

Public Works Committee
4:00 p.m., Wednesday, June 5, 2019

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held at 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, June 5, 2019 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmember Smith and Chair Rice, Administrator Fragoso, Public Works Director Pitts and Clerk Copeland; a quorum of the Committee was present to conduct business. Councilmember Kinghorn was absent.

1. Chair Rice called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and public were duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

MOTION: Councilmember Smith moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of May 7, 2019 as submitted; Chair Rice seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Citizens' Comments

Katrina Limbach, 5 Duck Lane, was back to the Committee wanting to work with the City on an official trash/litter themed beach campaign; she said that she has some ideas, but did not know the right time to bring them up. She wanted to include the local businesses and short-term rental companies to assist in getting the word out about the new ordinances and suggestions about how to better approach the beach and live in a cleaner way when they are on the island. Since her background is in public relations, she would very much like to be involved; she said that she was willing and anxious to be a part of whatever the City does to promote a cleaner beach. She also asked for an update on the lidded trashcans for the beach, and she was told that, at three hundred dollars (\$300) each and with some one hundred fifty (150) barrels deployed on the beach plus those at the end of the beach accesses, they were cost prohibitive.

4. Departmental Reports for May 2019

Director Pitts reported that compared to May 2018, garbage was up only slightly while yard debris was down significantly from the prior year; he reminded the Committee that the island was still cleaning up from a storm a year ago. Miscellaneous garbage was about equal to last year; he believes that homeowners were still cleaning out and getting ready for the season. Personnel conducted ten (10) beach sweeps in the month, and the Director mowed the rights-of-way from 21st to 41st Avenues once – if the drought continues, they will not need to be mowed again anytime soon. DOT was on the island fixing sidewalks on Palm and Waterway Boulevard, and Eadies began the vac truck portion of the general ditch maintenance contract. In May, vehicle maintenance reached fifty-six hundred dollars (\$5,600); with less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) remaining in the vehicle maintenance budget, the Public Works Department will go over budget a couple of thousand dollars.

Director Pitts reported that four (4) candidates were interviewed for the Public Works Assistant Director of Facilities and Maintenance, and an offer has been made to one (1). Assuming he accepts the offer, he will begin on Tuesday, June 18th.

Responding to Councilmember Smith's question, the Director explained that a beach sweep happens when Public Works personnel remove the chairs, umbrellas, etc. that visitors have left on the beach and the Police Department has tagged as having been left on the beach overnight. They typically remove truckloads after a weekend.

The Director also reported that, on May 25th, some one hundred fifty (150) bags of restaurant garbage was all over the compactor and running down the pad; the employees who left it simply did not know to turn it on. The Director reached out to Captain Swain, and he contacted the restaurants involved for them to clean up the area and to train their wait staff on the proper operation of the compact. He has not had a problem since.

The Administrator reported that the message had been delivered that the situation was unacceptable and would not be tolerated.

5. Old Business

A. Update on Phase II Drainage

Administrator Fragoso reported that Thomas and Hutton was finishing up with the conceptual plans and the cost estimates, and they are to be sent to the City by the end of the week. She noted that they are also selecting the small and impactful projects to be done with the five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) earmarked in the FY20 budget; they expect to deliver them to the City in four to six (4 – 6) weeks.

B. Status of the renovations to the Public Works workshop

The Director said that two (2) items remain on the punch list, and two (2) pieces of furniture have not been delivered. In order to keep the workshop in pristine condition, the Director has hired the same crew that cleans City Hall for a weekly cleaning.

He also reported that the air conditioner has a new condenser and coil and is fully operational.

Once the furnishings come in, the Chair wants to hold a meeting in the workshop.

C. Update of general ditches and drainage issues

Director Pitts reported that Eadie's has been all over the island; he noted that the new financial software lists the specific streets/ditches that are included in each invoice for excellent record keeping.

Administrator Fragoso informed the Committee that she and Directors Kerr and Pitts met with representatives from SCDOT earlier in the day, and their personnel will be on the island beginning Monday to complete work orders that have been placed by residents and other small drainage projects in the SCDOT right-of-way. One (1) particular flooding issue they were asked to solve was on 25th Avenue, and the proposed solution was more comprehensive than staff had anticipated and could positively affect the problems on Tabby Lane. Tabby Lane resident's came to the Committee offering to fund the improvements. She reported that Director Kerr has contacted the property owners, and Thomas & Hutton has completed the design for the project according to SCDOT's recommendation. The City was going to allow SCDOT to proceed with their solution and then reassess the flooding/drainage situation for 25th Avenue, Tabby Lane and surrounding streets.

Responding to the Chair's question about the area on Hartnett between 30th and 31st Avenues, Director Pitts said that he had taken the County engineer there but no action has been taken; he said that he would reach out to the County again.

D. Update on Public Works Assistant Director

As the Director stated earlier, four (4) candidates were interviewed, and an offer has been made to one (1) of them. The Administrator indicated that they were negotiating the salary and expect to have him on-board beginning June 18th.

E. Update on dumpster location for Goat Island residents

Director Pitts had no update for the Committee.

6. New Business

A. Thomas & Hutton recommendations for small drainage projects

Administrator Fragoso reported that Thomas & Hutton would have the report ready in four to six (4 – 6) weeks.

B. Discussion of garbage on the beach

Chair Rice commented about the volume of garbage left on the beach Memorial Day weekend, and she asked Mr. Garrels, the City's contractor (JLG Enterprise) for beach garbage collection, to inform the Committee about what he is finding to be problematic on the beach.

3

Mr. Garrels stated that the whole weekend was terrible and the garbage was concentrated from the pier to Coconut Joe's. He indicated that, when he empties a barrel, he also tries to clean twenty to thirty (20 – 30) feet around it. He told the Committee that they would be surprised the people that are on the beach between midnight and 3:00 a.m.; he frequently sees people sitting on a blanket eating and drinking when he is picking up garbage. When he returns to the beach later to setup his chairs and umbrellas, he sees that the late night people simply got up and left everything where it was; he added that it has become a commonplace occurrence.

Answering Councilmember Smith, Director Pitts said that the late-night beachgoers has become a problem in the last six (6) years.

Mr. Garrels thought that these people were locals, not tourists staying in the condos, but residents of surrounding communities. He said that many people were coming to the beach from the municipal parking lot and down the ramp between 1140 Ocean and Sea Cabins; he noted that he has eight (8) trash barrels there that they were always overflowing, and he was dumping them twice a day sometimes. The bulk of the recycling he picks up is beer cans and beer and liquor bottles; he sees very little plastics.

Director Pitts explained that the responsibility for keeping the beach clean falls to the Public Works Department; therefore, when a piece of equipment breaks down that was used on the beach, he would call in two (2) of his lowest paid employees to clean the beach. Cleaning the beach by hand means emptying the garbage barrels. It is, at least, an eight (8) hour job for two (2) people; they will be paid at their overtime rate, and they might complete the job. The Director noted that Mr. Garrels has been adamant about doing the job himself while the equipment is being repaired;

his wife helped him one (1) day and he hired a young man to help him on another day. In an effort to keep costs down, Director Pitts has allowed Mr. Garrels to do the task, and, according to the Director, "he has done an exceptional job."

Councilmember Smith asked Mr. Garrels if he thought stepped up enforcement would help, but he was not sure it would help.

Since the City has only been able to hire five (5) of the ten (10) BSOs budgeted for, the Administrator told the Committee that the Public Safety Committee discussed following Kiawah and Seabrook in contracting for beach patrol services. These patrol officers are non-certified persons who would be authorized to issue municipal summons for violations of the City's ordinances on the beach. She noted that this would produce another expense, and she was not sure that they would expand their services to the Isle of Palms. With the shortage of BSOs, she stated that the City could not dedicate officers or BSOs to patrol the beach for City Code violations.

The Committee agreed with the need to run an educational campaign and to take advantage of Ms. Limbach's talents and enthusiasm. Chair Rice urged Mr. Garrels to contact her or Director Pitts about any ideas he has that might help him to do his job.

C. Discussion of construction and household garbage and debris

Chair Rice commented that construction projects were happening all over the island and that the contractor did not have a dumpster on site; she asked if the City had a means of requiring a dumpster to hold construction debris.

Director Kerr said that he thought the City could enact an ordinance requiring a dumpster, but, when he and the Administrator discussed it, they questioned how one would distinguish between those projects that must have a dumpster and which do not. The Director said that the Building Department is alerted to three or four (3 - 4) jobs per year that need dumpsters, but do not have them. Maybe twice a year, a massive pile has been left for Public Works to pick up, and they do not do it; it must be removed by the property owner or the contractor.

As the Building Inspector travels the island, he has not noticed a problem he thought deserved addressing, and Director Pitts has not had anyone contact him about a particular address that was problematic. Director Kerr recommended that, when the Chair sees or is contacted about a problem with construction debris to report it to him or Director Pitts.

Director Pitts said that, if a resident is renovating a bathroom himself, the City will pick up construction debris when it is placed on the street; if a contractor is re-doing a bathroom, the City does not pick it up.

Chair Rice has seen homeowners with a do-it-yourself renovation create tremendous amounts of debris, and the projects continues for months. She does not think the City should remove it and that the homeowner should be required to get a dumpster.

If the pile was massive, Director Pitts said that he would call with the Livability Officer or Director Kerr.

Another of the Chair's complaints involved those contractors or residents who fill a pickup truck with debris and go across the Connector with their debris blowing out all along the way; she questioned that the City had an ordinance requiring that the debris be covered and tied down.

According to Director Pitts, enforcement of the debris blowing off a truck would fall to the Police Department as littering violations; it is a state law that such debris must be covered. He also stated that enforcement could only happen when the contractor was caught in the act.

Councilmember Smith asked Director Kerr if any instructions or statement of the City's expectations were given to contractors when they got their permits.

Director Kerr responded that, when ordinances change that affect their work, the Building Department staff does have an educational period, for instance when the work hours were changed a couple of years ago; however, they do not have a standard packet of information for contractors.

The Chair advocated having a handout for contractors about their responsibility to remove building materials and other debris from the island, and, if the materials and/or debris were removed in an open truck, they must be securely covered so that it will not blow off.

Administrator Fragoso told the Committee that, when the City received a complaint about debris blowing off trucks and onto the Connector, it was typically accompanied with photographs identifying the company, and the City then contacts the company and warns it about any future violations of littering laws.

Director Kerr said that he could definitely produce a poster with the State code on it related to covering loose materials in a truck; he suggested that the City could have a different message for each month, for instance, securing a construction site prior to a major storm, requiring drainage plans for new construction, etc.

Director Pitts stated that, when a large pile of construction materials is left for the City to remove, he is notified by one (1) of the drivers and asked to come to the address involved.

Use of the City's website and social media sites were also referenced as good ways to get the message to contractors and do-it-yourselfers.

A final issue for the Chair was, when houses were cleaned out, the family members frequently put all of the furniture, carpet, books, etc. on the street for Public Works to remove. She wanted to know the Director's policy on this type of debris and if he wanted to continue the practice of removing it. She asked if he thought that type of debris should be contained in some way to keep it from blowing around.

Director Pitts stated that he did not know how it would be enforced since the person(s) must be caught in the act; he reported that these large piles show up in the spring and fall. He referenced the May monthly report that showed forty-four tons (44 T.) of miscellaneous garbage was taken to the landfill; miscellaneous garbage is furniture, mattresses, books, etc. In addition, he said that all municipalities pick up miscellaneous garbage. He stated that the Public Works personnel typically picks up miscellaneous garbage on Wednesdays although they cannot get to the whole island in one (1) day.

Just as residents cannot put their household garbage out until 5:00 p.m. the day before the scheduled pickup by ordinance, Chair Rice suggested that a copycat ordinance be adopted regarding miscellaneous garbage.

Director Pitts said that, if miscellaneous garbage pickup was limited to one (1) day and the truck was full at 21st Avenue, the remainder of the island would not be picked up since the round trip to Bees Ferry took three (3) hours. The remaining two (2) days of the week would be consumed with garbage pickup although it takes more than one (1) day to pick up yard/miscellaneous debris on the island; in reality, yard/miscellaneous debris is picked up five (5) days a week.

Chair Rice expressed amazement that so many island residents did not know that Wednesday was the pickup day for miscellaneous garbage, so she suggested a short educational piece on Facebook to inform people about the garbage schedule. She also thought that having a sticker with the annual garbage schedule placed on garbage roll-out carts, similar to Charleston County's recycling calendar, would be effective.

According to Director Pitts, the amount of miscellaneous/yard debris drops dramatically during the months of June, July, August and September.

D. Discussion of the ordinances related to the connection to the public sewer system that were deferred:

- **Ordinance 2017-08 - An Ordinance to Require that all Subdivisions of Lots be Connected to the Public Sewer System and to Require Certain Information Related to Sewer Connection for the Subdivision Approval Process.**
- **Ordinance 2017-09 - An Ordinance to Provide That All New Construction or Substantial Improvements shall be Connected to a Public Sewer System Where a Public Sewer Line is Located Within One Hundred Fifty (150') feet and to Reduce the Lot Coverage Requirements and Floor Area Requirements for lots with Septic Systems**
- **Ordinance 2017-10 - An Ordinance to Require Mandatory Connection to Public Sewer System Where Public Sewer Line is Available upon the Sale or Transfer of Property.**

With Councilmember Kinghorn's absence in mind, the Chair deferred this item until the next meeting.

7. Miscellaneous Business

Next Meeting date: 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, August 7th in the Conference Room

8. Executive Session – not needed

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Councilmember Smith moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:08 p. m.; Chair Rice seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk