



Town of North Beach Mayor and Town Council Work Session Minutes

Date: Thursday, January 8, 2026

Location: North Beach Town Hall

Begin: 7:00 PM

Adjourn: 8:35 PM

Mayor and Council Attendees:

Mike Benton, Mayor
Gregg Dotson, Councilmember via Zoom
Allen Creamer, Councilmember
Michelle Crosby, Councilmember
Mary Healey, Councilmember
Mickey Hummel, Councilmember
Ken Wilcox, Councilmember

Staff:

Linda Vassallo, Town Administrator
Stacy Milor, Town Clerk/HR Manager
Donnie Bowen, Public Works Director
Joanne Hunt, Town Treasurer
Veronica Atkinson, Capital Projects Manager

Agenda

- Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
- Public Comment
- Scheduled Appointments
- Business Items
- Adjournment

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

- Mayor Benton called January 8, 2026, Town Council Work Session to order at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

- Mr. Chad Tice, Vice President of the Twin Beach Players, has requested time on the February Work Session agenda to present an overview of a proposed black box theater and to discuss potential support from the Mayor and Council.
- Ms. Mary Meyhew addressed the Mayor and Council, expressing appreciation for any support the Town may be able to provide to the Twin Beach Players.

Update from Calvert County Soil Conservation – Shoreline Stabilization Breakwater Project

***Background**

The Town has been working with the Soil Conservation Design Team to evaluate shoreline stabilization options and develop a design that balances structural stability, environmental considerations, and cost effectiveness. Following review of preliminary concepts, the Council recommended moving forward with Option 2, which utilizes recycled concrete with rip rap placed on top as the preferred stabilization approach.

Discussion

The Soil Conservation Design Team will provide the following update regarding the shoreline stabilization project:

- **Design Progress**
The design team has incorporated the Council's recommendation to proceed with **Option 2**, which includes recycled concrete with rip rap placed on top. Work is underway to complete the design, and a draft is anticipated to be ready for Council review at the upcoming work session meeting.
- **Engineering Cost Estimate (Potential)**
Soil Conservation will provide an engineering cost estimate for the proposed design. Where feasible, the estimate will also identify potential opportunities for cost savings.
- **Permitting Considerations**
Soil Conservation will provide input and guidance on the next steps required for permitting the proposed design.
- **Oyster Reef Component Update**
Soil Conservation will provide an update on the progress of the oyster reef component, which is part of the overall design concept.

The updated plan was presented and is approximately 99% complete. The Council recommended widening the opening near the 7th Street finger pier. Next steps include applying for the necessary permits, which are estimated to take 6–9 months for approval, and applying for funding for the project.

Town of North Beach Election 2026 Process

- Following the enactment of House Bill 322 (2025), municipalities may collaborate with the State of Maryland to administer municipal elections and authorizes the State Administrator to lease election equipment and provide election-administration support services to municipal governments.

What does the Town of North Beach need to do?

The Town Council will need to determine whether to maintain its current structure of administering elections independently or transfer election operations over the State of Maryland/Calvert County Election Board. Regardless of the operational decision, the filing deadline to run for Mayor or Town Council is **August 3, 2026**; **there is no primary**, the Town's elected offices are non-partisan.

Option 1: Continue Independent Election Administration

The Town would:

- Continue administering its own municipal election.
- Appoint by April 1st and train an Election Board.
- Distribute candidate filing information by the end of January 2026.
- Determine process. The Town can:
 - Use State election machines or independently lease election equipment.
 - Both options have an associated cost.
 - If the Town desires to use State equipment, a Memorandum of Understanding with the State is required.

Option 2: State-Run Election Model

The Town would:

- Transfer election operations to the State Board of Elections/Calvert County Election Board.
- Submit request to the State to do so as well as a Proclamation.
- Decision from the State would occur in February or March.
- Direct candidates to file with the State Board of Elections/Calvert County Election Board.

Fiscal Impact:

Town Run Election - Option 1.

- \$23,400 (*\$11,700 per machine*) – to lease independent equipment for 2026 elections.
- \$19,000 (*approx.*) for administrative costs (*see attachment*)

State Run Election - Option 2.

- \$0

Staff were directed to contact the State Board of Elections to determine whether, if the Town elects to utilize the State Board of Elections for the 2026 election, the Town would be permitted to withdraw from the State-run election in future years or if participation would be required to continue once enrolled. The decision from the Council will be placed on their January 15, 2026, Town Council Meeting Agenda for a vote.

Presentation of the FY27 Staff recommended budget

- Veronica Atkinson, Capital Projects Manager, presented the FY27 Staff recommended budget for the General, Water and Sewer Funds. Council members are encouraged to review the recommended budget and reach out to staff with any questions you may have. Staff will return in March 2026 with the final budget recommendations. The public hearing on the FY27 budget is scheduled for April 2026.
- **MOTION** made by Councilmember Hummel to close the meeting at 8:35 pm
Seconded by Councilmember Healey. All in favor. Motion carries.