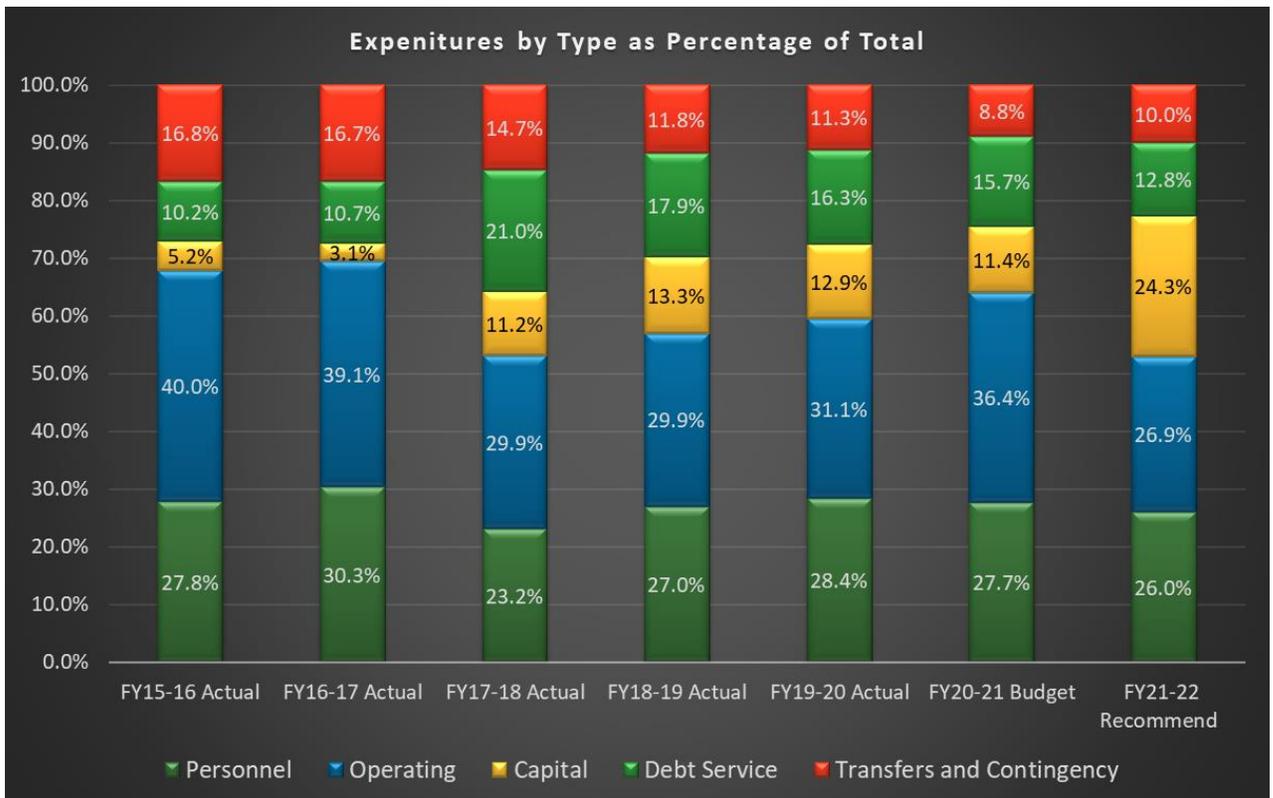
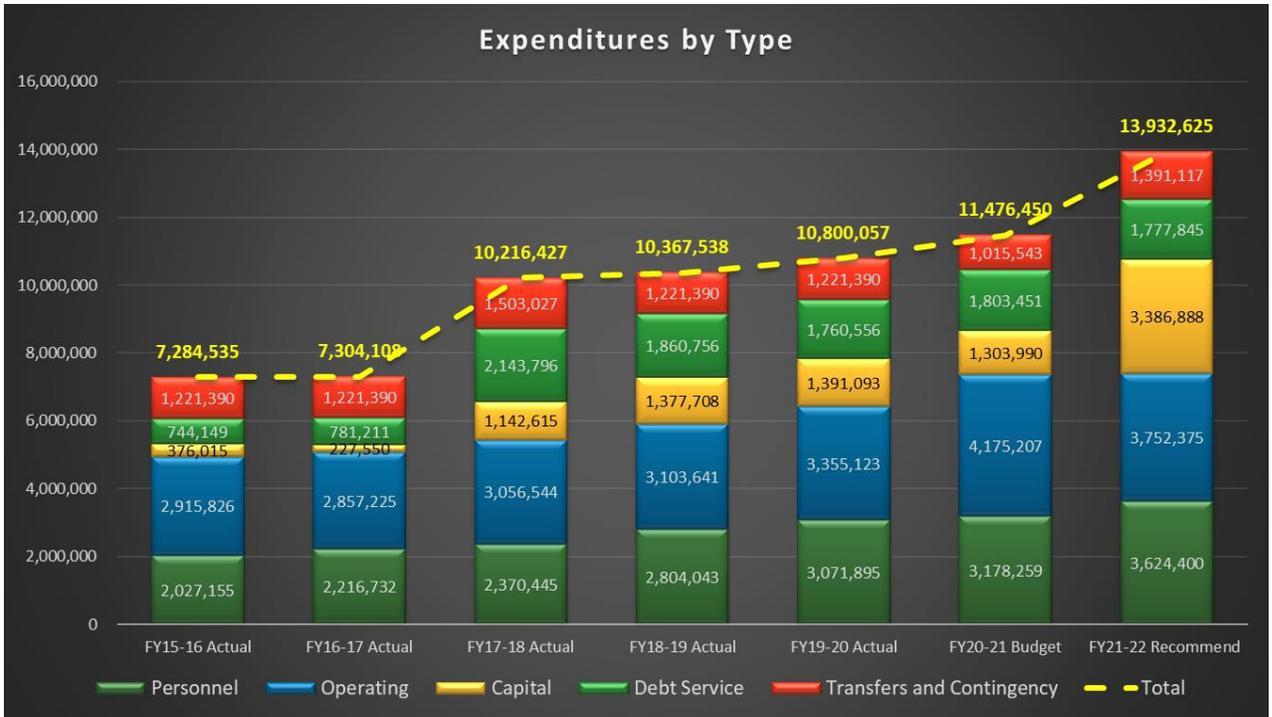


Town of Duck
FY2021-2022 Budget
Property Owner Questions/Comments/Perspectives
Ron Blunck, Bob Hasteadt, Jim Duffield
6/1/2021

1. Property Owner Perspectives.

- a. The total cost of ownership of property in Duck includes the cost of government, significantly funded by real estate taxes. Non-resident property owners represent about 90% of the property owners. Many of them do not feel represented by the Town. **Town staff and elected leaders show equal respect for the input from all who desire to be part of the process. While the law prohibits non-residents from voting, Town elected leaders value input from all who live in, own property in, or own/operate a business in Duck.**
- b. Real estate tax is a significant expense each owner faces each year.
- c. All owners seek services (government and non-government) at reasonable costs.
- d. Owners can usually switch vendor services but usually can't switch government services.
- e. Owners want to be convinced government services are adequate and not excessive. **We remain open to suggestions relative to right-sizing services. Our proposed changes in staffing levels, as explained later in this document, reflect a desire to have the right number of public servants to provide effective and efficient services without sacrificing the safety of those who provide them.**
- f. Owners want to be convinced government services are productively provided and not too expensive. **We will continue to provide information, through the annual budget process, about how we steward the tax revenue we receive to be efficient and effective in providing services. Future work on performance goals and measures will help illustrate where we are efficient and where additional improvement is needed.**
- g. Owners, resident and non-resident, want to have a voice in government priorities, government services and establishment of tax levels. **See 1.b above.**
- h. Town expenditures have increased over time as follows.
 - i. 2016: \$7,284,535
 - ii. 2017: \$7,304,108
 - iii. 2018: \$10,216,427
 - iv. 2019: \$10,367,539
 - v. 2020: \$10,566,112
 - vi. 2021: \$13,932,625

The numbers you provide are correct, but should be viewed in the context of what made/makes up these totals. The two charts below show the make-up of the total both in actual dollars and the percentage of the total for each of the five expenditure “types” we track.



- i. Town Council largely makes budget requests to itself and then reviews/approves them. The Town staff develops and presents a budget based upon the priorities set by the Council through a public process. The Council then has conversations, a public hearing, and hears informally from citizens during the process. All of the Council's meetings about the budget are open to the public, streamed live, and recorded for viewing from our website. Council members' e-mail addresses are on the website to allow citizens to contact them directly at any time about the budget.
 - j. The annual government budget process presents a way to communicate Town priorities, explain proposed levels of government services and to convince property owners that Town Council members are spending their tax money wisely. The newly formatted and expanded budget and CIP document do just this. This high level of transparency is to allow for the free flow of information so all who are served can have a fuller understanding of how their tax dollars are stewarded by the Town. This year's Public Hearing on the draft budget had one in person speaker, and one written comment which was read into the record at the Hearing. This inquiry was the only other public comment received by Council regarding the draft budget.
2. Manager's Letter (starting on page 7).
- a. Unifying Principles. These were developed, through a public process, as part of the Vision 2027 effort undertaken in 2016. Additions/changes should come as part of a similar public process focused on things such as this.
 - i. We think a 7th principle should be added entitled 'DUCK RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITIES.' There are over 60 subdivisions/communities in the Town. Since most of the residential property owners in these subdivisions are non-resident owners, the unifying principles should also address how their voices should be included in Town affairs.
 - ii. Regarding the 'ENHANCES MOVABILITY' principle, there's a reference to the Town being able to 'optimize traffic flow.' Everyone knows there's terrible traffic congestion in the Town on turnover days. The focus on pedestrian traffic is too high; vehicular traffic flow needs more attention. A public process to develop the pedestrian plan and provide safe and appropriate crossings of Duck Road led to the improvements in infrastructure now seen. These improvements include sidewalks, bike lanes, marked (and lighted) crosswalks and some pedestrian refuge islands.
 - iii. We believe traffic vehicular flow should be balanced with pedestrian flow for safety and flow, and both should be optimized. The Town should create and fund a specific plan to investigate improvements in traffic flow on turnover days. This was part of the pedestrian planning effort mentioned above. Here is the link to a page on our website containing

information about this effort: <https://www.townofduck.com/community-development/comprehensive-pedestrian-plan/>

When this same concern was raised by Mr. Blunck during the Council's Retreat this year, the following information was sent to him and posted on our website regarding this concern:

Traffic congestion during turnover days is a problem that reflects the Town of Duck's and Outer Banks' success in creating a desirable destination for visitors to our community and beyond. Although certainly challenging for residents of the Town, the economic activity generated by these visitors substantially supports our Town, businesses, and local economy. Traffic statistics generated from the Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) system show that the vast majority of vehicles traveling into Duck on turnover days pass through to Corolla and beyond.

In 2014, the Town of Duck adopted a Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan that evaluated the balance between the needs of vehicles traveling in and through Town and the needs and safety of pedestrians in our community. The Town conducted a comprehensive public input effort that resulted in over 600 responses to a questionnaire from residents, property owners, business owners, and other stakeholders, as well as many additional opportunities for public participation throughout the planning process.

The resulting document, Duck's Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan, places greater emphasis on vehicular and pedestrian safety, particularly in Duck Village. The Plan includes a great deal of background information and recommendations for improvements to public facilities and policies. These include recommendations concerning where crosswalks should and shouldn't be located throughout the Town of Duck. Over the past 5-6 years, the Town has prioritized and partially funded many of the projects identified in the Plan, including the recently installed sidewalks, bike lanes, landscaping, crosswalks, signage, and crosswalk lighting throughout Duck Village.

Pedestrians crossing the highway can create a chain reaction that slows traffic. However, pedestrians crossing at marked crosswalks only account for a portion of the pedestrians crossing the highway. North Carolina General Statute 20-174 addresses

pedestrians crossing a highway. That law, as written, only restricts a pedestrian to crossing a highway in a marked crosswalk if the crosswalk is located at an intersection controlled by a traffic-signal. As no such crossing exists in Duck, this creates a challenge for law enforcement. Additionally, many motorists voluntarily stop to allow pedestrians to cross the highway at other points along the highway. You may recall that prior to installation of many of the Town's current sidewalks, crosswalks, and landscaping, pedestrians frequently attempted to cross Duck Road nearly everywhere in Duck Village, causing traffic disruptions in numerous locations. The crosswalks have helped define safer locations for crossing that are identified for drivers.

Additionally, the Town has worked to educate pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers about safe roadway use in Duck. These educational efforts occur weekly during the summer season as visitors come and go in our community. This information can be found in our brochures, on our website, and shared on social media. If you would like educational material for your home or rental property, please contact Christian Legner: clegner@townofduck.com.

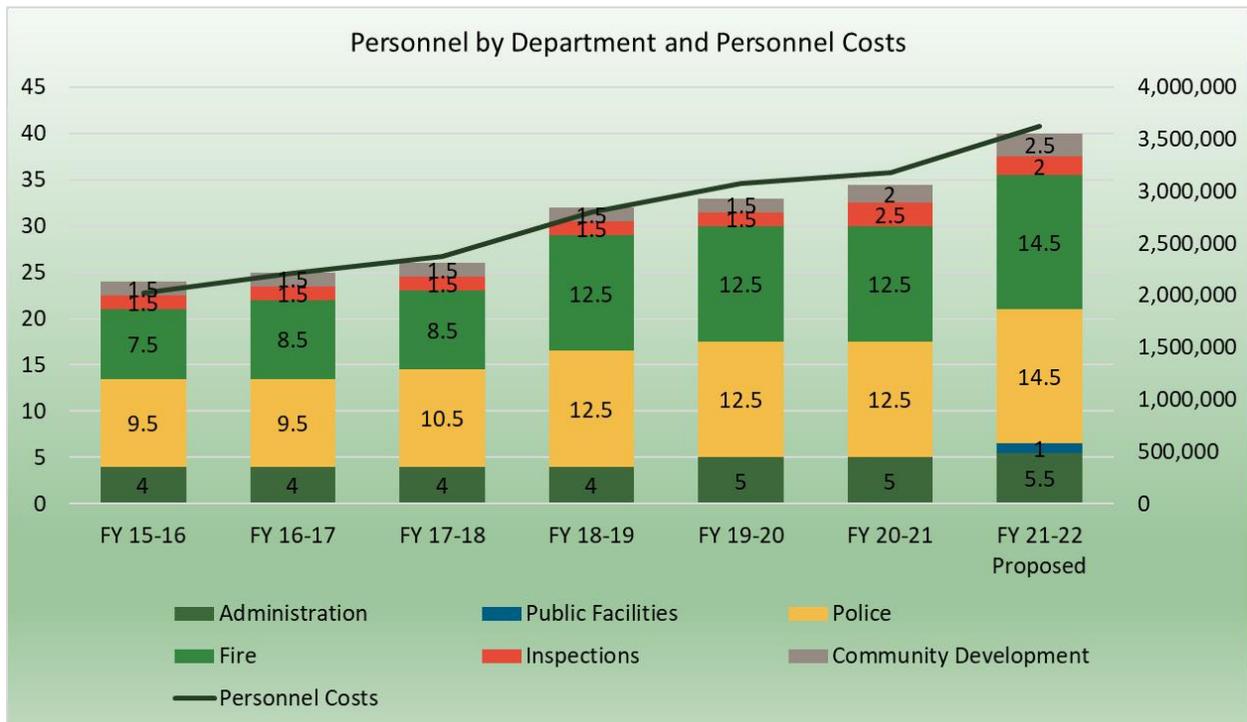
...and don't forget that we have a significant project on the horizon that should alleviate a substantial amount of vehicular traffic through the Town once it's complete. Although presently in the process of resolving a lawsuit, design and engineering are proceeding on the Mid-Currituck Bridge that will allow travelers to the northern Outer Banks to bypass most of the traffic issues on change-over days.

- iv. Regarding the 'ACTIVE, ENGAGED COMMUNITY' principle, many non-resident property owners feel they are second class residents and the Town mostly ignores them. If this is not the case, these residents need to be convinced. Changing the language in this principle to specifically reference non-resident property owner engagement would set the stage to improve this. **The elected leaders of this community value the input of all residents, property owners, and business owners. We are one community and have a demonstrated commitment to serve all equally and effectively.**

- b. Recommended Budget.

- i. The recommended budget is \$13.9 million, 21.4% higher than last year and 93.1% higher than 2016! Bluntly put, these increases are too much. This is a major issue for property owners based upon feedback we have received. **The significant changes are explained in the budget document and mainly focus on capital improvements and adequate staffing.**
- c. Expenditures.
 - i. One of the largest expenditures in the budget is for staffing. The recommended budget calls for \$3.6 million, 26% higher than last year. That’s also too much of an increase. Adding full-time staff (5.5 FTEs next year) when the Town has a large off-season with greatly reduced needs doesn’t make sense. **The need for these additional positions was explained, by department directors, during the Annual Retreat earlier this year. This link: <https://www.townofduck.com/town-council/retreat/> will take you to the Retreat page of our website. Clicking on the video segments for police, fire, and community development will allow one to view the presentations by the directors which include rationale for the requests for additional personnel. Additionally, the police request is summarized on Page 111 of the budget documents, the fire request on Page 117, and Community Development on Page 135.**

The chart below shows total personnel costs (line) and the number of personnel per department to give an idea of the changes over time.



As noted on Page 11, we do not anticipate adding positions in the coming years unless service demands change.

- d. COVID Revenue.
 - i. How much revenue was received or will be received from the US government and from the NC government due to COVID? We don't see any references to that, except \$56K in 2019-2020. The Town anticipates receiving approximately \$120,000 in funding through the American Recovery Program with the first \$60,000 coming late this fiscal year, or early next fiscal year and the second \$60,000 coming one year later. We are still receiving and reviewing guidance on how these funds may be spent and will ensure they are accounted for, as required by the law, in a separate budget line/fund. Once we know how much will be received, a budget amendment will be proposed to recognize the revenues and the funds accounted for separately from regular General Fund Revenue.
- 3. Kinston & Ackerman Ordinance Letter (starting on page 14). This is the Budget Ordinance that is signed, like all ordinances, by the Mayor and attested by the Town Clerk.
 - a. Real estate taxes (ad valorem taxes).
 - i. This is what property owners pay each year and is a bottom-line issue for most property owners. Your budget should specifically estimate how much the average real estate tax bill will increase. The recommended ad valorem tax revenue is \$4.0 million, a 11.7% increase from last year. We think this means the average real estate tax bill will then increase by 11.7%. If correct, that would be too high. This is a major issue for property owners. There is a table on Page 56 of the document that shows the impact of the proposed tax rate change on properties of many different assessed values.
 - 1. We understand that the real estate tax bill for each property is mostly calculated by multiplying the assessed value of the property by the tax rate and that assessed values vary by property. The tax rate does not. The property tax bill is calculated solely by multiplying the tax rate by the number of hundreds of dollars of assessed value. State law requires that the rate be uniform for all taxpayers (MSD rates are permitted to be different).
 - 2. We estimate there are about 3,000 residential properties in Duck, and we estimate there are about 600 resident property owners, and we therefore estimate about 90% of the residential properties are owned by non-resident property owners. Given this estimate, non-resident owners should be actively involved in

determining the Town budget and establishing the real estate tax rate to fund the budget. This is a major issue for property owners. Our budget process is open to all who wish to participate and all Council meetings are available live and recorded. The elected leaders, and staff, remain available to respond to inquiries, and the elected leadership values the input of all who choose to participate.

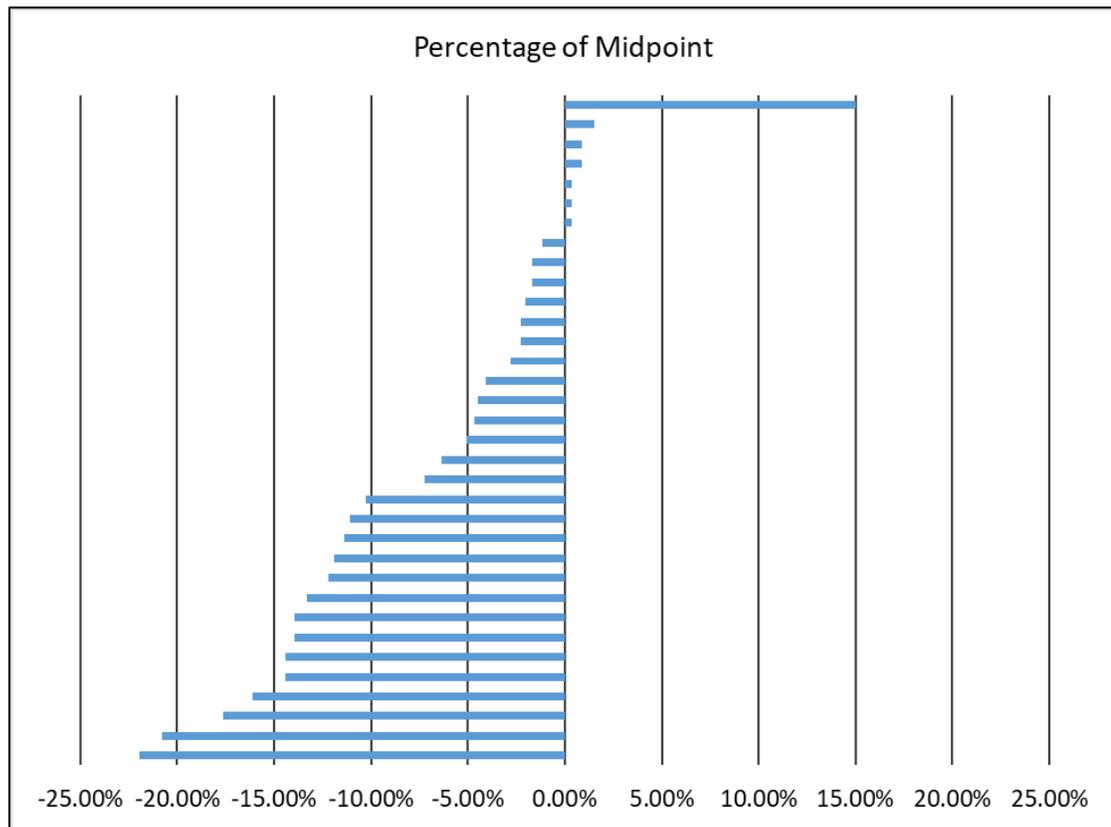
- b. The MSD-A and MSD-B tax rates also get added to the real estate Tax bills for residential properties in the beach nourishment area. The MSD rates are additive to the regular tax rate for these owners. The recommended MSD rates are slightly lower than the current rates. That's good on the surface, but the 2023 nourishment project will likely increase the MSD rates in 2022-2023. If so, maybe it doesn't make sense to decrease these rates 2021-2022. What are your 2023 nourishment MSD rate assumptions? The proposed MSD rates are unchanged from the rates in the current fiscal year. MSD-A \$0.1296 and MSD-B \$0.285. Please refer to the budget ordinance. Thank you for pointing out the error in the text on Page 57 of the document. This will be corrected prior to publishing the ~~final~~final document.

Unless the scope of the project changes, we do not anticipate that the upcoming renourishment project will require any increase in MSD rates. Once the final project scope is finalized and bids received, we will know how much we will need to borrow for the project and thus what our debt service expenditures will be. This will allow a more detailed review of MSD rates as we work on the FY 2022-23 budget, but, again, as of now we do not anticipate any rate increase.

4. Staff Salary Schedule Table (page 28).

- a. There's a reference to a MAPS Group who provided data in this table.
 - i. What is the MAPS Group and what other towns use them? MAPS is the Management and Personnel Services Group, a consulting firm located in Cary, NC and a NC League of Municipalities approved vendor. Since 1983, this firm has been providing cities, counties, and other entities with HR services including extensive experience in Pay and Classification studies. This link is to the video of the Council meeting on May 19th at which MAPS presented their report including explaining their experience and process. The presentation begins at approximately 16:45. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ur7RrgkBUqg&list=PL575D0B24F61A8FC1&index=1&t=11210s> Their services have been used by over 100 entities in North Carolina representing cities from small to large, and counties from small to large. Here is link to their website for more information: <https://www.themapsgroup.com/>

- ii. How much of a salary increase is in this Table over the salaries in the MAPS table used last year? The table in the document is the first prepared by MAPS as this was the first time the Town engaged them to provide this service. Their work involved review each position, creating a classification specification and then placing that position in a pay grade. This is a link to the FY 2020-21 pay plan: <https://www.townofduck.com/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-C-2.pdf> The FY 2021-22 proposed pay plan is shown on Page 28 of the draft budget document.
- iii. What % of the staff is close to their Minimum Salary? Mid-Point Salary? Maximum Salary? Not wanting to presume what “close” is, this graph shows where each current employee’s salary (in the FY 21-22 budget) is in comparison to the proposed pay plan midpoint. For reference, the midpoint is approximately 21% above the minimum and 22% less than the maximum of the ranges.



- iv. How long has it taken, on average, to fill vacant staff position over the past year? While we do not capture this data point, our typical turnaround from job posting to filling the position runs between 30 and

60 days. With the majority of the positions being filled being in police and fire, there are several steps to complete during recruiting, selection, and subsequent to a conditional offer of employment. One position last year, that of Town Manager, was vacant for over seven months.

5. Demographics (page 32).
 - a. There are useful demographics presented in this section for resident owners.
 - b. Can similar demographics be presented for non-resident owners? **This data is from the US Census Bureau and accounts for residents of the Town independent of whether they own or rent. The Census does not capture data specific to non-resident property owners.**
6. Budget Details (starting on page 52).
 - a. Budget Summary Revenue Table.
 - i. Ad valorem taxes are increasing by 11.7%. Again, these are the real estate taxes property owners will pay. That's too high.
 - ii. Grants are increasing by 220.2%. That's terrific and the Town deserves good recognition and credit for this! Grant money allows the Town to provide services and amenities without having to rely upon ad valorem taxes from property owners. **As noted in the budget document (Page 70) only 36.6% of revenue in the draft budget is from property taxes (including MSD taxes). 28.8% comes from shared revenue sources such as sales tax, land transfer tax, and occupancy tax.**
 - b. Budget Summary Expenditure Table.
 - i. Streets and highways are increasing by 106.3%. Since the Town doesn't own/maintain any streets/roads, this is mainly for the bike trail, pedestrian walkways and maybe the park areas. This is a large increase, maybe too large, if tax bills will be increasing by 11.9% to fund this. Maybe some of this money should be re-allocated to investigating traffic congestion and identifying ways to balance vehicular traffic with pedestrian traffic for improved traffic flow on turnover days without sacrificing safety. **Please refer to Pages 126-128 for details related to this increase. Most of the increase is attributable to the Highway 12/Living Shoreline project for which we are hoping to receive substantial grant revenue.**
 - ii. Public safety is increasing by 28.3%. We need to know what this will be spent on and how much is really needed during the off-season but public safety is always a priority. **Please refer to Pages 110-115 for a description of police expenses, and Pages 116-120 for fire expenses. It will be helpful to listen to both Chief Ackerman's and Chief Black's presentations at the Retreat to get more details. The link is shown above in response to number 2.C of your inquiries.**
 - c. Ad valorem property tax (page 55).

- i. While you provide lots of descriptive information about this, many owners find it confusing. Can you add a simple table that shows the residential real estate tax bill amount for next year and the residential real estate tax bill amounts for past 5 years for hypothetical properties in Town assessed at \$400K, \$600K, \$1MM, \$1.5MM and \$2MM? Residential property owners can then easily see what the trend in their actual real estate tax bills has been. **There is a table on Page 56 of the document that shows the comparison between the current and proposed tax rates for a variety of assessed values. The prior year should be quite close to the FY 2020-21 as the tax rate was set to be revenue neutral.**
 - d. General Fund Expenditures (page 73).
 - i. Who owns, maintains, funds and manages the DVFD? Is there a separate DVFD organization that has some responsibility for this, or does the Town completely oversee the DVFD? There's a significant perception that too much money has been spent on shiny new equipment that may not be truly needed. **Please refer to Page 116 of the document for this information and to Chief Black's presentation at the Retreat where she provided a good history of Duck Fire and the current operational model. It is worth noting that, aside from two light duty vehicles and two command vehicles, the newest piece of fire apparatus in the fleet is Engine 111 which is a 2014 Pierce. The other two large vehicles are Truck 11, a 2002 Pierce, and Engine 11, a 2005 Pierce. The remaining piece of response equipment, Brush 11, is a 2011 Ford. Our full-time fire personnel, and Duck Fire's dedicated volunteers do keep the apparatus "shiny" not only to show pride in the department, but to help preserve the equipment in the harsh environment caused by salt in the air.**
 - e. Expenditures by Department (page 74).
 - i. Administration is increasing by 16.9%, finance by 41.3%, streets & highways by 106.3%. These increases seem high for these departments. Maybe Town priorities are too high for these departments. **Please refer to the Administration section (beginning on Page 91) and the Finance section (beginning on Page 97) for details about the increases. Much of the change is due to correcting how personnel and other expenses are allocated. The Streets department is referenced in the reply to 6.B above.**
 - f. Personnel by Type (page 77).
 - i. Staff is increasing by 5.5 Full-Time-Equivalents (FTEs), on a base of 34.5 FTEs. That's a 15.9% increase in staff. The estimated fully-loaded cost of adding 5.5 FTEs somewhere between \$433.1K and \$439.6K. We're a small Town. That's a lot. **This is addressed in 2.C.i above.**
 - ii. Staff salary management questions:

1. The recommended budget provides for merit (1.5%) and bonus (3%) increases.
 - a. Does each staff member have a set of goals and is each staff member's performance formally evaluated? **Yes.**
 - b. How many staff members will likely get a full 1.5% merit increase? **We budget for all to merit this increase, but it is not automatic. We will be doing more work on our performance evaluation system in the coming year to ensure that a fair and accurate performance assessment is done each year.**
 - c. How many staff members will likely get a full 3% bonus increase? **Same as above.**
 2. Do the department managers have productivity goals whereby the departments increase their services without just relying upon staff increases? **There are no formal productivity goals established. Each request for a new position is scrutinized in the light of current workloads, service demands, and the overall needs of the organization.**
- g. Capital Projects (page 81).
- i. There are \$2.9 MM capital projects listed.
 1. There is no capital project listed for beach nourishment in 2023. **The table includes projects in FY 2021-22. Depending on timing, the beach nourishment project, with revenue and expenditures, we will come into the FY 2021-22 budget in the form of a proposed amendment, or amendment or be fully accounted for in the FY 2022-23 budget. Refer to Page 196 for a description of this project and note that it is shown as a FY 2022—23 project.**
 2. There is no capital project listed for a potential new fire station / public safety building. **We opted to remove this from the current budget due to the continued uncertainty surrounding acceptable lease terms for property upon which to construct the facility. Should we be able to get an acceptable lease worked out, we have the ability to amend the budget, using reserves, to begin design work.**
 3. There's no capital project listed for improvement in ambulance services. **Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are the purview of the County and not the Town. The County determines where to locate resources, the appropriate level of resources, and how the system operates. We will include Dare EMS in our discussions relative to a new Public Safety building once we get to that point**

in case they want to locate an ambulance there for more than just peak inbound traffic times.

4. There's no capital project listed for traffic flow improvements on turnover days and on other days of the week. The Mid-Currituck Toll Bridge, when completed, should improve (but not eliminate) traffic congestion on turnover days. It is not likely to improve congestion very much on other days of the week for owners, visitors and service vendors. We remain open to suggestions to improve traffic flow that do not compromise the safety of all who use roadways, including bicycles and pedestrians. The response to 2.III above contains information relative to this same inquiry.
5. There's not capital project listed for potentially providing public access to the ocean beach via the Army Pier property. This comment is similar to one expressed during the Council's Retreat earlier this year. Here is what was sent to Mr. Blunck following the Retreat and posted to the Town's website:

The Town of Duck Comprehensive and Land Use Plan (CLUP) contains topics and goals required by the N.C. Coastal Resources Commission for approval as a CAMA Land Use Plan. One of the required topics is how the community seeks to address public access to the beach and sound.

The Town's adopted statement relating to beach access can be found in Goal 1.1 on page 30 of the CLUP and reads, "Remain open to partnerships and opportunities for increasing public access to the ocean." This goal is further clarified by an additional statement, "This will require partnering with willing HOAs or other private property owners, seeking assistance from county, state, or federal government, or encouraging third-party partnerships that enhance beach access for homeowners, renters, or vacationers."

The Town's prior Land Use Plan contained the following goal: "Provide public access opportunities to beaches and public trust waters." An initial draft of the current CLUP contained a similar statement. During review of the draft by the CLUP Advisory Committee, concerns were expressed about the statement encouraging a proactive, assertive approach by the Town to obtain public beach

access. As a result of these comments, the goal in the adopted plan takes a more passive approach, suggesting that the Town work with willing property owners as opportunities for beach access arise.

While recognizing the importance of public beach access, the Town's leadership understands that it is a complex and challenging issue. There are many different opinions and perspectives on how to consider providing greater public beach access in the future.

Some of the constraints and considerations the Town faces as it seeks to obtain property for public beach access include:

- Nearly all oceanfront lots in the Town are already developed.
- Nearly all access to the beach is through public or private neighborhood streets.
- Over 95% of all properties already have dedicated beach access.
- Many homeowners' associations have covenants or deed restrictions that prevent use of property for public beach access.
- Owning and maintaining a public beach access is not as simple as providing a walkway to the beach. Provisions must also be made for a substantial amount of public parking and associated facilities, potentially including showers, bathrooms, trash cans, etc.
- Access and facilities must comply with ADA standards for handicap accessibility.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Field Research Facility conducts military and environmental research. Providing public beach access is not consistent with its mission and could interfere with ongoing operations and research.

To date, neither the USACE nor any HOAs or landowners have agreed to deed appropriate property to the Town or provide easements to

further pursue a municipally owned and maintained public beach access. The Town remains committed to exploring options with interested parties.

- a. Note: The last two approved CAMA Land Usage Plans contained a major Town goal to provide public access to the ocean beaches in Duck.
 - b. We know that Army management has not been willing to provide access over their property, but maybe this issue needs to be escalated politically at both the State and National levels.
6. We think the capital projects should be reviewed with property owners on a periodic basis and then updated with property owner input. The annual budget process, which includes the Capital Improvement Plan, provides opportunity for public input. The annual Retreat contains a significant amount of information/discussion about capital projects and members of the Town Council remain available and willing to hear from citizens regarding their thoughts about needed projects.
- h. Three to Five Year Goals (starting on page 228). The goal setting process will be revisited in the coming years and we welcome any and all input as the elected leaders decide relative priorities.
- i. Goal to continue to advocate for traffic improvements. We think this goal needs to be given a high priority and reworded so it is an immediate goal with action items and not just a statement of intent to 'continue to advocate' for improvement in traffic congestion.
 1. Traffic congestion adversely impacts visitors, renters and all property owners in Duck.
 2. Traffic congestion adversely impacts vendor servicing property owners in Duck. Nearly all service vendors complain about traffic congestion and many would prefer to avoid/limit servicing property owners in Duck.
 3. Duck businesses employ people, most of whom do not live in Duck. These employees are adversely impacted when driving to work. Anecdotally, we understand some Duck business hours, notably restaurants, have reduced hours of operations due to this and labor market shortages.
 - ii. Goal to explore strategies/forums for HOAs to connect and engage with the Town and each other, including the use of technology. This a new goal and a very good one, especially for inclusion of non-resident

property owners. The Duck HOA Forum is becoming a voice for property owners, especially non-resident owners.

7. Wrap Up.

- a. We know we have asked many questions and proved a lot of commentary. Please don't interpret these as a criticism of anyone or anything. As property owners, we don't always have the same background knowledge and awareness of past Town perspectives/discussions on issues. **We appreciate the perspectives and will endeavor to keep improving our budget process and document to be even more inclusive and clear so that all will have information available to them.**
- b. The proposed budget format contains much useful information. It's 228 pages long and is not easy to read without spending a huge amount of time. Furthermore, the recommended budget was just released. Given that, it's pretty unrealistic to assume that property owners would be able to review the budget and provide rational input in a short period of time, which you should seek. We would recommend you provide a short, abridged version of the budget in a 1-2 hour Zoom meeting for property owners, including non-resident owners. The focus of such a meeting should be on (a) what are the key Town priorities and how does the recommended budget focus on them and (b) what will the Town be doing to keep expenses and real estate taxes down. **Mayor Kingston and Manager Havens are available to meet with you to further discuss your concerns.**
- c. We ask that you respond to us on each of our items and that you include our items and your responses in the minutes to the Town Council meeting(s) where you will be reviewing/discussing the recommended budget. **These inquiries and responses will be made public on our website and included as written public comment in our records.**

Thank you.

Ron Blunck, 1356 Duck Road, Carolina Dunes HOA, Duck HOA Forum

Bob Hasteadt, 112 Jasmine Court, Tuckahoe HOA, Duck HOA Forum

Jim Duffield, 138 Seabreeze Drive, Sand Dollar Shores HOA, Duck HOA Forum