

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
UTILITIES COMMISSION
RALEIGH

DOCKET NO. A-41, SUB 21

VILLAGE OF BALD HEAD ISLAND,)
Complainant,)
v.)
BALD HEAD ISLAND TRANSPORTATION,)
INC., BALD HEAD ISLAND LIMITED, LLC,)
and SHARPVUE CAPITAL, LLC,)
Respondents.)

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF
BRANDY MUNROE
ON BEHALF OF
VILLAGE OF BALD HEAD
ISLAND

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

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Direct Testimony of Brandy Munroe

On Behalf of the Village of Bald Head Island

August 9, 2022

Q. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME, OCCUPATION, AND ADDRESS.

A. My name is Brandy Munroe. I live on Bald Head Island and am the owner of Bald Head Island Services Rentals and Sales, Inc. (“Bald Head Island Services”). My home address is 7 Bufflehead Court, Bald Head Island, NC 28461. My business address is 2 E Merchants Row, Bald Head Island, NC 28461.

Q. ON WHOSE BEHALF ARE YOU SUBMITTING THIS DIRECT TESTIMONY?

A. I am submitting this Direct Testimony on behalf of the Village of Bald Head Island (the “Village”).

Q. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH BALD HEAD ISLAND.

A. I live on the Island and have worked here for seventeen years. I’ve owned a business here for twelve years, and we have over 40 employees.

Q. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE.

A. I received a business degree from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington in 2003. I worked my way through college managing a furniture store in Wilmington. After college I earned my real estate license and then became a rental reservationist for Bald Head Island Limited in 2004. A position became available for a real estate assistant for Bald Head Island Limited, which I accepted. I worked my way up as the lead assistant for the top two agents on the island. While in this position I found our clients needed professional cleaning from the new homes they purchased. I could never find the perfect cleaner who could meet our standards of the homes they purchased so I began cleaning myself on my time off. From there, the cleaning business just continued to grow. During this time, I found the management of most rental homes were lacking and subpar so I began managing a handful of homes. Over the last 10 years I have gone from 5 homes to over 130 homes. Bald Head Island Services is now the largest rental company on the Island. We provide property management, maintenance, cleaning, and services for the Island's many rental properties.

Q. PLEASE PROVIDE A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF BALD HEAD ISLAND AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE TO THE CITIZENS OF NORTH CAROLINA.

A. Bald Head Island encompasses 12000 acres of which only 2000 will be developed. We have 2000 acres of marshes, 7 miles of undevelopable beaches and 200 acres

of Virgin Maritime forest that has been deeded for perpetuity. This allows visitors from around the world to enjoy time standing still!

Q. HOW DOES THE PUBLIC REACH BALD HEAD ISLAND?

A. Some members of the public can reach the island by personal watercraft, but almost all members of the public reach Bald Head Island by using its ferry system.

Q. WHAT MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC RELY ON THE FERRY TO REACH THE ISLAND?

A. Vacationers and homeowners rely on the ferry to reach the Island. But so do many employees, such as my own. Of my staff of 40, only three live on the Island. The rest commute from the mainland and rely on the ferry to reach the Island every day.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER USED THE PARKING FACILITIES AT THE DEEP POINT MARINA?

A. Yes. I use the parking facilities myself and have an annual pass. My employees also park at the parking facilities daily. The cost of parking and using the ferry is a major expense for my business.

Q. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR USE OF THE PARKING FACILITIES AT THE DEEP POINT MARINA.

A. Our whole lifestyle as well as our business depends on the ferry system. We purchase over a dozen yearly parking passes as well as daily parking for our part-time employees.

Q. WHAT ARE YOUR PRIMARY CONCERNS ABOUT WHERE THINGS STAND TODAY WITH THE FERRY AND PARKING OPERATIONS?

A. Aside from day-to-day concerns about things like whether the ferries will run on time or whether the parking lots will be full, I am worried that if the ferry system and parking facilities are bought by a company that is focused on maximizing profit as opposed to promoting the interests of the Island it will not take the concerns of businesses, Islanders, and vacationers into account. I am particularly concerned that the parking facilities—which are essential to use of the ferry and, ultimately, my business—will not have any regulatory oversight concerning their operations. Who will listen to service complaints? Who will protect us from excess rate increases—when the rates are already quite high for businesses like mine? Who will ensure that any future sales are in the public interest?

The Island is dependent on workers who come over to the Island every day. If business owners can't afford parking, this will trickle down to every business on the Island. If this happens the businesses will have to close causing loss of property values for homeowners, creating massive unemployment and huge tax dollars losses for Brunswick County.

Q. ARE YOU AWARE OF ANYBODY WHO HAS USED THE PASSENGER FERRY WITHOUT HAVING TO PARK AT THE PARKING FACILITIES?

A. I think that 99% of ferry passengers use the parking facility. Maybe there are a few people who come to the ferry by car service from the airport.

Q. HAVE YOU EVER USED THE BARGE AND TUG SERVICE?

A. Yes. Quite frequently.

Q. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR USE OF THE BARGE AND TUG SERVICE.

A. I rely on the barge to bring supplies over for my business. I have also used the barge to bring household goods over for my personal use. A few years ago I rented a U-Haul and brought over a bathroom vanity and light fixtures for my house. I called the barge to reserve a spot. I rode over on the barge with the U-Haul. Everyone on the Island knows that the only way to get furniture or other large household goods over the Island is by using the barge.

Q. DOES THIS COMPLETE YOUR DIRECT TESTIMONY?

A. Yes.