Resolution 2015-07 in Opposition to Offshore Drilling Exploration and Activities off of the North Carolina Coast

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of the Interior includes the waters off North Carolina in their proposed exploration and development of offshore oil and gas off of the Atlantic Coast; and

WHEREAS, Beaufort's tourism based economy, fishing industry and quality of life depends on the health and welfare of our natural resources; and

WHEREAS, many of Beaufort's surrounding natural areas provide sanctuary and nesting/breeding grounds for diverse groups of migratory birds, turtles, whales, fish and other forms of wild life; and

WHEREAS, because the most generous estimates of the oil located in the mid-Atlantic leasing area are inconsequential when compared to global supplies, drilling off the North Carolina coast will have no significant impact on energy prices; and

WHEREAS, even a complete harvesting of all of the oil and natural gas resources in the mid-Atlantic leasing area would do nothing to reduce our nation's dependency on foreign oil; and

WHEREAS, the inherent risks to our region from off-shore oil and natural gas exploration and drilling have the potential to irrevocably harm our natural environment, our economic wellbeing, and our overall quality of life; and

WHEREAS, there are no revenue sharing arrangements in place that would compensate North Carolina coastal communities for the environmental risks taken in pursuit of offshore oil and natural gas; and

WHEREAS, barring proven gross negligence, the cap for damages in the event of an accident sits at $75 million; and

WHEREAS, the estimated revenues from off-shore exploration and mining of oil and natural gas fall far below the anticipated growth of revenues directly related to North Carolina's tourism industry; and
WHEREAS, The Town of Beaufort had previously submitted official comments to the Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management in opposition to exploration and drilling in the mid-Atlantic; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Beaufort stands with numerous other coastal North Carolina municipalities in their pursuit of shoreline protection and preservation.

Now, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE TOWN OF BEAUFORT formally opposes exploration, including seismic testing, and production of petroleum resources on the continental shelf or elsewhere off the coast of North Carolina.

ADOPTED, this the 10th day of August 2015.

Attest:

Richard Stanley, Mayor

Jennifer Allen, Town Clerk