



Public Safety Committee
1:00pm, Thursday, June 4, 2020
Virtual Meeting via Zoom call due to COVID-19 Pandemic
broadcasted live on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms>

MINUTES

1. Call to order

Present: Council members Buckhannon, Ward, and Pounds

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

2. Approval of previous meeting's minutes – May 13, 2020

Council Member Pounds made a motion to approve, and Council Member Bell seconded the motion. The minutes passed unanimously.

3. Citizens' Comments

Administrator Fragoso reported comments were received about parking along Ocean Boulevard, paid parking, dogs on the beach. Those comments are attached to the minutes.

4. Old Business

A. Discussion of implementing paid parking on the designated public beach parking zones and discussion about Ocean Boulevard parking

Administrator Fragoso gave a detailed presentation about the history and future implementation of paid parking on the Isle of Palms. The presentation reviewed the mission of the managed beach parking plan, the operating expenses of parking management, the existing right-of-way parking zones and the areas to consider adding paid parking. A detailed implementation timeline was presented to Committee members. Administrator Fragoso noted City staff needs direction from City Council regarding areas in which to implement additional paid parking, days and times of enforcement, parking rates, and acknowledgement of the responsibility for road shoulder maintenance in those areas. The presentation is available on the City's website.

Administrator Fragoso said she is also researching to see if there are any cost savings in outsourcing the enforcement of paid parking.

B. Update on Public Safety Building rehabilitation project

Administrator Fragoso said the rehabilitation project is ahead of schedule and on budget. Anticipation completion is November 2020. She reviewed what is currently being done on the

inside and outside of the building. She invited all City Council members to schedule a walk-thru of the building with the project manager.

C. Discussion of existing rules for dogs on the beach

Administrator Fragoso pointed to a document in the meeting packet comparing dog rules across local beach communities. Committee members asked City staff to develop recommendations for dog leash laws based on community input.

D. Discussion of recommendations from Planning Commission related to short-term rentals

Director Kerr reported that Attorney Copeland did have a suggestion regarding the business license revocation process that she will speak about to the full City Council at the next meeting. Committee members agreed that requiring short-term rental owners to post their license number in their advertising was not good practice as not all business license holders are required to do so.

MOTION: Council Member Ward made a motion to recommend to full City Council on the recommendations from the Planning Commission including requiring an owner's representative to be onsite within a hour of being called, limiting the daytime occupancy, and (upon advice from the City's attorney) changing the business license revocation process after 5 founded complaints within a calendar year. Council Member Pounds seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. New Business

A. Discussion of beach parking at the Recreation Center, 27th and 28th Avenues

Administrator Fragoso said staff discussed limiting parking at the Recreation Center would be hard to enforce since it is uncertain who is going to the beach and who is participating in Recreation Center activities. Chief Cornett added that limiting parking there cannot be enforced without changes to the parking plan and City ordinance. Administrator Fragoso said she will look into language that could add the Recreation Center parking lot to the parking plan.

B. Discussion of exception in the City Code that allows "Hobie Cat" style sailboats, which are operable and in good condition to be left on the beach

Administrator Fragoso stated that current City code allows the exception for beachfront property owners to leave "Hobie Cat" style sailboats on the beach. The Police Department will be identifying the owners of the boats currently on the beach, and if they are found to be abandoned, they will be removed.

7. Highlights of Departmental Reports

A. Fire Department – Chief Graham

Chief Graham reviewed the calls for service and notable events for the Fire Department in May. She shared that the high quality of the work being done at the Public Safety building is very evident.

B. Police Department – Chief Cornett

Chief Cornett reported there were 2400 calls for service in May, 2331 parking tickets were issued, and 176 other violations were written.

8. Miscellaneous Business

The next meeting of the Public Safety Committee will be Monday, July 6, 2020 at 9am.

9. Adjournment

Council Member Ward made a motion to adjourn, and Council Member Pounds seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:16pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk

Public Comment For City Meetings

Name

Mr. Kent Taylor Stair

Address

112 Charleston Blvd., IOP, South Carolina 29451

Comments for Council Meeting

It is my understanding that one of the issues for discussion on your agenda for today is "Ocean Boulevard parking." I do not know the background giving rise to this issue being raised, but I write in opposition to the proposal, particularly as it relates to the street as it approaches Breech Inlet.

I live at 112 Charleston Blvd., on one of the properties that was ocean front before new lots were created and the road added from 4th Avenue to serve the new properties across the newly created street. No parking has been permitted on that extended street since I bought my house in the late 90's and as the City tries, understandably, to control the number of people coming on to the island, the logic of adding parking seems counterproductive. There are, of course, compelling additional reasons to reject an extension of parking on our end of the island that are matters of true "public safety."

As you well know, the waters of Breech Inlet have claimed the lives of numerous people and have exhausted many of the City's emergency resources necessitated by rescuing countless people who should not have ventured into those currents. It is for that reason that the series of signs are erected by the City at the one entry point where public parking is allowed. In English and Spanish they prohibit swimming and wading, with a \$500 fine levied for those who (foolishly and illegally) disregard the warnings.

During Memorial Day weekend, my granddaughter was playing in one of the tidal pools created by the low tide on the beach directly across from our house. My daughter – and everyone else who visits us and goes to the beach – has been told of the dangers of Breech Inlet and the need to be careful when and where they go into the water. On that occasion, my daughter and I were comfortable that the particular wading pool in which the child was playing did not present any kind of danger, but one of the City's Beach Patrol came by and told them to get out of the "pool" because of the dangers of Breech Inlet. While, again, I didn't feel there was a danger under those particular circumstances, we really did appreciate the officer's expression of his sincere concern.

As we observed all else that was going on at the time, we did note the particular danger presented to the people who had been tempted (as the "unknowing" always are) to walk out on the ever-changing sandbars that go unbelievably far into the ocean at extreme low tide. What we knew – but they did not – was that as the tide turns and starts to quickly rise, they would be stranded on a sand bar that had lost its walking path back to the mainland. As a result, they would be quickly surprised to find themselves on a true "island" with the only way back being to swim in the deadly waters of Breech Inlet or to hope that the City's Emergency responders could be alerted – and available – to get there in time to save them from the waters that would ultimately consume their once innocent-appearing sandbar. I do not know where those people were from, but I can guarantee they were not local to that end of the island – because people who know the lay of that land and who appreciate its life-threatening dangers do not walk where those people so joyously went.

If the City extends parking to the public on this stretch of roadway, it needs to "factor in" the extraordinary financial resources necessary to keep the beach-goers safe from conditions that do not exist anywhere else on the island. I would also urge the City to consider its increased exposure to liability for the loss of life resulting from actively facilitating the placement of unknowing people in dangerous circumstances and/or the failure to constantly patrol that area (with bilingual officers) to assure that people

avoid the dangers that are known to the city and others who live in the area, but will not be known or fully understood by the visiting public.

At a time when the City is struggling with the economics of handling massive numbers of visitors, the idea of increasing the parking on the island and putting them in a place of known danger makes no sense. Like all citizens of the island, I appreciate the extreme challenges with which you deal to make everyone happy – but I do urge you to reject this ill-advised proposal.

If you would like to hear from me further on this issue, please let me know.

Kent Stair

Meeting This Comment is Intended For:
Public Safety Committee

Email Address

Public Comment For City Meetings

Name

Dana Andrassy Lanigan

Address

22 42nd Ave, Isle of Palms, South Carolina 29451

Comments for Council Meeting

I see the current dog rules are on the agenda. As a resident, I hope there are not additional limitations on beach rules for resident dogs under consideration. Our dogs are a big part of IOP life here.

Preaching to the choir I'm sure, but we continue to be alarmed at the lack of respect for the CDC and DHEC guidelines on IOP. Several of our bars and restaurants regularly have people crammed together, no masks, certainly no distancing, even employees not all all wearing masks. I went to get take out at the Dinghy (which I love) this week and couldn't get through the throng of partying tourists (seemed to be) to get in the door. I was literally the only person wearing a mask. I do realize our City Council has tried, but seems like there must be some way to enforce or incentivize better compliance. Thanks! Dana

Meeting This Comment is Intended For:

Public Safety Committee

Email Address

Public Comment For City Meetings

Name

Jeff Jacobs

Address

606 Ocean Blvd, Isle of Palms, South Carolina 29451

Comments for Council Meeting

Please read this one...took me three tries and false start submissions, before I opened up a Word Doc to send in. Sorry.

Good afternoon and thank you for taking up the dogs off leash matter. I live very near the site of the off the leash large dog attack that resulted in over 40 stitches to a woman. On any afternoon, I can easily view 4-6 dogs per hour running off leash at a time when only 5-9am is permitted.

I view this much like the short-term rental noise issue we had many years ago. The solution is the same: Don't outlaw dogs on the beach or penalize legal dog ownership but enforce the laws already on the books. Adjust the fines, as you recently did with parking, for maximum effect. Recall how some folks screamed when their cars were towed from the post office lot? Guess how many are parked there now after word got around?

I understand kinder, gentler, so first, make sure the leash laws and penalties are posted at the beach access with the bag box. Start with a small fine, say \$20 for those who say, "I didn't know". I can see an issue of identification or lack thereof. So, document the dog's name and veterinarian, as a tag is mandatory and required to confirm shots. You can track the owner through the vet if necessary. For second offenders, make it sting, \$100. For third offense, \$500 IOP dogs and any Mt. P. dogs with free IOP license have their address verified.

For those without dog tag, there should be very stiff penalty.

Since permits are free, why not issue a license on the spot with their address/phone. They might not have ID, but I bet they have their phone. You could tie the ticket to their phone.

This brings up the issue of out of state folks. As we know from short term rentals, you can issue a \$1,000 ticket, but it means nothing when they leave the state. Only if they return and are stopped for something else will you have a chance at collection. Solution: Fine must be paid while they are here. There should be a stipulation in every short-term rental contract that any IOP fines incurred while they are here will be paid by their credit card on file. They sign that and that should take care of most cases.

Final thought: there needs to be a conversation and understanding with the judge. In years past (not recently due to livability effort) I sat in court and watched the process. With the lamest of excuses or reasons, the judge either greatly reduced the penalty or eliminated it. This was both for parking and livability issues. He seemed concerned that the defendants were "pleased with the outcome". This leads to morale problem. How much will a city employee want to enforce a law knowing there will be little to no penalty? Human nature. I know you can't mandate sentence, but more enforcement and a bit less sympathy will have the desired effect.

Meeting This Comment is Intended For:
Public Safety Committee

Email Address

Public Comment For City Meetings

Name

Dudley Spangler

Address

124 Charleston Blvd, Isle of Palms, South Carolina 29451

Comments for Council Meeting

I am against parking on Ocean Blvd. It is legally included in the deed that parking on Ocean Blvd is not permitted. There is parking on all of the side streets that allow people to use the beach paths.

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