Town of Washington Park
Municipal Building
August 3, 2026, 7:00 p.m.

As of July 31, 2026:

United Bank	General Fund	**$** 398,401.86
United Bank	Capital Reserve CD	86,839.40
United Bank	Powell Bill Checking	60,608.20
United Bank	Powell Bill/Saving CD	11,477.19
NC Capital Trust	Surplus Savings	50,723.87
	Total	**$ 608,050.52**

Present: Thomas Richter, Mayor; Jeff Peacock, Mayor pro tem; Lee Bowen, Commissioner; Wade Dale, Commissioner; Trey Howdy, Commissioner, Vail Rumley, Commissioner

Approve Agenda: Mayor pro tem Peacock made a motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Bowen. Passed by all.

Public Hearing: Leash Law

Commissioner Bowen made a motion to move into public hearing for comments regarding a potential leash law. Seconded by Commissioner Howdy. Passed by all. Speakers included: **Billie Brooks** - not for a leash law; lost a cat to a dog running loose but worked it out amicably. Even from that example, not for it. Why put another law on books cannot do anything about. **Susanne Hackney** - not supportive of a leash law. Certain working dogs need to run free and exercise properly for their health. Part of culture for neighborhood and loved by people here. Dogs keep us safe. If have a problem, talk to your neighbor. **Vance Moore** - not in favor of leash law. If is considered, have some form of dog park in conjunction with leash ordinance. **Rob Baxter** - not supportive of leash law. Has lived in the Park for many years; wants to preserve history of Park and way of life. Supportive of responsible dog ownership; neighbors speaking to each other and not on Facebook. Contact animal control if needed. How will the Town enforce it. **Sam Grist** - Family moved here in 1963. Has a dog; have to work out things sometimes. Not in favor of leash law in any form. In favor of neighbors being neighbors to get along better. **Carol Nash** - lived here 41 years; moved to Washington Park because there was not a leash law. Agree with what others have said; neighbors need to talk to neighbors. Aggressive dogs have been contained when talk with owners. **Rob Ratlift** - new resident perspective; moved here year ago with wife and daughter. One of draws is it's a place where kids and dogs roam how they should, which is a lost thing. Leash law has a negative impact to the community. Neighbor issue, speak to neighbor and deal with it accordingly. **Seldon Taylor** - on record as against any form of leash law. Dogs in neighborhood, part of how we grew up. Speak for my parents, they are against it as well. **Seth Edwards** - My issue is how will the Town enforce it. **Caroline Crisp** - against leash law, lived here 50 years. A lot of us who grew up out here, it is why we came back, part of Washington Park is dogs and neighbors. **Marshall Taylor** - bought house here in 82, raised 3 kids, several dogs; part of life for us. Look at the City of Washington and the major problem they have with geese poop. More dogs can cross and roam the waterfront help to minimize that problem. **Derek Cooper** - want to share a different point of view. Appreciate people who spoke about community; respect the neighborhood. Once helped a woman in Washington who was attacked by a dog and disfigured permanently. I hear residents here say they are afraid to walk in town; need to take it seriously. Ordinance can be

written to allow under immediate control and not necessarily on leash. Does not have a problem with dogs, but does not want to clean up after someone else's dogs. **Ashley Jones** - lived out here 24 years. Really important to consider crime rate. How does the fact that dogs are not on leashes impact that. Our neighborhood deters some of the crime in community. Also agree with neighbors talking to neighbors. **Chris Schaefer** - Afraid to walk in the Park. Walked neighborhood when first came here. When encounter dogs walking that are not your dogs, they can be aggressive. No longer walk in park; go to Stewart Parkway. Would love to talk neighbor to neighbor, but no idea who to talk to.

Commissioner Bowen thanked everyone for coming to make their comments known. Been out here 66 years; has lost 4 dogs over the years. Has seen aggressive dogs removed. The Board received two (2) letters today from people in favor of some form of leash law. Need to work with Beaufort County Animal Control to address issues; if do not say anything to animal control, nothing will happen. Does not think it is right that residents are not comfortable walking in the Park or another dog coming out attacking your dog. We should do more with animal control to alleviate problems. The Mayor commented his wife has been bit by a dog; she stopped walking for a while but is back walking now. Also, a german sheppard attacked his car one time, puncturing a tire. Can see both sides of it; lot of good comments tonight. Thanked everyone for coming out and speaking on this issue. **Bo Brooks** asked the Board when they see comments on Facebook, does it carry any weight? Board members may see Facebook posts, but that is not official communication to or from the Town. The Board responds to emails; if there is a concern, notify the Town and/or Board via email.

Commissioner Bowen made a motion to close the public hearing. Seconded by Commissioner Dale. Passed by all. Brief break while residents left the meeting.

Public Input: No one signed up to speak. **Vance Moore** asked if the Board is voting on the LSL tonight or taking info. The Mayor responded taking information. **Anne Baxter**: If receive federal money for LSL, and in 10 years it does not work, is the Town stuck with the project because we accepted federal money. Mayor pro tem Peacock indicated we are not locked into anything. The Town gets one shot at money; the project will be monitored, but if need to do something else down the road, we can. **Suzanne Hackney**: If it's established as a marsh, can't do anything. Commissioner Rumley commented in traditional LSL plans, some materials are built out in the water, for the purpose of getting sediment built up behind; that is marshy. But as this project has evolved, the plan now is nothing like that. The matrix forms, 18 inches tall, will be put on the shoreline and back filled creating a slope, not an opportunity to create marsh. The estimate for the rendering mentioned at the last meeting was around $9,000; Commissioner Rumley will try to create one. **Beth Byrd**: pictures show break between the shore. Commissioner Rumley noted again the project has been modified to the point where no pictures exist to anything similar to our project, which is one of the sources of confusion. **Suzanne Hackney** asked if the recreational aspect will change, and if dogs will be able to get where they want to. Commissioner Rumley responded the only place the waterfront will be noticeably different is at site 2. So, for site 2, may look at other options, ones that Washington Park may have to pay for. The Board asks everyone to keep an open mind that what they are trying to do is protect the waterfront, for current and future generations. **Derek Cooper**: has spent several weeks in a group dealing with native plant issues, similar to the issues he had with his property. Others are working through hard issues to create environments for native plants, municipalities allowing areas to become naturalized, and opportunities for writing better ordinances for municipalities,

such as having setback rules, having naturalized areas in a delineated border or fenced area. He would like to provide examples of ordinances other municipalities have written for the Board to consider. **Neil Kirven**: Discussed the grass on Isabella where regrading work was done and the need to reseed it. Mentioned the need for temporary barriers to keep people from driving and parking on it. Additional comments on parking in medians. Also asked if the project evaluating stormwater drainage is ongoing. He was told it is. Commissioner Rumley noted projects with the Tar Pamlico Flood Resiliency Blueprint plan is supplanting RCCP programs. Two (2) projects from Washington Park's RCCP program have been included; one of the projects directly addresses medians on Riverside and Isabella. **Beth Byrd**: asked about the care of ditches. Commissioner Bowen noted if they are in the easement, the Town should be taking care of them. **Anne Baxter**: commented on drains and medians; in front of Younce, sinking areas, stinks, kills grass; if keep it unplugged, will drain.

June 29 Minutes and July Financial Report: The June 29, 2026, minutes and July financial report were reviewed. Mayor pro tem Peacock made a motion to approve the financial report and minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Dale. Approved by all.

Old Business

320 Isabella Avenue: Received an email from the property owners stating the windows have been replaced and the yard will be maintained. They asked since the improvements have been addressed that the outstanding fines ($3,400) be waived. Commissioner Dale made a motion to not waive the outstanding fees. Seconded by Commissioner Bowen. Passed by all. Commissioner Bowen noted we just voted to keep the fines; we will find a way to enforce the fines if necessary. This has been going on too many years.

RCCP Update: Engineering/Design of Living Shoreline (LSL) – Phase 3
Received emails opposing moving forward with the LSL project from: Beth Byrd, Paul Moore, Katherine Respess, Vance Moore, Wheeler Johnson, Mary Carter Taylor, Susanne Hackney, and Camilla May. Copies of all emails were provided to the Town Board. Phase 3, design, has been closed out. Waiting on applications to open for Phase 4, construction.

Closing America's Wastewater Access Gap (CAWAG) – Wastewater Analysis:
Monthly check-in call held on July 27, 2026. According to the State Water Infrastructure Authority (SWIA), the Town has been awarded $500,000 for the CWSRF Septic Pilot program; however, the Town is waiting on the official confirmation letter before proceeding with next steps. CAWAG staff is working on preparing a flyer that can be distributed to the community that summarizes the program and discusses the upcoming septic survey.

Stormwater Analysis – Phase 3: Field work continues. Submitted payment for MEC invoice ($3,187.50)

Ordinance Review: Began on pg. 55. Minor edits to language regarding collection for garbage and yard waste. Discussed scheduling bulky item pick-up once a month instead of items being placed out during regular garbage collection days. Leash law – based on comments tonight, do not need to propose leash law. Ones in favor of it are ones who have been attacked by another dog. Let public know how to address that issue with animal control; more an education matter. Leash law not going to fix the problem because have no enforcement. Cannot enforce responsible dog ownership.

Consensus among the Board members was to leave it alone. Pg. 60 – new section regarding storage of vehicles on residential lots. Storage of vehicles (boats, trailers) on vacant lots is an eye sore; what if had 12 trailers, boats and flat beds trailers, what is the limit? Discussion regarding vacant vs. occupied lots. Any language has to apply to all lots. Consult with Town attorney to see what other communities do in similar situation. Would not include it at this time.

New Business

Budget for Playground Equipment: Commissioner Dale would like to start setting aside money for playground equipment; maybe start putting aside $50,000/year. Mayor pro tem Peacock said this should have been decided in the spring during the budget process. Commissioner Howdy volunteered to chase down grants for this; just need direction on where to look.

Anticipated Board Vacancy: Commissioner Dale submitted his resignation notice to the Town Clerk and Town Board, effective after the September 2026 meeting. The Mayor commented he has been great and will be missed. Mayor pro tem Peacock noted the Board does not have to fill it right away; it is up to the Board.

Commissioners' Reports

Commissioner Dale: Three upcoming 5k events: Ovarian cancer 5k, 9.26; Hannah's Heroes Glow Run, 10.3; Smoke on the Water 5k, 10.17. Playground needs: dig out landing area for slide and add mulch; weed eat; fluff mulch under swings. Commissioner Bowen will check on the new hub for the spinner.

Commissioner Rumley: The Beaufort County Sheriff's Office conducted 31 drive-through neighborhood checks in July. No incidents reported. Preliminary design of new website looks great. In an effort to engage residents as active participants for the new website, consider asking residents to submit different photos of Washington Park for possible use on the website.

Mayor tem Peacock: The new clips are in for the tennis court wind screens; also received a sample wind screen to try. Working on a plan for the tennis court lights and timer. Personnel side, trying to fill vacancy; will work with April to come up with a job description. Todd will be difficult to replace, but we will get there.

Commissioner Bowen: Follow-up to Isabella grass discussion earlier, just put rye grass out; try to get it replaced. Need to pay attention to ditches, a lot of growth right now.

Commissioner Howdy: Concern that cost to have trees removed is rising rapidly. Multiple contractors quoting about same numbers.

Clerk's Report

Deposits received in July totaled: **$39,817 (**Ad Valorem / NCVTS: $1,284; Local Option Sales Tax: $15,226; Beaufort County FY27 Allocation: $5,000; Reimburse RCCP: $18,057; Waterfront Rental: $250). **Debris Management**: request to submit a letter of intent to Southern Disaster Recovery for debris management in the event of a major disaster affecting the community; approval given. **Roof on Municipal Building**: IBC Roofing representative conducted a free inspection of the municipal building roof. He noted the roof is approximately 14 years old and indicated there are signs of wind damage; he recommends contacting the insurance company to file a claim. Our

deductible is $1,000. Mayor pro tem Peacock stated he requested the inspection. Can make it fortified roof, better shingles, better attachments, drip edges; if can get that for $1,000, recommend moving forward. Commissioner Bowen made a motion to move forward with filing a claim and asking the insurance adjuster to take a look. Seconded by Commissioner Rumley. Passed by all. **Southern Software**: Auditor said the software would be very valuable if the Town had more than one fund. Since we do not have a water/sewer fund, recommends continuing with use of QB. Too much expense for town our size. **PW Supervisor Vacancy**: an ad in the Washington Daily News (WDN) will cost $360 for 3 months. Suggested proceeding with the WDN ad; NC Jobs; check NCLM. Purchased new 54" Hustler Fastrak **mower**. Submitted Powell Bill reports and updated streets map; submitted bi-annual LGC report; completed annual solid waste report. Reached out to MEC regarding 324 River Road. Changed out lock on tennis courts. Wedding planned on waterfront August 22. Plan to attend the NCAMC Summer Conference, August 19-22

The Mayor adjourned the meeting. The next meeting will be held on Monday, September 14, 2026.

April S. Alligood, Clerk
Town of Washington Park