

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
**9:00am, Monday, October 7, 2019**  
**City Hall Council Chambers**  
**1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC**

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to order**

Present: Council Member Buckhannon (chair), Council Members Bell and Ward

Staff Present: Administrator Fragoso, Chief Cornett, Chief Graham, Director Kerr

**2. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

Council Member Bell made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2019 meeting, and Council Member Ward seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.

**3. Citizen's Comments**

Jim Smiley, 16 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue, spoke to the Committee regarding public parking on Ocean Boulevard. He reviewed the history of his concern about this issue including reading a letter from Neil Robinson to Charles Way dated August 3, 2015 and the letter from Charles Way to the former Isle of Palms Mayor Dick Cronin. He asked the Committee to consider installing resident permit parking signs on the landward side of Ocean Boulevard between 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Inlet Lane to allow IOP residents reasonable access to the beach in those areas.

George Page, 5 Forest Trail Court 1, spoke to the Committee about Ordinance 2019-16. He read from the current code, stating he believes the City already has enough enforcement capabilities to better deal with the house next door to him. He said if this house were located across the street from the entrance to Wild Dunes, the issue would have already been dealt with.

Susan Page, 5 Forest Trail Court 1, also spoke to the Committee regarding Ordinance 2019-16. She stated she is concerned the Committee is losing momentum to move forward with this ordinance due to concerns raised by some citizens. She said it was the job of Council members to inform the public on the intent of the ordinance. She added that the suggestion that neighborhoods create HOAs to deal with these sort of issues is an unrealistic expectation. She also said that if any of the Council or staff had to look at this house every day, they would have done something about it by now.

Jim Owens, 2805 Palm Boulevard, gave an "Attaboy" to Jason Smith, saying to Chief Graham that he is a "great guy." He asked Chief Cornett to do more enforcement on people driving golf carts on the sidewalks. He also said more speed enforcement needs to be done in the area of 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and a permanent speed sign is needed there in both

directions. Lastly, he shared that the postmistress is close to signing a contract with a towing company to tow all who illegally park in the Post Office. He suggested more signage in that area so people know not to park there.

4. **Old Business**

A. **Consideration of Ordinance 2019-16 – An ordinance to establish new standards for dilapidated structures**

Administrator Fragoso began the discussion by reviewing some of the changes made to the draft ordinance since the City Council meeting and the last committee meeting. A lengthy discussion ensued about how the City has dealt with the house on Forest Trail Court, interpretation of items in the current code and their enforceability, and the need for the City to have an ordinance on the books that “raises the bar on what is considered unacceptable” to allow the City more grounds on which to deal with dilapidated structures. Both Administrator Fragoso and Director Kerr noted that the property owner has done all that the City has asked him to do but has done so at the bare minimum. They also said that it is their understanding that even if this ordinance passes, there is nothing in the ordinance that will make that particular house look well-manicured and up to the standards of the neighbors.

**MOTION: Council Member Bell made a motion for the Committee to move forward with Ordinance 2019-16. Council Member Buckhannon seconded the motion.**

**MOTION: Council Member Ward made a motion to suspend the rules of order to allow Ms. Page to speak during the discussion. Council Member Buckhannon seconded the motion.**

Ms. Page expressed concern over why the staff and Committee members did not think this ordinance will fix the problem. Director Kerr said the Committee is “walking a tightrope” on this issue. He reported the house is not as unsafe as it looks and the property owner will “selectively demolish” any concern addressed to him. Council Member Ward said he would expect his elected officials to do something about this issue but do it in a way as to not waste City resources. Council Member Buckhannon said he believes current code gives the City enough enforcement, but Director Kerr said he does not believe a judge would see it the same way.

**VOTE: A vote was taken and the motion to move forward with Ordinance 2019-16 passed unanimously.**

B. **Update on improvements for 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Palm Boulevard golf cart path**

Administrator Fragoso reported the path “encroaches on the Beachside Community property line. Staff has been going back and forth with them because their lot lines do not show the path as actually encroaching but ours does.” In the meantime, she said she has asked Public Works to lay down shell or gravel in the areas of soft sand along the path

during the winter months. She said the process for improving the whole space is lengthy and will take allocating funds in the next year's budget.

5. **New Business**

A. **Discussion of reducing the speed limit on Palm Boulevard between 10<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> avenues.**

Council Member Buckhannon said he added this to the agenda due to complaints he has heard about this area. Council Member Bell said that in addition to a lowered speed limit there needs to be more enforcement. Administrator Fragoso briefly explained the process for petitioning DOT to decrease the speed limit. She noted that the justification for such a change should be more about pedestrian safety and or traffic congestion and not concerns about speeding.

Chief Cornett noted that while only 13 speeding tickets for that area were given in September, over 200 warnings were issued. He said he is always in support of reducing speed limits and will look more closely at the accidents in that area.

**MOTION: Council Member Buckhannon made a motion to bring this issue before the full City Council for a vote to direct staff to contact DOT to begin the process of a speed study. Council Member Bell seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

B. **Discussion of 2019 beach parking plan after action assessment**

Administrator Fragoso distributed and reviewed a brief presentation of findings from the staff's after-action assessment. She briefly discussed the staff's assessment of the changes to the parking plan that were implemented this year, including the year-round enforcement of the parking regulations, parallel parking only and double parking prohibited on Palm Boulevard between 21<sup>st</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue, no trailer parking on Waterway Boulevard, the new residential only areas on 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Chief Cornett discussed the challenges associated with enforcing the prohibition of double parking on Palm Boulevard. He stated that the ordinance defines double parking as "Parking on the passenger side of any vehicle that is parallel parked along the right-of-way" which is difficult to enforce due to the officers' inability to identify what vehicle doubled parked and where the public right-of-way ends and the private property line begins.

Administrator Fragoso presented graphs showing the number of citations issued in the municipal parking lot and on street parking on Ocean Boulevard and indicated the need for continued funding of parking patrol officers to assist in enforcing the parking laws and ensure that visitors are paying to park in the paid parking areas.

Other topics for discussion included extending resident parking to 24/7 instead of just 9am-6pm, adding additional dedicated areas for golf cart parking, parking along Ocean Boulevard as presented by Dr. Smiley, extending the 4 feet off rule along Palm Boulevard between 41<sup>st</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> Avenues and paid parking on Palm Boulevard.

Administrator Fragoso stated that the implementation of the 4 feet off rule on the public right-of-way between 53<sup>rd</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue would eliminate parking in that area due to the location of the swale ditch. This would impact the City's ability to meet the City's definition of public access which could hinder the City's ability to secure state and federal funding for beach restoration in that area of the beach. The implementation of some of these ideas would require changes to the City Code, signs, which would require appropriate funding.

Administrator Fragoso reported that she is in discussion with Wild Dunes to investigate other parking options for construction workers parking in the right-of-way, including using the municipal parking lot and continuing their shuttle service.

Council Member Bell requested a map showing where the City provides public parking and the allowable maximum and minimum parking space requirements in those areas. Administrator Fragoso said Stantec has developed such a map but added that it has always been City Council's position and a requirement of the Beachfront Management Act to enhance and not restrict parking for public access.

**MOTION: Council Member Bell made a motion to implement 4' off pavement parking from 41<sup>st</sup> to 53<sup>rd</sup> avenues. Council Member Buckhannon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Administrator Fragoso expressed concern about presenting a piecemeal approach of changes to the parking plan to the Council at different times.

## 6. **Highlights of Departmental Reports**

### A. **Fire Department – Chief Graham**

Chief Graham reviewed the departmental report provided to the Committee. She stated that the teamwork exhibited between City Hall and the fire and police departments during Hurricane Dorian is the best she has seen in her years of service at the Isle of Palms. Administrator Fragoso shared the staff is working to better organize and clarify the emergency action plan.

Discussion ensued about restricting access to the island before, during, and after a storm requiring an evacuation. Chief Cornett said he cannot have officers on the connector during a storm due to the winds and he would need permission from DOT to implement road closures. He also pointed out that if people wanted to access the island via boat before, during, or after a storm they could still do so. Administrator Fragoso said staff was in constant communication with Sullivans Island about whether or when to restrict access to the islands. She said the City's website states access to the island following a storm may be restricted to only residents. She and Chief Cornett will look into ideas for pre-storm restrictions.

**B. Police Department – Chief Cornett**

Chief Cornett reported he is moving an officer into a position that focuses on emergency management issues, including dealing with the paperwork that occurs as a result of any large-scale emergency. He reviewed the newly formatted report provided to the committee noting that some of the numbers may look low due to elimination of some redundant reports.

**7. Miscellaneous Business**

The next meeting will be held at 9:00am on Monday, November 4, 2019 in City Hall Council Chambers.

**8. Executive Session – none required**

**9. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:19am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane  
City Clerk