

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  
STEPHEN BOYETT  
ON BEHALF OF  
VILLAGE OF BALD HEAD  
ISLAND

**BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**DOCKET NO. A-41, SUB 21**

**Direct Testimony of Stephen Boyett**

**On Behalf of the Village of Bald Head Island**

**August 9, 2022**

1 **Q. PLEASE STATE YOUR NAME, OCCUPATION, AND BUSINESS**  
2 **ADDRESS.**

3 A. My name is Stephen Boyett. I am the Development Services Director for the  
4 Village of Bald Head Island (the “Village”). My responsibilities for the Village  
5 encompass planning and zoning decisions and building inspections. As part of my  
6 building inspection duties, I review building plans, issue permits, conduct  
7 inspections of structures on the island, and approve final certificates of occupancy.  
8 I also am responsible for compliance with the Coastal Area Management Act and  
9 related environmental issues. My business address is 106 Lighthouse Wynd, Bald  
10 Head Island, NC 28461.

11

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

14 A. I am submitting this Direct Testimony on behalf of the Village.

15

1 **Q. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR EDUCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL**  
2 **EXPERIENCE.**

3 A. I attended East Carolina University where I studied construction management and  
4 then completed my studies at Mount Olive University, where I graduated with a  
5 degree in criminal justice and criminology. After graduation, I worked at a  
6 construction framing company before taking a job with the Village as Head  
7 Building Inspector. I served as the Village's Head Building Inspector for  
8 approximately ten years before responsibilities for zoning and land use were  
9 combined with the Building Inspector duties to create my current position as  
10 Development Services Director. I have held that position for about eight years.

11

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

14 A. Bald Head Island is a beautiful barrier island that is home to residential properties  
15 and a lot of wildlife and vegetation. Of the island's approximately 12,000 acres,  
16 only 2,000 is developed while the remaining 10,000 is a wildlife preserve. Given  
17 this, the opportunities for outdoor activities on the island are numerous—including  
18 hiking, birdwatching, turtle watching (the island is a well-known nesting ground  
19 for sea turtles), canoeing, and boating. The Village, which has municipal authority  
20 for the whole island, has a long history of protecting the natural resources under its  
21 care. The Village, the island's residents, and our regular visitors take pride in the  
22 unique natural beauty of our island. For many North Carolinians, the island serves  
23 as a regular vacation destination and a unique opportunity to experience our state's

1 coastal habitats.

2

3 **Q. HOW DOES THE PUBLIC REACH BALD HEAD ISLAND?**

4 A. The only way to reach the island is by boat. For the public, that means taking the  
5 passenger ferry operated by Bald Head Island Transportation, Inc.

6

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

9 A. The ferry hosts a wide range of passengers. The island is home to approximately  
10 300 full-time residents. Obviously, they rely heavily on the ferry. In the summer,  
11 the day population on the island balloons with vacationers. During the peak tourist  
12 weeks in the summer, the population can reach over 7,000. These vacationers, who  
13 either rent properties or come to stay at their personal vacation homes, rely on the  
14 ferry to get to and from the island.

15 In addition to owners, renters and other overnight visitors, there are many  
16 daily visitors who we call “day trippers.” These visitors are often tourists staying  
17 in Southport, Wilmington, or Oak Island, who want to explore Bald Head Island  
18 for a day. I believe most day trippers visit the island to experience its reputation for  
19 being a unique car-free sanctuary and preserve. Many day trippers also come for  
20 shopping and dining, as well as to visit the Bald Head Island Conservancy (the  
21 “Conservancy”) and Old Baldy Lighthouse.

22

23 **Q. CAN YOU TALK MORE ABOUT THESE TWO ATTRACTIONS?**

24 A. The Conservancy is a non-profit organization that operates on the island and

1 focuses on stewardship of the island's natural resources. It hosts educational  
2 programs, conducts research, runs a summer internship program, and provides  
3 stewardship programs (such as turtle monitoring). I suspect that any day tripper  
4 who ventures beyond the island marina would visit the Conservancy. It is one of  
5 the main attractions for visitors.

6 Old Baldy is another major attraction on the island. One of the oldest  
7 lighthouses in North Carolina, Old Baldy is easily accessible via a short walk from  
8 the island's marina. Visitors can climb the lighthouse for a vista of the island, and  
9 there are various historical materials in the gift shop at its base.

10

11 **Q. ASIDE FROM TOURISTS AND RESIDENTS, WHO ELSE RELIES ON**  
12 **THE FERRY?**

13 A. In addition to tourists and residents, the ferry transports employees and contractors.  
14 During the day, the island is operated by hundreds of Village employees, workers  
15 at retail stores and restaurants, and contractors and tradesmen. Few, if any, of these  
16 workers reside on the island. Instead, they are daily passengers who rely on the  
17 ferry and barge to take them to and from their jobs. The island depends on these  
18 workers, and these workers depend on the ferry.

19

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

22 A. Yes. I park every day at the Deep Point ferry terminal parking facilities.

23

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

3 A. As an employee of the Village, I park in the lot designated for contractors. We refer  
4 to the lot as the “Contractor Lot.” To my knowledge, Village employees, retail  
5 employees, and construction laborers are the sole users of the Contractor Lot. No  
6 overnight parking is allowed in the Contractor Lot, so those who use the lot must  
7 arrive and park there every morning and remove their vehicles before the evening.  
8 As a Village employee, I have a pass card that gives me access to the Contractor  
9 Lot. The Village pays for my parking.

10 My typical schedule is to take the 6:30 a.m. contractor ferry in the mornings.  
11 The contractor ferry is a no-frills (island tram or baggage) ferry that is specifically  
12 scheduled for workers and contractors—although the same boats can also be used  
13 for regular passengers, depending on need. I usually arrive in the Contractor Lot  
14 around 5:45 a.m. At that time, the lot is about a quarter full, as some contractors  
15 and employees have already parked and taken the 5:30 a.m. contractor ferry. When  
16 I leave the island in the afternoon and return to my car, the Contractor Lot is usually  
17 80% full, as many of the other island workers have not yet returned from the island.

18 Although the number of vehicles in the Contractor Lot can fluctuate some  
19 based on the level of construction activity on the island and whether we are in the  
20 height of summer tourist season, the lot has consistently been pretty full as of late.  
21 That is likely because it is both the busiest time of the year for seasonal workers  
22 and there are about 50 houses being constructed now, plus some commercial  
23 projects, as well as some home repairs and renovations.

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

3 A. No. In fact, there are “No Parking” signs up and down Ferry Road SE, which is the  
4 road that leads to the entrance to the Deep Point property. I assume that if you park  
5 on Ferry Road SE, you will get towed, and I have never seen anybody try to park  
6 on that road.

7 I am not sure how far away you would have to go to find a place to park that  
8 was not in one of the terminal’s parking lots. It would be far away, and you would  
9 have to walk a significant distance to then reach the terminal. The Deep Point  
10 property is surrounded by neighborhoods, and beyond those neighborhoods there  
11 is not a lot of public parking in Southport. I am not aware of any public or  
12 commercial parking lot that is within walking distance of the terminal. The closest  
13 parking lot of which I can think is near Howe Street in Southport, and Howe Street  
14 is over a mile away from the Deep Point terminal.

15 I am also not aware of any public buses that have a stop near or at ferry  
16 terminal. Certainly, I have never seen any public buses making stops near or at the  
17 ferry terminal.

18

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

20 A. Yes, I had to use the barge once. The Village had a temporary construction trailer  
21 that we were using on the island, and I was responsible for getting the trailer  
22 removed from the island when we were done with it. I had to coordinate with the  
23 Village’s construction contractor and the barge reservation service, making sure we

1 could get the contractor's truck on the barge in the morning, have it pick up the  
2 trailer during the day, and then have the truck and trailer returned to the mainland  
3 on the barge in the evening.

4 One thing that is often overlooked by suppliers and contractors who are new  
5 to the island is the importance of not just getting construction trucks on the island  
6 in the morning, but getting them off in the evening. If a truck bringing materials  
7 fails to get a spot on an evening return barge, then the truck will be stuck on the  
8 island until the next day. If it is a Friday, the truck will be stuck on the island until  
9 Monday, as the barge does not operate on the weekend.

10

11 **Q. PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE BARGE AND TUG**  
12 **SERVICE.**

13 A. Although I have used the barge only once, my work for the Village is heavily  
14 influenced by the barge. As the Development Services Director, I oversee  
15 construction on the island, and the main challenge of building on Bald Head Island  
16 is the barge's schedule.

17 The barge is the lifeblood to construction on the island. First, with an island  
18 that is only accessible by boat, all material must come over on a boat. The vast  
19 majority of all construction materials and household items come over on the barge.  
20 The only exceptions would be small items that a passenger could carry onto the  
21 ferry and, if one owned a boat, whatever small items the boat owner could put on  
22 their boat.

23 Second, not only is the barge the means by which materials reach the island,



1 but the barge schedule dictates construction schedules. A contractor must plan his  
2 building schedule around access to the barge. Space on the barge is often booked  
3 well in advance, so it is difficult to get supplies to the island on short notice.  
4 Experienced contractors learned to schedule their deliveries and stock up on  
5 supplies in advance. New contractors immediately realize that they cannot get  
6 materials on a daily basis; they need to schedule deliveries well in advance based  
7 on the barge's schedule. On occasion, if there is a cancelled barge run, the  
8 cancellation can delay a construction schedule for days or weeks as they wait for  
9 the next opportunities for the needed building supplies to arrive.

10

11 **Q. WHAT MATERIALS COME OVER ON THE BARGE?**

12 A. The materials that come across the barge include everything needed to build and  
13 furnish a house. Lumber, nails, tiles, grout—you name it, it comes across on the  
14 barge. It also includes the delivery of appliances and furniture. The barge regularly  
15 transports furniture to the island.

16 In fact, very recently I was working with a contractor who was anxious for  
17 me to issue a certificate of occupancy that day because the furniture for the house  
18 was scheduled to be delivered the next day. The contractor knew that if the house  
19 did not receive the certificate of occupancy, the homeowners would not be allowed  
20 to move the furniture into the house as scheduled. The furniture delivery would  
21 have to be rescheduled and, given how full the barge has been, it could be weeks  
22 before the furniture could be delivered again. I would say that a large percentage of  
23 contractors, maybe as much as 40% or so, ask me to perform final inspections by a

1 certain date because they are expecting furniture to be delivered within a day or two  
2 of when they hope to get approval. The need to get construction approval finalized  
3 because the barge is scheduled to bring over furniture and appliances on certain  
4 date is a common topic in my role as a building inspector.

5 The barge also transports furniture off the island. The Village's Public  
6 Works Department offers a service to property owners of collecting and removing  
7 household items that can be donated to goodwill. Public Works regularly picks up  
8 furniture in its truck, loads the truck and the furniture on to the barge, and then  
9 disposes of the furniture on the mainland.

10 Similarly, as part of my duties, I am part of the post-storm Emergency  
11 Operations Team. I help conduct assessments of the island roads and do exterior  
12 inspections of structures to help assess damage to the island. After a major  
13 hurricane or other storm, it is common for damaged furniture, appliances, and other  
14 household items to have to be collected and transported off-island via the barge  
15 before they become a safety hazard.

16  
17 **Q. IS IT COMMON KNOWLEDGE ON THE ISLAND THAT THE BARGE IS**  
18 **THE APPROPRIATE VEHICLE FOR TRANSPORTING LARGE AND**  
19 **BULK ITEMS FOR HOUSEHOLD USE TO THE ISLAND?**

20 **A.** Absolutely. Without question. Unless you own a boat, or have access to someone  
21 else's private boat, the barge is the only way to get these items to the island.

22

23

- 1 Q. DOES THIS COMPLETE YOUR DIRECT TESTIMONY?
- 2 A. Yes.