



The Village of Bald Head Island

Dear Islander,

The Village Council met on Friday, May 7th to review the Village Manager's preliminary budget for the next fiscal year beginning July 1st.

During the meeting, Animal Control was discussed and the Council approved, by a split vote, conducting a "referendum" to determine the property owners' preferred method of deer management. Animal Control can be a very emotional issue involving not only taxpayers' money but also their philosophies. The present question is whether to control the deer herd through lethal culling or through immunocontraception with limited culling.

Since it is essential that all taxpayers have the opportunity to weigh in on the issue, it would not be possible for the Brunswick County Board of Elections to conduct a formal referendum.

Although there are many details to be worked out, the general procedure would have each side prepare a statement presenting their perspective, followed by written rebuttals and then the four documents would be sent to all taxpayers for their vote. This would give each side the opportunity to present their views and would give the taxpayer the privacy to vote their preference without scrutiny.

Confidentiality would be maintained through the use of an independent accounting firm. Hopefully the entire process can be accomplished over the next six months, giving all taxpayers an equal voice.

In the interim, the Bald Head Island Conservancy will conduct a deer count and will deliver to the Village two reports on the deer herd, one in the next few weeks and one in late September/early October. The need for action, as well as what type, will be assessed at that time.

Hopefully by allowing both sides the opportunity to present their case, a group consensus can be reached, and we can respect each others' differences in a way that moves us forward as a community.

Sincerely,

Andy Sayre

Mayor, Bald Head Island

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