYOR EVANS: Yea. Motion granted.
MR. QUATTLEBAUM: Mayor and Council, Item Number 3 on the agenda is just informational -- resignation of Committee Chair, Planning Commissioner Orton Bellamy. He had a conflict being council (inaudible) for the County, legal counsel informed him that he could not continue for -- on the Planning Commission so there's a vacancy that we will -- have to be filled, hopefully by next month. So I'll leave that for your consideration. Also informational, the Council meeting for next February 3rd will have to be changed to the following Monday.

MAYOR EVANS: Sure, what's that date?

(Inaudible background noise.)

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: It'd be the 10th -- 9th or 10th.

CLERK: The following Monday would be the 10th.

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: The 10th of February. Council will be attending the Municipal Conference in Columbia that starts on that same date, the 3rd, so alerting Council that's -- approve that we can move the Council meeting to the 10th. Is that acceptable?

MAYOR EVANS: Yes.

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: Last thing, Mayor, moving to the -- serving refreshments, the new year, we are...
celebrating the swearing in of our new Council person -- or new or renewal Council so asking everyone to partake. Ms. Kim Munja (ph) and also Mike Gore and Cheryl Pereira from our staff are responsible for putting together this repast for you. Just a hint, don't pass up the cake. You'll never forgive yourself. So I'm asking you to stay and partake in that. At this time, I'll turn it back over to Council for Public Time.

MAYOR EVANS: Thank you.

Public Time:

MAYOR EVANS: We're down to Public Time. I have two comment cards here. One's Hubert Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Yes. Want me to take the floor now?

MAYOR EVANS: Yep, it's all yours. For three minutes anyway.

MR. WILLIAMS: My name is Hubert H. Williams, Jr. I've been involved with Atlantic Beach for over 70 years. That'll tell you something about my age. Public service, said the Manager, serves citizens, responsible for hearing the concerns and requests of their community and receiving mail. Public servants shall act within good faith and honest intent,
without taking an unfair advantage over another person. I'm here to address the unlawful demolition of a building at 512 30th Avenue South, and the removal of a fence and gates which was posted. I heard my name mentioned in regard to a lawsuit that I have no knowledge of. Would like to read the letters, Town of Atlantic Beach, Robert Cox, Building Code Enforcement, Benjamin Quattlebaum, Town Manager, 717 30th Avenue, Atlantic Beach, South Carolina. Enclosed are copies of a U.S. Postal Service certified mailed letters dated November 27th, 2019, November 19th, 2019, November 18th, '19 -- 2019 and March 1st. These are copies of letters that were sent to the Town of Atlantic Beach. They are Postal Service certified and returned to the sender unclaimed, unable to forward to sender, Hubert H. Williams. On November -- on December 23rd, the UPS Store at 7320 Broad River Road, Irmo, South Carolina, researched (ph) this (inaudible) to the Town of Atlantic Beach to Robert Cox and Benjamin Quattlebaum. On December 27th, these letters were delivered to the Town of Atlantic Beach by UPS and received by the secretary at the office.
at 1:22 p.m., Friday. Here is a copy of the letter and proof of service for the receipt for tax. Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Thank you ---

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Thank you.

MAYOR EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Williams. Lynda Booker?

MS. BOOKER: Happy New year.

IN UNISON: Happy New year.

MS. BOOKER: I'm just coming up to say, first of all, that I'm one of those people that participated in that program the police have initiated so that when you're out of town, someone rolls by and checks the property (inaudible). So I wanted to just commend Chief Robinson and the Police Department. The name on my ticket's Valentine. I don't think that I (inaudible) so thank you very much. But I just wanted to commend. And also I just think it would be a good idea if the police would just go around town and introduce themselves to everybody else (ph). If I need something in the middle of the night, come back near dawn (ph) so I need to -- I need to know who's -- who are the police, okay?
IN UNISON: Thank you.

MAYOR EVANS: Council, seek a motion to adjourn.

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Seek a motion to adjourn ---

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Mayor, I make a motion that we adjourn the Council meeting ---

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: Mayor, may I please make an acknowledgment of ---

MAYOR EVANS: Okay.

MR. QUATTLEBAUM: --- and I meant to do it while I was up -- so please bear with me -- to acknowledge the Police Department, Town Council members who participated in our annual Christmas fair here at the Community Center for our young people in the Town and also commend the Council for their initiative on getting decorations in the Town. Councilwoman Williams, Councilwoman Gore taking the lead and also working with our staff to beautify the Town for this Christmas season. And it was a well-attended event for the children, had an enjoyable time, gifts for all, and wanted to acknowledge their efforts. And we're looking, hopefully in the next fiscal year, to do even bigger and better things for our children and
the residents of the Town. Thank you.

MAYOR EVANS: Yes. And let me mention as well, one of our long-term residents here in Atlantic Beach, James Howell Simmons passed away. And a lot of you may not know him, but I know you know Rose Stanley here in the Town, and that is her stepson. So, if you guys would, keep Ms. Rose Stanley and the Simmons family in your prayers, and may go by and give her a visit. Those of you who plan to attend, I know the funeral is Thursday and I don't have a whole lot of other details about it so you may want to get them from her. I do know it's at -- what's the funeral home?

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Ocean View.

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Ocean View.

MAYOR EVANS: Ocean View has the body?

FEMALE SPEAKER: Yeah.

MAYOR EVANS: And the funeral is gonna be at Sandy Grove, I think Thursday.

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: At 1:00 o'clock.

MAYOR EVANS: At 1:00 o'clock? Okay. Thanks, guys. So please keep Ms. Stanley in your prayers please. Council, seek a motion to adjourn?

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: So moved ---
COUNCILWOMAN GORE: So -- second.

MAYOR EVANS: Motion and a second to adjourn. Any other questions or comments? Roll call?

CLERK: Councilman Lenearl Evans?

COUNCILMAN EVANS: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Josephine Isom?

COUNCILWOMAN ISOM: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Jacqueline Gore?

COUNCILWOMAN GORE: Yea.

CLERK: Councilwoman Glenda Williams?

COUNCILWOMAN WILLIAMS: Yea.

CLERK: Mayor Jake Evans?

MAYOR EVANS: Yea. Motion granted. This meeting is adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

(There being nothing further, the meeting was adjourned.)