

NHC Commissioners March 12, 2018

Summary: This meeting was perfunctory, consisting primarily of annual report presentations by Trillium Health Resources (manages health services for Medicaid or uninsured residents of NHC and 24 other counties) and by Coastal Planning and Engineering, the company that is contracted to perform monthly water quality monitoring of 7 creeks in NHC. One topic, a request for an additional driveway access to North College Road from a Northchase commercial property, was tabled for presentation at the May meeting.

Requests for a MLK Jr Proclamation, funding for the construction of a memorial for Gold Star families in Hugh MacRae Park, funding for a Room Occupancy Tax Audit program, and budget adjustments to reflect higher than anticipated revenue were all approved.

This was a regularly scheduled meeting of the NHC Commissioners, starting at 4:00pm and adjourning at 5:40pm. All commissioners were in attendance.

Specific Discussion: Water Quality Monitoring Results July 2016-June 2017

Water quality monitoring has been conducted on a monthly basis at 7 tidal creeks in NHC for the past 10 years, spurred by shellfishing issues identified in the mid-1990s. Factors evaluated are turbidity, dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll-a and enterococci (an indicator of mammal waste, usually presumed to be human if detected in significant amounts). This 2016-2017 report shows that data for the locations tested indicates water quality has remained the same or improved against all factors with the exception of dissolved oxygen at one sample site in Pages Creek, which declined.

During discussion, the following points were made:

- Brad Rosov of Coastal Planning and Engineering is happy to see the improvement in the data but admits they do not have an explanation for the results. One community in the testing watershed has been moved to sewer lines from septic systems in the last year but this does not explain the uptick in other areas.
- One location in Pages Creek, within the Bayshore development, has had persistently high levels of enterococci. A joint investigation by NHC and CFPWA for leaks in the sewer system did not identify any issues, but Mr. Rosov indicated that better technology exists to answer questions about the source of this contamination if funding could be made available.
- Commissioner Zapple asked about the disparity between CPE's assessment of Smith Creek ("GOOD") and the results being obtained by Lower Cape Fear Water Authority, which show excessive levels of fecal coliform over several months at the end of 2017. Commissioner Zapple and Mr. Rosov agreed that it's difficult to compare since the two organizations sample at different sites and test for different bacteria; Mr. Rosov agreed to bring this up at the next collective water quality board meeting.

No LWV follow-up is needed.

Leslie Antos - Observer