

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Isle of Palms, South Carolina

May 9, 2007

A regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was held at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 9, 2007 in Council Chambers, City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Present were Committee Chairman Marino, Committee Member Mayor Sottile, City Administrator Tucker, Fire Chief Graham and Police Chief Buckhannon.

1. Call to Order and Welcome Chairman Marino called the meeting to order and stated that members of the press and the public had been duly notified in accordance with State Law.

2. Approval of Minutes: April 11, 2007 meeting

MOTION: Mayor Sottile made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 11, 2007 Public Safety meeting, as presented; seconded by Councilman Marino; MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

3. Citizen Comments

Brett Carlson, 2009 Country Manor Drive, Mount Pleasant

Mr. Carlson presented information regarding a proposal to have the Barrier Island Ecothon on Sunday, October 28, 2007. Administrator Tucker stated that there have been minimal problems with this event in the past, and it occurs at a time of low impact because fewer people are on the island. She noted that the insurance requirements must still be met, and all other previous requirements as in the past.

MOTION: Mayor Sottile made a motion to approve the Barrier Island Ecothon to be held on Sunday, October 28, 2007, as long as all requirements are met; seconded by Councilman Marino; MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

Chris Donovan, 2403 Waterway Boulevard

Ms. Donovan stated she is concerned that kiteboarders are not aware of the City rules to keep a distance of 100 feet from the swimmers. She suggested the city install signs to inform kiteboarders of the rules. Ms. Donovan submitted a petition to the Committee with signatures requesting the signs.

Jim Warrington, 125 Charleston Boulevard

Mr. Warrington agreed with Ms. Donovan's remarks and suggested that these signs could be bolted to the signs at beach access roads already in place from Breach Inlet to 6th Avenue.

Councilman Marino noted last year he had dropped off brochures at the Air store to educate their customers of the Isle of Palms rules.

Mayor Sottile agreed the signage would be appropriate from Breach Inlet to 8th or 9th Avenue. Chief Buckhannon will work with the sign shop. Ms. Donovan added that the owner of the Air store would probably be willing to supply a kiteboarding sticker to place on the signs. Chief Graham noted that it would be important to also include surfers on the sign.

Residents from Twenty-fifth Avenue

The residents of Twenty-fifth Avenue presented information regarding the use of their residential area as a place of parking and boat loading/unloading for people going to Goat Island, instead of using the marina.

Allan Rama, 7 Tabby Lane

Mr. Rama stated a North Charleston resident has been parking his car on Twenty-fifth Avenue frequently and swimming to Goat Island. Boats are also tying up to his seawall daily. Chief Buckhannon instructed Mr. Rama to place “no trespassing” signs on his seawall so charges can be easily filed. Mr. Rama added that a dumpster was placed there for four days, and people were dumping their trash in it at 5:00 a.m. Mayor Sottile responded that the City has endorsed Charleston County’s request to put a dumpster there one or two times a year for a short period of time; however, the 5:00 a.m. dumping is a violation of the noise ordinance.

Don Johnson, 41st Avenue

Dr. Johnson stated he lives at the end of 25th Avenue. He presented a letter from his neighbors, Billy Mitchell and Frances O’Dell. They stated that people are parking on their street and blocking their driveway, sometimes making it impossible to get in or out. Mr. Mitchell had one trespass notice issued. He noted he believed “No Parking” signs will not alleviate the problem; that signs need to indicate boats should not be docked at the rocks, as is currently taking place.

Administrator Tucker stated that the Police department has been trying to enforce; they will increase their patrol in the area. A letter will be written to SCDOT concerning the signs, because the City needs their approval. She added that the Department of Natural Resources and SCE&G will be contacted for their input. The Police Chief added that they cannot write a ticket for launching, or loading a boat there right now. Mayor Sottile stated it should be added to the ordinance.

Jimmy Carroll, 11 Tabby Lane

Mr. Carroll stated that the people of Goat Island do not pay Isle of Palms taxes, but yet Isle of Palms residents are affected by the dumpster brought for their use, and the noise they create coming and going from their boats.

Councilman Marino stated they will contact the City Attorney to see how this can be resolved. In the meantime, the Police Department will increase patrol of the area, and enforce no parking.

Lastly, Mr. Rama inquired about the end of the street becoming a park. Administrator Tucker informed him that a resident had expressed an interest in making it a park, and she had responded to the resident that the residents living in the area of 25th Avenue and Waterway might not approve of that idea. Mr. Rama asked that it be on the record that he is totally against this idea.

Rick Linville

Mr. Linville was not present at the meeting. Mr. Linville had sent a response to the Administrator concerning the City's permit request to establish a public safety outpost. Mayor Sottile noted during a conversation with Mr. Linville, he stated his main concern was that no one from the City talked with him. The proposed outpost is next to his condominium, and he owns the building containing Coconut Joes. Mr. Linville's biggest concern is that part of sand dunes would be taken out, leaving his property susceptible to high tides and storms. Councilman Marino noted Mr. Linville should be included in the dialogue, and stated he thought the plan was to build a ramp over the dunes. Chief Graham clarified by stating the goal is to go over as much as possible and not breach the dunes.

Michelle Powell, 1917 Falling Creek Circle, Mount. Pleasant

Ms. Powell teaches environmental science at Wando High School and would like to hold a walk on the beach on June 16, 2007 with approximately 30-100 students to raise awareness and donations for "Invisible Children," an organization to help young Uganda males who are unwillingly taken away to train to become rebel soldiers. They plan to start at the Pier, walk to Breach Inlet and return. Administrator Tucker stated the main concerns are: insurance is required to cover the event, staff support needs from the City; parking, and no commercial activity is allowed on the beach (selling, advertising). Mayor Sottile suggested having registration and staging for the event at the high school, then the group come to the beach to walk. Ms. Powell stated she would research that idea.

4. Old Business

Mayor Sottile recommended skipping to Items B and C (Public Safety Complex Review and Public Safety Outpost) because Councilman Taylor has strong concerns regarding these items, and was unable to be at tonight's meeting. Mayor Sottile proposed a special meeting on Friday afternoon when he returns. Administrator Tucker noted that Item D (FY07/08 Budget) is directly effected by these two agenda items. Councilman Marino stated he would inform the Administrator of his schedule for Friday afternoon in time to advertise a special meeting. He also stated that Items B, C, and D under Old Business will not be discussed tonight, but at a future special meeting.

A. Island-wide parking study – RFP (Status)

Administrator Tucker informed the Committee that no responses were received to the RFP, and suggested the Committee authorize Chief Buckhannon to attempt to negotiate with a couple of vendors. The Committee agreed.

E. Fire Station 2 Construction Update

Administrator Tucker stated she will take a tour of the facility next Wednesday and hoped the identifying placards will be on the rooms.

F. Livability Matters Status: Officer and Hotline

The position vacancy has been re-advertised in more newspapers. Chief Buckhannon reported that approximately ten (10) applications have been received so far. Dispatch has been answering a lot of hotline calls. The Mayor inquired what types of cases the Livability Officer will handle. Chief Buckhannon noted that the officer will handle issues related to zoning, parking, beach and dog violations. Incidents in rental homes, including alcohol, are heard in the Livability Court. Judge Harper will hear traffic citations, alcohol issues with motor vehicles or in the streets, and all other criminal cases. Councilman Marino suggested a magnet be designed with the Hotline phone number on it to place in rental units and for the residents. Chief Buckhannon stated he wants to develop a magnet and brochure, but is waiting on input from the Livability Officer when hired.

G. Status of Modifications to Emergency Beach Accesses

Chief Graham reported that 5th Avenue has been cleared and the sandshell has been laid. They pulled up the temp trail at 9th Avenue. They have widened up to the dune and are waiting on the permit to work further. She added that the temp trail for both 9th Avenue and 42nd Avenue would be about \$2,000 above the budget of \$30,000. Brush was removed from 42nd Avenue, but they were on the City side of where the permit would authorize. The 53rd Avenue access was cleaned, widened and sandshell was put down.

MOTION: Mayor Sottile made a motion to approve an extra \$2,000 from the Municipal Accommodations Fund for this project; seconded by Councilman Marino; MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

Administrator Tucker stated a response letter, signed by Chief Graham, needs to be sent to OCRM regarding Mr. Linville's letter concerning the public safety outpost.

H. Triathlon Review

Administrator Tucker reported that the greatest impact of the Triathlon falls on the Isle of Palms, and the last event was extremely large. The concerns of the City need to be shared with the other communities involved that the bulk of the events falls on the Isle of Palms. The Mayor stated, when the City meets with the other communities, the goal of the event needs to be determined. They claim they want the event to get bigger and bigger. It appears participation might need to be limited. The event is a great event, but the City cannot handle it getting larger. Chief Buckhannon reported that the Mount Pleasant Traffic Sergeant was also concerned. The Mayor stated that because Mount Pleasant Councilman Gary Santos is involved with this event, the Mount Pleasant Administrator Mac Burdette should also be asked to attend the meeting.

I. No Wake Zone

Administrator Tucker reported that the Department of Natural Resources is considering the City's request for the no wake zone.

J. Connector: Update of Thermoplasty

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) has informed the City that there is a contract which includes the bridge. Administrator Tucker noted that by the time this is accomplished the City may have other problems as all the painting is fading.

(5) New Business

A. Discussion of Parking Twenty-fifth Avenue

This was discussed previously in the meeting. Administrator Tucker added that the street could be taken out of the State system and become a private road. Chief Buckhannon added that he will need to contact PUPS before installing the signs. Mayor Sottile stated that the Public Works Committee needs to consider the dumpster issue. Councilman Marino added that the City will still need to adopt an ordinance even if it becomes a private road, as the Police need to be able to enforce boaters not tying to the rocks. Administrator Tucker noted that another possibility is to make this area an emergency boat launch for the City's emergency responses and post the area accordingly. The Attorney will be consulted regarding an ordinance that the Police Department can enforce.

B. Discussion of Ordinance Related to Commercial Vehicles Parking in Residential Neighborhoods

Chief Buckhannon stated that the current ordinance does not give his department the authority to require school buses to be moved. The ordinance covers commercial vehicles with more than two axles. Because activity buses and school buses are two axles, they are not included in the restriction. The intent of the ordinance was to not have commercial vehicles in residential area. Chief Buckhannon has responded to complaints about this.

MOTION: Mayor Sottile moved to ask the City Attorney to draft an ordinance that addresses buses parking in the residential area; seconded by Councilman Marino; MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. Prioritization of Projects over \$250,000

Mayor Sottile stated that the only items on the list should be items previously approved by Council. The items ranked by this Committee were: 1) Fire Station #1 and Outpost; 2) Drainage Project; 3) Marina Bulkhead; 4) Reconfiguration of Ballfields.

6. Highlights of Department Reports

A. Fire Department Monthly Report. The April 2007 report (**Exhibit A**) was included in the packet, and there were no questions by the Committee. Chief Graham did note that a little boy was diving into the surf (not off of anything) and hit his head and is paralyzed.

Mayor Sottile noted that a letter was received commending the Fire Department for their emergency help with a family member, because their actions probably saved her life.

B. Police Department Monthly Report. The April 2007 report (**Exhibit B**) was included in the packet, and there were no questions by the Committee.

Mayor Sottile noted that a letter was received complimenting the Police Department for their help near 56th Avenue.

7. Miscellaneous

A. Donation of Fire Hose

Chief Graham stated that they would like to donate a surplus fire hose that is over 10 years old. She stated they usually donate to the Fire Academy or to Town of Sullivan's Island Training facility.

MOTION: Mayor Sottile made a motion to donate the fire hose; seconded by Councilman Marino; MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

B. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Monday, June 11 at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.

MOTION: Mayor Sottile made a motion to go into executive session for a personnel matter; seconded by Councilman Marino, MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

Upon returning to regular session, Councilman Marino stated that they were in executive session concerning a personnel matter related to the Police Department. No action or votes were taken.

MOTION: Mayor Sottile made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Marino, MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Marino, Chairman