



NRPO Letter to BOC

1 message

Vincent ciancio [REDACTED]

To: lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov
Cc: knoble@hydecourtnc.gov

Fri, May 1, 2020 at 5:14 P

Kris Noble
Hyde County NC Manager

Dear Hyde County Board of Commissioners,

My wife and I are NRPO's on Ocracoke Island. We have owned our home on Ocracoke since 2013, although we have vacationed on the Island since the mid 1970's. We spend 7-8 months a year at our home on Ocracoke and return to Buffalo for the summers. We have been on the Island since mid-October. We love the Island, the people, the culture and the climate.

I am writing because I am troubled by the division that has developed between some residents, some politicians and some NRPO's. I have seen firsthand, over the past 7 months, the heartbreak of devastation and the hard work of re-construction. Unfortunately, the devastation happens to both permanent and non-permanent residents at the same rate. However there is a huge difference in the ability for NRPO's to get the help and opportunity to repair their properties. There should be no difference between all property owners to get the same help when properties are damaged by the same occurrence. Dorian did not choose which houses were damaged but local Politicians decided who got help and when, to repair them.

We were extremely fortunate at our home and only suffered relatively minor damage to our sheds, trees and fences. After the storm we offered our home to a local family for 6 weeks before we arrived in Mid-October. After arrival and seeing the devastation, we donated over \$12,000 to local families, businesses, food kitchens and other good causes. We helped whoever or wherever we could. We asked for nothing in return, no free lunches, no cleaning supplies, no generators, no contractor help, no recognition, no nothing. This is our community for the better part of the year and we help lift it up.

In return, we get to pay our taxes, get discriminated against, get talked about like we are some breed of creature that flies in on our Private jets to frolic in the sand to the detriment of the local community. We contribute.

We are not asking for special treatment. We want to be treated the same. We contribute.

We have personally been locked on the Island during the Corona crisis because we cannot leave. For some reason, if we leave, we cannot come back on. This is our home. Local residents, contractors, delivery people, and many others can come and go freely, but we cannot. Why?

When I have to take the Hatteras ferry to get to my home, I have to wait in line with others that come to the Island for a day trip or a vacation. We pay taxes, do we not get that minimal right to a Priority Pass to get home. Last Fall I had to go get a prescription in Hatteras, I had to wait 5 hours in line to get back home. Fair? Don't think so. We contribute.

I think it is time for our Local leaders to understand the contribution level of the NRPO group. We are not asking for anything that other tax paying and non-tax paying residents enjoy. We contribute!

I think it is a mistake to have the NRPO group angry. It will not accomplish positive results for the community. We are all in this together, you need us and we need you, let's not like it.

Sincerely,
Vincent Ciancio, 46 Fish Camp Lane, Ocracoke, NC

Sent from my iPad



"Non resident" property owner comments

1 message

Mike Noles <[REDACTED]>

Sat, May 2, 2020 at 1:56 F

To: lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov

Cc: knoble@hydecourtnc.gov

Kris Noble
Hyde County Manager

To the Hyde County Board of Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these subjects. My wife and I are property owners on Ocracoke Island. I refuse to use the term "non resident" as I do not understand the designation and is the purpose of my questions and comments.

After 30 plus years of vacationing multiple times a year on Ocracoke, we fortunate and blessed enough to buy our home in 2012 and it truly is our home. We do not rent and we use our home as much as 6 months out of the year. We have always tried to support every function on the island and participate to the best of our abilities in everything that was for the village. Our family has never shirked what we felt were our responsibilities to assist the village in times when there was a need for help. We like to feel that we are an appreciated part of the community and, for the most part, we believe that to be true. However, this most recent decision to block us from our home has brought what I consider to be an "ugly" picture to an island that we treasure as a paradise. Thus, my rather simple questions;

1. Why is there a separate designation for personal property owners on the island of Ocracoke? Do permanent residents pay a higher tax rate for the privilege of being able to access and leave the island at will?
2. In the same logic, why are we denied "priority passes" for the NCDOT ferries by the same designation, but vendors and permanent residents receive them? I can actually understand the vendors moreso than permanent residents. I'll ask the same question about the tax base. Do permanent residents of the island pay a higher tax rate for that privilege?
3. And, finally, if the covid19 issue that has been declared as the reason that we cannot go to our home due to the chance of a viral infection coming to the island (which I understand entirely), why in the world has island residents, vendors and contractors been allowed to repeatedly travel off the island to designated "hot spots" and return without concern while we're forbidden to go to our home and leave(which I absolutely DON'T understand)? Medical issues (appointments) should be the only reason. All other necessities can be delivered to the island, including medications. If isolation is the goal, then isolate.

The "ugly" picture I referred to is this: For those of us that own homes on the island but do not live there on a year round basis, there's a glaring prejudice that's reared its head and I honestly don't think that anyone ever expected it. While the county and some of the permanent residents will probably never accept most of us as a "part of Ocracoke village", as island property owners, we try to support the island businesses and vendors completely by avoiding shopping for necessities on the mainland. We participate in everything from the fund raisers for the ball park, for the school and for the fireman's funds to relief efforts after storms. When Dorian deviated so much and so many, those of us that did not have the more significant property damages pitched in with every possible way to help restore our "paradise". The amount of time, labor and contributed expense by the "non residents" was very apparent and significant. No one screamed "you're a non resident property owner, we don't want you help or donations" during that time period, but now we're the "doomsday deliverers". That's a prejudice that probably will not go away, and one that many of us will not likely forget.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment and question. I'd surely hope that the ones we have in a position to lead this county will respond wisely to the designation issue.

Respectfully,

Mike Noles
575 Jackson Circle
Ocracoke, NC
[REDACTED]

April 28, 2020

Dear Ms. Noble and the Hyde County Commissioners:

We are and have been Non-resident Property Owners on Ocracoke for the last fifteen years. The recent restrictions placed upon NRPOs following Hurricane Dorian and on the heels of Covid 19, have made it abundantly clear that Hyde County's resident/non-resident distinctions are detrimental to our equal rights.

Let us start by saying that we do not understand the reasoning in allowing residents to travel on and off island, yet restricting us access to our property. Contractors and suppliers come and go freely, yet we are prevented access to our homes. Additionally, we are required to obtain building permits that are not required of any other resident. Our cottage sustained about 80k in damages. None of this work required a building permit. As of this writing, the work is not complete. We've recently hired a company out of Kill Devil Hills who can gain access onto the island and our home, but we are prevented access to meet them there to oversee the work. We would greatly appreciate if you would explain the rationale behind these decisions.

If these restrictions were about fighting the pandemic, you would have shut the island down. As it turns out, you only shut the NRPOs out. We see no NRPO designation on our tax bill. We pay the same property tax rate as residents. We want the same equal rights as resident property owners. If we are not entitled to the same rights, why are we paying the same taxes?

We see this same discriminatory practice play out after every hurricane. We are denied the same access given to resident property owners. Why is one property owner's home more important than another?

After Hurricane Dorian, we were denied access. This time the ramifications of the restrictions were more devastating. It was not only inconvenient; it resulted in additional loss, a loss that we had to shoulder disproportionately. There was no free help available to us, yet you set into place directives that compounded our struggle. There were no provisions made to allow us to bring friends or family onto the island to assist with muck outs and tear outs. If our helpers, tools and supplies didn't fit in our vehicles we were out of luck. There was no consideration given to the hardships that we were struggling with alone. Meanwhile, benevolence groups from all over the East Coast descended upon the island to assist locals. Since we received almost no actual assistance we would have appreciated a little consideration. We got neither.

These inequalities don't stop there. As taxpaying property owners why are we not given the same priority with ferry loading as residents, many of which do not even own property? We often times find ourselves sitting in ferry lines for hours to access our homes. Our family is on the island for most of the entire summer season. We cannot make a trip off island to get supplies or food without it becoming an all day affair. It's almost certain that those off island trips will require an additional 4 hour window at the very least. On two different occasions last winter, a wait in the ferry line leaving Ocracoke lasted for

three hours; three times being bumped from loading. A trip back to Maryland is an eight hour drive and must be scheduled to accommodate night time driving difficulties. On two different occasions it became necessary to return to the cottage in Ocaracoke, to try again the next day. This is patently unfair.

If a distinction between resident and non-resident property owners had not been made from the outset, the discord between these two groups might not exist today. It's pretty straight forward and simple. We are all taxpaying property owners, and should be afforded the same rights and freedoms under the law.

We ask that the Board of Commissioners afford us those same rights and freedoms granted to residents.

Sincerely,

Cheri Larsen

Jeff Larsen



Questions on Restrictions on property owners

messages

Jawn <[REDACTED]>

Wed, Apr 29, 2020 at 9:21 AM

From: lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov, knoble@hydecourtnc.gov

Dear Ms. Noble and Board of Commissioners,

Due to this unprecedented year, I have a couple questions that I have not been able to find justification to the reasoning behind the restrictions. There seems to be a lot of restrictions placed on one group of property owners and these owners are the ones who do not have a voice in elections or in making decisions about emergency management protocols, but pay the same taxes.

Why is Ocracoke restricted to one group of property owners during emergency time? Residents are allowed to come and go, at free will. They are not required to get permission or approval to leave or return to island. Many continue with their daily life without restrictions. They have gone off to do shopping, go visit family and friends, and are free to come and go as they please. Contractors, delivery personnel, utility personnel, Amish helpers, and off island family members have been able to come and go without any safety protocols. No one is taking temperatures at the ferry terminals. If Ocracoke is so serious about limiting exposure to the fragile community, then restrictions would have also been placed on residents and commercial personnel, but it wasn't. There was only one group of citizens that restrictions were placed on and had to show unreasonable proof to gain access to their property.

Secondly, how can Hyde County tax properties, the same, when Non Resident Property Owners have not had access to their properties? They have been legally barred from accessing property in which they own and pay taxes? This is unconstitutional and the local authorities of Ocracoke do not have the power to supersede the federal government. If the Board of Control, wants to control the property rights of one group of citizens then the tax amount should be reduced. NRPO should not pay the same tax rate if they do not have equal rights.

Going forward, I feel that there should not be any distinction between property owners. All owners should be given equal rights. Re-entry passes should be given to owners. Renters would get their passes from the owners of the property. Many times the excuse is given to fragility of resources on the island. Taxes, utilities, road projects, and education services are all based on taxes and numbers of properties not the full time residents only. There are a number of part time residents that factor into sustainability of the island. Why do the residents get to say who has access and who doesn't? I urge you to make changes now. Do not let these practices continue.

Thank You,
Jawn Moore

Sent from my iPad

Lois Stotesberry <lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov>

Wed, Apr 29, 2020 at 9:56 AM

cc: Benjamin Simmons, III <twsbcsliii@aol.com>, "Earl Pugh, Jr." <middletownfarms@embarqmail.com>, Franz Holscher <ffh@rhpe.net>, Les Topping <litbrother68@gmail.com>, Kristen Noble <knoble@hydecourtnc.gov>, Lois Stotesberry <lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov>, Shannon Swindell <swindellfarmgroup@gmail.com>, Tom Pahl <thppahl@gmail.com>

YI

Lois Stotesberry, CMC, NCCCC
Member to the Board of Commissioners
Administrative Assistant to County Manager and EM Director
P.O. Box 188, 30 Oyster Creek Rd., Swan Quarter, NC 27885
Cell: (252) 926-4178 Fax: (252) 926-3701

[quoted text hidden]

Donnie Noble <knoble@hydecourtnc.gov>

Wed, Apr 29, 2020 at 10:51 AM

From: Donnie Shumate <dshumate@hydecourtnc.gov>, Lois Stotesberry <lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov>

I think since we are receiving so many of these they may need to go in the packet under public comment. What do you think Donnie? We've received more than 3 this week all very similar.

[quoted text hidden]



Ocracoke NRPO status

3 messages

Betsy Shepard <[REDACTED]>

Tue, Apr 28, 2020 at 10:23 A

To: lstotesberry@hydecountync.gov, knoble@hydecountync.gov

Dear Ms. Noble and Hyde County Commissioners,

We are Non-Resident Property Owners (NRPOs) on Ocracoke Island. The recent events of Hurricane Dorian and Covid-19 have created incredibly difficult issues for us all. As NRPOs, our difficulties have, unfortunately, been compounded by Hyde County's distinctions between resident and non-resident property owners.

For example, after Hurricane Dorian, many NRPOs were unable to get to our flooded houses in a timely manner because of Hyde's NRPO reentry access restrictions. We watched as secondary damage occurred to our properties, while residents were able to begin mitigation of their properties immediately. Allowing one group of property owners to incur added damage and financial hardship seems terribly unfair.

After Dorian, many NRPOs offered our homes to displaced locals. We were happy to do so, knowing that we would eventually be able to complete our repairs and ready our houses for the 2020 season. Obviously, no one expected a pandemic, but because of Hyde's NRPO reentry access restrictions, we've been thwarted there, as well.

Immediately after the hurricane, our insurance company sent multiple adjusters to inspect our property. After allowing for deductibles on wind and flood policies, we ended up with somewhere in the neighborhood of \$25,000 worth of total damage. That figure didn't account for a new, locally-made picnic table that floated away, trees down on the property, and so on.

None of this damage required a building permit to fix.

We have owned and operated a construction company in Virginia for nearly 30 years. We are very familiar with the permitting and inspecting process. We had no plans (or need) to do any plumbing, HVAC, structural, or other repairs that would require a building permit. So we have had to wait even longer.

Last week we were notified by our property managers that our roof was leaking and water was entering our property. Our management team told us we should apply for a building permit, because that was the only way we could get there to fix it. Otherwise, we would have to hire another contractor to do the work. We sent an email inquiry to the Hyde Planning Dept. and were told that we could get a building permit for a roof repair, even though one would typically not be needed. Staff went on to say that these building permits were more about restricting access to the island, than about needing them for the work.

We printed out and filled out ELEVEN pages of application and mailed it in. A week later we received our building permit in the mail. Then we started the reentry pass permit process, which was to take another week.

No other property owner or business owner in Hyde County would be made to go to these lengths, and through this protracted process, to fix a simple roof leak.

Today, we found out that curbside hurricane debris pick-up will not be offered to NRPOs upon reentry in May. Beyond that, we may not even be able to bring it to the dump. Our tax dollars fund the collection of refuse and the dump, but we can't access these services. Again, it is suggested that we should hire out for these services.

Throughout this time, Ocracoke leaders and residents have (in varying degrees) painted us as schemers looking to game the system, as greedy and heartless, as neighbors who are more interested in vacationing and running from the virus than the health of people in "their" community. Additionally, there have been some very disturbing public comments about what might happen to us, NRPOs, if we were to come to the island and get anyone sick.

It has been a shocking and sad turn of events.

Unfortunately, we feel Hyde's "separate but equal" policies for different property owners have contributed to this vitriol and division.

We understand that Ocracoke is remote and lacking in many resources. We are told this repeatedly to justify the policies which exclude us. While we can't fix the location issue (and wouldn't want to), perhaps it is time to do something about the resources issue.

We pay a full tax rate and receive less services—not the least of which is access to our property. Ocracoke Island is not private property. It is not a gated community. If we are not entitled to equal services, perhaps we should not have an equal tax rate.

Similarly, as NRPOs who rent our property to tourists for more than half the year, we generate quite a bit of Occupancy Tax income for the island. We have virtually no say in how this revenue is spent.

It is perhaps time to rethink this system.

We feel it is discriminatory for Hyde County to prohibit access, services, and resources to tax paying property owners based solely on their residency status. Because of this discrimination, we are incurring added hardships and expenses that other property owners (and even residents who do not own property) are not subject to.

Please consider doing away with the resident/non-resident distinctions and allow ALL property owners the same rights and freedoms under Hyde County law.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Chris Anderson & Betsy Shepard

11811 Rolfe Hwy.
Surry VA 23883



Letter to Hyde County Board of Commissioners (May 4th meeting)

message

Teresa Still <[redacted]>

Wed, Apr 29, 2020 at 9:21 PM

Reply-To: [redacted]

From: "lstotesberry@hydecourtync.gov" <lstotesberry@hydecourtync.gov>, "knoble@hydecourtync.gov" <knoble@hydecourtync.gov>

Hello Ms. Noble and Ms. Stotesberry,

I am a Hyde County property owner and taxpayer and have submitted a letter below for the consideration of the Board of Commissioners during their upcoming May 4th meeting. I would greatly appreciate if you could ensure that all Board members receive my letter for their review and consideration. Thank you so much in advance, and please feel free to email ([redacted]) or call ([redacted]) me with any questions or concerns.

Teresa Still

Dear Ms. Noble and Hyde County Commissioners,

I own a cottage on Ocracoke Island and am a non-resident property owner (NRPO). I would like to share my thoughts and concerns with you in hopes that they can be discussed in your May 4th Board of Commissioners meeting.

Firstly, we all know and intimately understand the devastating losses the island suffered from Hurricane Dorian, and now the unprecedented times we face with Covid-19. We are all still navigating our way through these back-to-back emergencies. By definition, NRPOs are property owners. We pay full-share property taxes and maintain insurance on our homes. We purchased property on Ocracoke because we love the island, it's rich history, and it's people, and we take pride in our homes and in being a part of the community and it's sustainability. NRPOs are an integral part of the island's community and economy, and many of our homes in the rental program play a vital role in generating revenue for the island and providing housing for tourists on whom the island largely depends. However, Hyde County's re-entry policies around Dorian (and previous hurricanes/evacuations) and Covid-19 have unfortunately highlighted the inequities and sense of discrimination that NRPOs face when trying to access our property. I feel the distinction between resident vs. non-resident property owners perpetuates division and an unfair class system that makes many of us feel devalued. Property owners are property owners. Additionally, the current re-entry policies force NRPOs to incur additional and unnecessary damage and repair costs to their homes by our delayed access and inability to immediately begin mitigation. My home, along with hundreds of others, flooded during Dorian. The delay in my access to the island contributed to costlier and more extensive mold mitigation and damage to my floors. In the weeks and months that followed, the class system required that I wait in the non-priority ferry stacking lanes where I watched contractors and builders and vendors fill up the ferries, and I was bumped from several runs. Never was my 2nd-class status more obvious, and as a Hyde County property owner and taxpayer, this felt demoralizing.

I have the utmost respect for the Board of Commissioners and the work you do for Hyde County, and I recognize that there are many competing needs and issues around re-entry. For your consideration, I respectfully suggest that the distinction between resident vs. non-resident property owners be eliminated and that equal re-entry and ferry loading priority is given to "residents and property owners." Perhaps a revised re-entry policy could require that all eligible vehicles use the priority ferry stacking lanes and hang their re-entry tag (red, yellow, green, white) for inspection. Minimally, when the island is open to visitors, all property owners should be permitted use of the priority ferry stacking lanes.

Thank you all in advance for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Teresa Still



Letter to Ms. Noble and Hyde County Commissioners

message

Karen Sawyer <[REDACTED]>
to: lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov, knoble@hydecourtnc.gov

Fri, May 1, 2020 at 3:49 PM

Dear Ms. Noble and Hyde County Commissioners,

We bought our house on Ocracoke in 1987 as a second home (not rental property). My husband has spent time on and off Ocracoke Island since the 1960's. We live in Moyock, consider ourselves "part-timers" who are able to frequently travel back and forth to stay in our island home. Over the years, we have made good friends on Ocracoke and like many others fell in love with the remoteness and uniqueness that Ocracoke has to offer. We pay the same taxes to Hyde County as local property owners but have never had the same priority for boarding on the ferries. We understand the need for locals to get on and off the island to do business or go to doctor's appointments. And that vendors daily must make or pick up deliveries. But we have felt it unfair as property owners that we should have to wait hours with the visitors, sometimes missing two or three ferries. We believe that NRPO's should be entitled to a priority pass (as a fixed pass and not shared with visitors who are renting). We do not feel it would significantly impact the overall wait time for locals and vendors to access or leave the island.

The governing board has taken the position that we should not have equal access to our Ocracoke home because we are not full time residents. Permanent residents and NRPO's collectively contribute to the Ocracoke economy. We would hope that all NRPO's who own property on Ocracoke do so because they truly love the people that live there, the island, and its history. We felt the locals' pain when their houses were flooded. Our house sustained damage but because of re-entry restrictions, we were not allowed on the island to assess damages until a week later. Then, we who are senior citizens worked on our own to clean up and restore our home and property. We donated money to the local relief efforts which helped the full time residents. And collected money, food, and goods to help the locals. Many NRPO's let local families stay in their rental houses because their houses were flooded. Now with this current situation regarding COVID-19, we certainly understand and respect the need to follow the state's guidelines to stop the spread of this virus. Especially considering the remoteness of Ocracoke and limited medical availability. But when an emergency situation happens such as a hurricane or now this pandemic, we as property owners should all be treated with the same respect and given the same consideration. When decisions are made that impact all residents who own property on the island, don't just dismiss and restrict a segment of that population.

We all want to see Ocracoke restored and thriving again.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration,

Karen Sawyer

David Sawyer
[REDACTED]



NRPO Letter to BOC

message

incent ciancio <[REDACTED]>
o: lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov
c: knoble@hydecourtnc.gov

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Kris Noble
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Sincerely,
Innie Ciancio, 46 Fish Camp Lane, Ocracoke, NC

Sent from my iPad



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message

Mike Noles <[REDACTED]>

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3. And, finally, if the covid19 issue that has been declared as the reason that we cannot go to our home due to the chance of a viral infection coming to the island (which I understand entirely), why in the world has island residents, vendors and contractors been allowed to repeatedly travel off the island to designated "hot spots" and return without concern while we're forbidden to go to our home and leave(which I absolutely DON'T understand)? Medical issues (appointments) should be the only reason. All other necessities can be delivered to the island, including medications. If isolation is the goal, then isolate.

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Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment and question. I'd surely hope that the ones we have in a position to lead this county will respond wisely to the designation issue.

Respectfully,

Mike Noles
75 Jackson Circle
Ocracoke, NC
[REDACTED]



Non-resident pass

1 message

Andy Kennell <[REDACTED]>

Sat, May 2, 2020 at 3:55 PM

To: lstotesberry@hydecourtync.gov

My wife and I live in Wake County. We have loved coming to Hyde County these past 9 years. We do have some expensive personal property in the form of a camper in Hyde County that needs to be maintained. I'm sure we are not alone in this situation. I feel that non-residents with personal property, such as a camper, house, boat, etc. in Hyde County should be able to enter the county without having to obtain a pass. Please advise.

Thank you,

Andy Kennell

Sent from my iPhone



Non Resident Property Owners Public Comments

message

Brenda Peacock <[redacted]>

Sun, May 3, 2020 at 6:27 PM

to: "lstotesberry@hydecourtync.gov" <lstotesberry@hydecourtync.gov>, Jeff Peacock <[redacted]>

Dear Hyde County Commissioners,

Recent events have certainly been "novel" situations, with a novel viral disease pandemic following the wake of Hurricane Dorian. These events now in sequence have brought to light once again – and hopefully to the table- major concerns of Non Resident Property Owners of Hyde County.

These property owners, NRPOs, of which we are part, support Hyde County extensively with property taxes, some with occupancy taxes, and many with funding for non profits on the island of Ocracoke such as the Fireman's Ball/Volunteer Fire Service, and Ocracoke/Ocracoke Alive. They are also year round customers of many of the local businesses on the island.

Some restrictions and a plan of management are certainly required after major disasters, and definitely with the current pandemic. In the past however, Dorian being the exception, NRPOs have barely been allowed re entry and access to their property before tourists were allowed back in. It looks as though this is about to be the case once again.

It is so unfortunate that some NRPOs, with damage to their property from Dorian as significant as many permanent residents, were denied access to the huge volume of volunteer labor that we witnessed on the island after the storm. Yes, by definition, NRPOs have another "home", but their property on Ocracoke is likely a very large financial investment in a place they have at least some kind of attachment to, once again supporting the economy of both the island and the entire county.

With so many NRPOs concerned about our status, and hurricane season basically upon us, now is the ideal time for the Hyde County Commissioners to address at least some of these issues. One – Hatteras ferry priority access as a property owner same as a resident of the island. Two- representation of NRPOs on the decision making bodies such as the Ocracoke Control Group. These property owners could then at least be involved in determining restrictions and re entry criteria for themselves as well as tourists.

As a physician and NRPO, I agree that the current pandemic warranted some restrictions, and continues to do so. However, NRPOs going to their property to "shelter in place", with restriction on re entry, would have been and would be less of a risk to the island population than many of the permanent residents who have continued non essential travel off of the island, as well as the off island contractors not required to remain on the island for projects underway during this time.

We thank you for your time, your efforts, your consideration and implementation of these requests regarding priority Hatteras Ferry access for NRPOs, as well as representation on decision making bodies, as soon as possible. June 1 is around the corner.

Brenda S. Peacock, MD



Jeffrey A. Peacock

12 Riverside Drive

68 Jackson Circle

Washington, NC 27889

Ocracoke, NC 27960



sent from Mail for Windows 10



Public Comment for Board of Commissioners Meeting

message

LR Gyger <[REDACTED]>
to: lstotesberry@hydecountync.gov

Sun, May 3, 2020 at 7:32 PM

Dear Hyde County Board of Commissioners:

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my concerns. From my perspective, the County has proven itself to make well-informed decisions while balancing the difficult and often conflicting interests of the environment, public, and businesses. I am grateful for the high level of services that the County provides.

The issue that I would like the Board to give additional consideration is the discrimination against the group of people that the County has deemed the Ocracoke "non-resident property owner" (NRPO). It is noted that the term "non-resident property owner" does not appear to have a clear definition listed in the County ordinances or resolutions, and State regulations refer to a non-resident as someone that does not live within North Carolina. The County seems to use the term only to segregate between those who do not have a County address on their driver's license from those that do.

The first example of Ocracoke NRPO discrimination is the lack of a ferry priority boarding pass. Under normal circumstances, the Ocracoke NRPO has no more priority for accessing the island than a tourist, which can lead to extreme ferry wait times when trying to access their property. On the contrary, island residents, even those who rent and have no property tax obligations, as well as any vendors that meet the criteria for a priority pass, regardless of the whether the service they provide is essential, are first to board the ferry.

The second example of NRPO discrimination is the delayed or restricted access for NRPOs during a state of emergency. The NRPO should have as much right to assess, salvage, and protect their property as any island resident and typically in these situations, time is of the essence to prevent additional losses or damage. NRPOs do not want to take away or use up resources needed by locals, in fact, most want to help by bringing more of what is needed and sacrificing where possible.

With the most recent restriction on NRPO access changing to a more stringent building permit requirement due to too many NRPOs meeting the initially established entry criteria, it has come to light that there is an "us versus them" mentality as evidenced by statements made by local officials that have been published by the local media. It is especially disheartening to find that not only are rights and privileges withheld from Ocracoke NRPOs, but the NRPO is being cast in a negative light by those who serve the community.

It is requested that all County property owners, and specifically Ocracoke property owners, be treated in a fair and equitable manner and be provided the same rights and privileges granted to other property owners. This is not a request to take anything away from island residents or businesses. It is a request for a priority pass for boarding the ferry during normal circumstances and a request for the County to cease the bans and delays on NRPO access to their property when a state of emergency is declared. These requests are made with the best of intentions and the Board's approval of these requests will go a long way toward developing a sense of neighborhood and community between the island residents and off-island homeowners.

Sincerely,

Lawrence "JR" Gyger, Jr.

Ocracoke Property Owner

Ride The Wind, Inc

PO Box 700
Ocracoke, NC. 27960

May 3, 2020

Earl Pugh, Jr, Chairman
Hyde County Board of Commissioners
32 Nebraska Road
Englehard, NC. 27824

Mr. Pugh,

I'm writing to you to support the current recommendations of the Ocracoke Control Group to reopen our island to Nonresident Property Owners on May 11, 2020 and other visitors on May 21, 2020. Economically, it is essential that our island businesses begin to get some relief. Late May represents an important bump in cash flow that helps many of us get our business fully up to speed for the summer. The more we delay the more difficult our economic survival.

Our island has been under extreme quarantine for an extended period of time. During that time we've learned to Social Distance, keep ourselves and our property sanitized, and to use common sense to avoid situations that might harm others or ourselves. These same lessons are being learned all over the country. The fear that hordes of virus infected tourists are going to arrive without regard to personal safety are unrealistic. The same understanding of our current situation that motivates some to shut down our island, will also motivate those sick or at risk to stay home and not travel.

The longer we delay opening the island the more at risk become Ocracoke businesses and nonprofits. Without tourist dollars, there will be no money for our citizens to get thru next winter, no tax revenues for the county to provide essential services, and no occupancy tax dollars to be distributed to our nonprofits.

Again, the most effective way to keep our island safe in the future is to get our island open.

Respectfully,



Bob Chestnut,
President



Fwd: Control Group Meeting
message

iris Noble <knoble@hydecourtnc.gov>
to: Lois Stotesberry <lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 11:28 AM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Wayne Clark** <[REDACTED]>
Date: Fri, May 1, 2020 at 7:39 AM
Subject: Control Group Meeting
To: <knoble@hydecourtnc.gov>, Tom Pahl <thpahl@earthlink.net>, <middletownfarms@embarqmail.com>, Martha Garrish <[REDACTED]>, Rudy Austin <[REDACTED]>, Justin LeBlanc <[REDACTED]>, <[REDACTED]>, <[REDACTED]>

5/1/20

Kris, Tom, Earl, Martha, Helena, Rudy, Justin, Amy, David Scott

If at all possible, from a “health concern”, please consider opening the Island up fully the week before Memorial Day. This will allow Tourist to plan their vacation and “needed advertising” to be put in place now. The Island needs the full, busy season to stay afloat economically. If the Virus changes to the extent of concern between now and the time the Island reopens to Tourist, it can be closed. Continuing the “lockout” of Tourist puts too much pressure on our seasonal economy, especially with the impact of Hurricane Dorian. We have had no “normalized” income stream since last August. This is 7 months and running.

Thanks for your efforts!

Wayne Clark

Ocracoke access

message

Stewart Roberts <[REDACTED]>
to: lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 1:07 PM

I would like to address the council on my perspective on the NRPO lockout. My family has been on Ocracoke since the Civil War, my Grandparents, my Mother and various other relatives were born and raised on Ocracoke. My family used to raise cattle and sheep on Ocracoke. My Grandfather was Postmaster at one time, and used to have a store on the harbor until the 44 hurricane took it. We have a home on the island inherited from my Mother many years ago. We pay property taxes (and generate occupancy tax revenue) plus contribute, either directly or indirectly, to the economy of the island. That being said, this body has ignored the NRPO's rights to be included in any decisions involved with any policies made. We are entitled to access our homes and properties immediately after natural disasters such as hurricane Dorian. Many NRPO's incurred more damage than necessary, resulting from not being allowed to access our properties immediately after hurricane, including but not limited to mold and rot. We personally had 12" of water in our house and was not allowed back on the island to empty the house. When NRPO's return after such a situation, we bring our own food and supplies and generators so not to be using the islands resources. Another issue causing hardship on NRPO's is about ferry priority passes. We pay taxes (more than a lot of residents) and should not have to sit for three hours to catch the ferry. My father is 93 years old and cannot sit in the ferry line for three hours when he comes to the island. We don't come and go as often as full time residents therefore we wouldn't be taking up as much ferry space as residents going back and forth. Regarding the decision to lock out NRPO's during this pandemic; the full time residents are no more at risk of us bringing the virus onto the island, as it is for suppliers, workers, volunteers, contractors, or full time residents who are traveling back and forth. My heritage is from this island, my Grandparents are buried there, my Mother is buried there, and my Wife is buried there, as will I be, someday. We are asking you to respect our rights to access our property as much as the rights of the full time residents. I was there when the Governor called for the stay at home order and I returned (without finishing my repairs) to my home in New Bern to wait it out, not knowing I would not be allowed to return. I was told that I could get a " building permit " and return, but the work that is necessary at this point does not require a permit. I feel that is unconstitutional to charge for an unnecessary permit to circumvent your illegal activity. Let us back on our island, it belongs to us too!

ThankYou,
Stewart Roberts

Sent from my iPad



Concern for the reopening Ocracoke

message

Lois Brewer <[REDACTED]>
To: lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 4:38 PM

***This does NOT need to be read out loud!! Please do not read out loud. But it would be nice to think someone read it.

To whom it may concern,

I am very concerned about the reopening of Ocracoke. NPRO love the island enough to purchase property. We will supply our own goods, masks and sanitizer. We have the means to prepare food in our property, not placing strain on resources. However, the island was closed to us early in the COVID crisis. We can easily shelter at our property, unlike islanders, contractors, volunteers. But I feel as if the energy and attention has been placed on prohibiting us. I hope enough attention has been given to preventative measures when vacationers, who do not consider the island a part of their home, arrive. Below are recommendations:

-order out menus in every rental / hotel. I understand that all restaurants have take out. But visitors need to know the menu. If you don't want to print menus, consider a webpage that lists the items at EVERY restaurant.

-require masks in every store. I understand plexiglass has been installed. I find this concerning. Mask prevent the spread among visitors and store employees. Sneeze guards only (minimally) limit risk to employees.

-sell mask in every store. I'm sure there are a few sewing machines on the island. Make masks to sell at nearly every store. Sell them at reasonable prices (not 24 dollars like Downcreek Gallery). There is a lot of research regarding the effectiveness of cloth masks, I'm happy to provide.

-encourage outdoor displays for shops. Rearrange stores so customers walk in a circular fashion, therefore not standing as close to each other.

-ramp up online webpages / purchasing options for stores.

-provide hand sanitizer throughout the island. Of course, you can't buy it now. But hand sanitizer can be home made by the gallons. Several distilleries are making sanitizer, perhaps they can supply. Discourage use of gloves.

-work with the variety store to make a list of items people frequent purchase. In emails, ask visitors to remember these items to reduce the frequency of trips to the store. I know they have curbside pick up. Are they prepared to offer that to an island full of visitors??

-frequently touched areas need a plan for sanitation. Door knobs, hand rails. Stores need to clean them every few customers.

I'm sure all these measures have been considered. I really hope the island requires masks at all indoor public locations. One week before you closed to NPRO, the island was not taking COVID seriously. No masks, minimal precautions. I can't help but be offended by the choice to close the island to those who pay taxes, desperately need to finish repairs from Dorian, and consider the island part of home when so few precautions were in place. We love the island, we are not the same as visitors. And I hope you are prepared and allow all precautions when you open it to those just taking a vacation.

Thank you,

Lois

Improving Safety Measures for COVID-19 on Ocracoke Island

1 message

Sue Dayton <[REDACTED]>

Fri, May 1, 2020 at 1:29 P

To: tpahl@earthlink.net, middletownfarms@embarqmail.com, twsbcsiii@aol.com, swindellfarmgroup@gmail.com, littbrother68@gmail.com
Cc: lgibbs@hydehealth.com, Misty Gibbs <mgibbs@hydehealth.com>, Kris Noble <knoble@hydecourtync.gov>, stotesberry@hydecourtync.gov

May 1, 2020

To The Hyde Country Board of Commissioners:

My name is Susan Dayton. I am a former business owner and 6-year resident of Ocracoke Island, NC.

I would like to submit the following recommendations for improving safety measures regarding Hyde County's current guidelines and restrictions regarding the COVID-19 VIRUS as they apply to Ocracoke Island. Safety measures should begin on May 11, 2020, when restrictions are lifted for non-resident property owners (NRPOs) and remain in effect when the island re-opens to visitors (date TBA).

A quarter of a million tourists visit Ocracoke each year with as many as 10,000 visiting the island on any given day during peak season. As such *special considerations* should be given to Ocracoke to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on the island.

The fears are many. Visitors may (wrongly) view Ocracoke as "immune" to the virus. #2 *Best Beach in the country. Vacation get-a-way. Ocean breezes. Relaxation. Worry-free. Party time. Fun. Fishing. Margaritas and beer.* Despite all the wonderful things that Ocracoke has to offer these are the very things that place Ocracoke at special risk for spread of the COVID-19 virus. Undoubtedly, many visitors will be coming from COVID-19 "hotspots." An influx of outside visitors on the island means there is a greater potential for the spread of this highly contagious and potentially lethal virus.

Ocracoke's isolated location, lack of medical facilities, inclement weather (including the impending hurricane season) and transportation challenges also need to be considered should an outbreak occur on the island. Many of our residents are elderly and we have a large number of children and young adults on the island. The virus has a special affinity towards people with pre-existing medical conditions, but everyone is at risk. The virus not only attacks the lungs and heart, but we have recently learned it can cause blood clots and strokes in children and young people. Another concern: the virus also has the ability to silently spread from person to person asymptotically.

With all of these factors in mind I am urging that the Hyde Country Board of Commissioners (BOC) take all necessary safety precautions in helping to deter the spread of the COVID-19 virus on Ocracoke. Social distancing continues to be crucial in helping to prevent spread of the virus. As a resident of the island I can tell you that social distancing at the Ocracoke Variety Store can be difficult at times. When the island begins to swell with non-resident property owners (NRPOs) and visitors from locations around the country it will be virtually impossible to maintain a distance of 6 ft. from each other unless guidelines are in place limiting the numbers of shoppers.

virtually impossible to maintain a distance of 6 ft from each other unless guidelines are in place limiting the numbers of shoppers.

I am strongly urging the BOC to *require* wearing face masks or cloth coverings in public places on Ocracoke Island. Face masks are a powerful tool in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Wearing a face mask or a cloth face covering (i.e., a simple bandana) will help to cut down on the spread of the virus by keeping infected droplets from the mouth contained within the mask. However, face masks will not be fully effective unless every person wears them.

Ocracoke businesses should have a comprehensive plan in place to prevent the spread of disease with safety measures in place before the island re-opens to NRPOs and visitors. The diligent use of personal protections – social distancing, hand washing and requiring the use of face coverings – these are the only weapons we have at this time for spread of the disease and I strongly urge the BOC to consider implementing these potentially life saving measures.

Attached for your review is a sample “safety reminder” handout with a list of 7 THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO TO LESSEN THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 ON OCRACOKE. I am recommending requiring that hand-outs be posted in every vacation rental on the island and made readily available to visitors via businesses on the island as well as the Hatteras, Cedar Island and Swan Quarter ferry terminals.

We do not want Ocracoke to become another epicenter for the virus.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully yours,

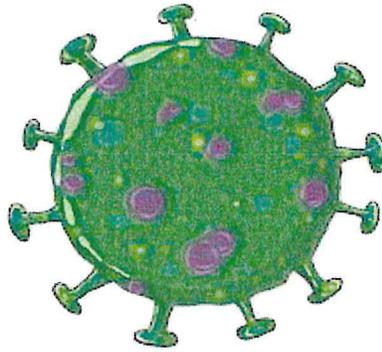
Susan (Sue) Dayton, MS, Public Health

Formerly Roxy's Antiques On Ocracoke



 Virus-free. www.avast.com

 **COVID-19 flyer PDF.pdf**
128K



PLEASE HELP US IN LESSENING THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

WHILE VACATIONING ON OCRACOKE PLEASE TAKE APPROPRIATE SAFETY MEASURES

Ocracoke Island is no different from any other town or city faced with the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Ocracoke is NOT IMMUNE to the virus because of its isolated location and the Community of Ocracoke is taking all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

7 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP KEEP YOURSELF AND OUR ISLAND SAFE

1. Practice safe **SOCIAL DISTANCING** from others – stay at least 6 ft. apart. This includes inside businesses as well as the beach and other public places.
2. Wash hands as often as possible and thoroughly for at least 20 seconds after touching objects that may have been touched or handled by others.
3. Refrain from touching your face with your fingers or hands when you are in a public place.
4. Wear a face mask or cloth face covering when entering any business on the island.
5. Have hand sanitizer available at all times and use after handling or touching surfaces that others may have shared such as a door handle, gas pump handle, steering wheel - even a *shared* beer or bag of chips could harbor this highly contagious and lethal virus.
6. Please **RESPECT** safety measures - including face masks - required by our businesses on the island.
7. If you experience symptoms of the virus while on the island—fever, sore throat, body aches or cough—please stay at home and call the Ocracoke Health Clinic at: (252) 928-1511.

PLEASE STAY SAFE AND HAVE A PLEASANT VISIT!

We are all in this together. The safety measures you take TODAY will HELP in preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus while protecting yourself and others. IT WILL SAVE LIVES.

Hello all,

I think Sue has created a very valuable and necessary flyer for our visitors,
I ask requesting that this is adopted, posted and distributed in all locals mentioned
plus added to websites concerning Ocracoke, such as rental agencies, hotels, restaurants,
and other businesses.

It is extremely essential to educate our visitors.

Thank you Sue for creating this, and Hyde County Officials, please support and require this.

Judith Wheeler, MPH

Ten year full time resident, 8 year NRPO

[Quoted text hidden]



Public comment

message

Sundae Horn <[REDACTED]>
From: Lois Stotesberry <lstotesberry@hydecourtnc.gov>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:09 PM

To Hyde County Board of Commissioners,

Please take a look at the survey I sent out for the Ocracoke Current.

There are many good suggestions for ways that the island can open to visitors but still keep our community safe from COVID-19.

I didn't take my survey though I did write the questions (with some community input). My answers would include that if we are to open by Memorial Day, we need to step up the mask-wearing and social distancing practices on the island. It needs to be enforced. If, for example, one Variety Store employee were to test positive for COVID-19, all the others would have to quarantine. That's our one grocery store and the effect would be devastating. The same goes for any other business on the island. Please make sure safety measures are in place — and there's a plan for enforcement — before you vote to open the island.

As always, I would like to see more transparency from the control group.

Also, please identify yourselves when you speak so those of us watching online know who's talking.

Sundae

Sundae Horn
[REDACTED]

PO Box 544
Ocracoke, NC 27960
[REDACTED]

Ocracoke survey

2 messages

Sundae Horn <[REDACTED]>

Mon, May 4, 2020 at 5:02 PM

To: Tom Pahl <thpahl@earthlink.net>, Kris Noble <knoble@hydecourtync.gov>, Donnie Shumate <dshumate@hydecourtync.gov>, Lois Stotesberry <lstotesberry@hydecourtync.gov>, middletownfarms@embarqmail.com, twsbcsiii@aol.com, swindellfarmgroup@gmail.com, itbrother68@gmail.com

[REDACTED]

Hi all,

I put together a survey for the Ocracoke Current with Survey Monkey about the decisions made by the control board about closing and re-opening the island. I was hoping that it would allow people to have some input without speaking out in a public comment (which is socially frowned-upon on Ocracoke.)

You can find ALL the data here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-BX5P7T8N7/>

Please note: you'll have to click on the blue "comments" link to see all the comments for each question that had an "other" choice.

Also, you can see how a single person answered all the questions by clicking on "individual responses" at the top right of the page. That way, if you see a comment you love or hate, you can find out what else that same survey-taker said or how they identified themselves (as a resident, NRPO, etc.)

Surveys are semi-reliable at best, but Survey Monkey has a good reputation. This one only allows one response per IP address; Survey Monkey is used by universities, pollsters, and news sources (e.g., the Washington Post). Of course people can lie on surveys. So we can take this with a grain of salt, and not take the insults personally since the people didn't say them to our faces.

In any case, I hope the control board (please share this link with that group) and board of commissioners will get something from this raw data. There's a lot of concern about opening Ocracoke, even more concern about the island's financial viability if we stay closed, and a heap of vitriol from NRPOs.

I'm leaving the survey open until Friday, so this is just preliminary information. I will send you an updated link on Friday. I can also share the data as pdfs if you'd like.

Sundae

Sundae Horn

[REDACTED]

PO Box 544
Ocracoke, NC 27960

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Hyde May BOC Meeting Public Comment

Due to the restrictions limiting gatherings of 10 or more people, public attendance at the April Hyde County Board of Commissioners Meeting is not possible. Public comments can be made by submitting this form. You can also do so by sending an email to lstotesberry@hydecountync.gov or by leaving a voicemail at 252-926-5288. The comment will be played or read aloud during the normal public comment session in the meeting.

Public Comments are a time for the public to make comments to the County Commissioners. Comments should be kept to three minutes or less, when read aloud, and comments should be directed to the entire Board and not to individual members, the staff, or to other members of the public. Comments requesting assistance will typically be referred to the County Manager for follow-up or for Board action at a future meeting.

Enter your full name. *

Peggy Harrell

What township or city are you from? *

Tarboro

State *

North Carolina

Other: _____

If your comment requires follow up, how would you like us to contact you? (if you do not require follow up you can leave this blank)

Send email when resolved

What is your comment? *

My husband is 77 years old. About the only thing he does for pleasure is fish lake mattumaskeet. There's no logical reason why he can't drive from Tarboro to Fairfield without getting out of the truck until he reaches the lake. Late afternoon he would get in the truck and drive home. There's no contact with anyone other than his fishing partner. We have been staying home and had no contact with anyone else.

This form was created inside of Hyde County.

Google Forms

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Enter your full name. *

Elizabeth Dyer

What township or city are you from? *

Ocracoke

State *

North Carolina

Other: _____

If your comment requires follow up, how would you like us to contact you? (if you do not require follow up you can leave this blank)

What is your comment? *

Before Ocracoke opens to visitors there should be plans and procedures in place.

What should visitors do if they develop Covid 19 symptoms while staying on Ocracoke?

Will there be on island testing for symptomatic individuals and for contacts?

If visitors become sick, will they be told to quarantine on Ocracoke or travel home?

Will contacts be told to isolate to see if they become sick or wait to see if they get sick and then isolate?

Will there be support services for those who may need to quarantine in a hotel?

If there is a visitor quarantined in a hotel, can the rest of the hotel be open?

This form was created inside of Hyde County.

Google Forms

Hyde May BOC Meeting Public Comment

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Enter your full name. *

Greg Honeycutt

What township or city are you from? *

Ocracoke

State *

North Carolina

Other: _____

If your comment requires follow up, how would you like us to contact you? (if you do not require follow up you can leave this blank)

[REDACTED]

What is your comment? *

Very important to get Ocracoke open for business. Can be done safety if businesses are practicing safety protocol. Hyde County needs to reach out immediately in communicating getting safety protocol in place. Extremely important in Coordination with Dare and Currituck County in establishing the May 22 reopening date as the Hyde Control group has established . Until a date is established folks will NOT BOOK Their lodging dates.

This form was created inside of Hyde County.

Google Forms