

## Minutes of TreePeace Meeting 9/18/2024

**Present: Wendy Morris, V.P.; David Merkle, Secretary; Judy Droitcour; Judy Read; Susan Davidson; Julie Angle; Barbara Merkle; Tom Simmons**

1. Wendy Morris opened the meeting hosted at the Merkle's home and presided beginning at approximately 10:15 as President Phil was out of town.
2. After the 8/21/24 meeting minutes were passed around, Judy Reid made a Motion to accept the Minutes as written. The Motion was seconded and passed unanimously.
3. Wendy announced that our Town Council rescinded the Ordinance providing new home applications that exceeded 4,000 SF the ability to have a "Special Use Permit" hearing by TC. This somewhat shuts down the building of "Mega Homes" that sometimes contain 10 BRS and 10 Baths. The vote was 4-1.
4. Wendy announced that a new organization has been created called "Helping Hands" and was formed to promote and augment efforts to establish a "Wind Phone" amenity in our Town. More below.
5. The "Wind Phone" proposal was envisioned by Wendy to provide a place for those experiencing grief of a loved one or dear friend. It provides a real phone (unconnected), in a quiet and serene environment where one can spiritually connect with that person. There are some 180 of these types of facilities world-wide. Possible locations here include May Moore Park and the Town's Nature Center. It is in the process to gain TC approval.
6. The TPO newsletter was recently sent to members and supporters who are on our mailing list. A couple present did not receive it as

yet. Phil has undertaken this project hoping that he would lay the groundwork and get it going.....and then one of our members would take it over relieving him to other project. It's a good project and hopefully will be a good tool for TPO. Can we twist anyone's arm to help us here?

7. Judy Droitcour gave a progress report on efforts to regain more Citizen control of the rampant building and development in Brunswick County. There will be a "Meet & Greet" assembly open to the Public in the Community Building in Southport on September 30<sup>th</sup> with 3 candidates running for the B.C. County Board of Commissioners-against 3 undesirable incumbents needing removal . The 3 challengers are allied to get more "Planned Development" in our County, stop the 'clear cutting of trees', and provide development decisions that are 'citizen driven and not 'developer/builder' gifts. **PLEASE NOTE that the 3 non-party affiliated candidates represent 3 different geographical areas of BC.....BUT WE CAN VOTE FOR ALL 3 # ON OUR BALLOT!** Whereas TP will not, as an organization, support candidates; our Members are free to support candidates, Parties, and Causes. For additional info; Email: [jdroit@ec.rr.com](mailto:jdroit@ec.rr.com) or txt/ph 703.517.2795. After Judy spoke; One of the non-Party challenge candidates spoke. **Tom Simmons**, representing Boiling Springs Lakes District, indicated that this choice in November was crucial to overall BC citizenry interests-not just to the development community-who he maintains that our current BC commissioners have virtual control over the Planners-even appointing them and discharging them. We need to remember on Election Day Tuesday November 5<sup>th</sup> that the incumbent commissioners took away the long-standing development tool of the Town of Southport (the Extra Territorial zoning ie. the "ETJ" enjoyed by many cities across NC).

They have promised more similar actions benefitting Developers at the expense of existing homeowners. Add to the list another disappointing actor, State Representative Charlie Miller, who championed the rescinding of Southport's ETJ in the NC Legislature. Miller is a life long citizen of Southport-one can only wonder how could he forsake his own town?

8. Wendy spoke to TPO's Grant Project via The NC Forestry Service where TPO in cooperation with OKI government, Council and Staff will plant some 600 hundred trees in the Public Land and Right-of-Way. The next step is a presentation to the EAC (Environmental Advisory Committee) seeking their support to the Town Council. Sue Davidson, a member of EAC, volunteered to find out whether a meeting space with adequate audio-visual facilities could be made available to the EAC to have a video presentation. The deadline for application including a signing partner is in January 2025.
9. David asked if anyone in attendance knew the newly selected OKI Town Manager, Kathryn Adams, or had met or spoken with her. Sue Davidson said that she had and had been much impressed with her. David suggested that TPO invite her to one of our next meetings.
10. Wendy advised that the initial 'Kickoff Meeting' of OKI's committee to update the Town's **Land Use Plan** would occur the following evening Thursday 9/19. She would attend in Phil Dudley's place as Phil was on travel.
11. Adjournment. There being no further business; the Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

David Merkle, Secretary

