



Public Safety Committee
9:00am, Monday, July 6, 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

Also Present: Stuart Day, Stantec

2. Approval of previous meeting's minutes – June 4, 2020

Council Member Pounds noted that Council Member Ward was the second for the approval of the minutes in the June 4, 2020 minutes, not Council Member Bell.

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

3. Citizens' Comments

Administrator Fragoso read the citizens' comments into the record.

Kathleen Elizabeth, 11 Driftwood Lane, spoke in favor of mask mandate.

Madeleine Harrell, 2701 Cameron Blvd., spoke in favor of a mask mandate.

Mrs. Erth Murphy, 2 20th Avenue, spoke with concern about the speeds at the curve at 20th Avenue and Palm Blvd and would like to see something done about it.

James Smiley, 16 44th Avenue, presented options for dog leash laws, including obedience certification through the AKC.

Rusty Williamson, 605 Carolina Blvd, spoke with concern about the experience level of some of the Beach Services Officers.

Cindy Lee, 23 25th Avenue, spoke in favor of eliminating the parking on the landside of Palm Boulevard until blinking signs can be installed at crosswalks. She would also like to see the return of the weekly crime blotter.

MOTION: Council Member Ward made a motion to reorder the agenda to allow for the discussion of paid parking to be discussed as the first order of business. Council Member Pounds seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. New/Old Business

A. Discussion of eliminating parking on the landside of Palm Boulevard between 22nd and 40th Avenues due to public safety concerns

Administrator Frago reported that she had a meeting with SCDOT to discuss the potential changes to the City's parking plan to ensure the City would have the required amount of parking needed to qualify for Federal reauthorization monies. Stuart Day of Stantec reviewed the "DHEC OCRM Public Beach Access Facility Classification," and said the City will still have ample amounts of parking to qualify for that funding if the parking along the landside of Palm Boulevard was eliminated.

Chief Cornett expressed concern that eliminating parking on the landside of Palm Boulevard would push visitors into residential areas and would require constant staff presence in that area.

Committee members discussed the possible consequences of eliminating parking on the landside of Palm Boulevard. Other options considered included increasing the distance a car is required to park off the pavement, eliminating only a few blocks of parking on Palm Boulevard to allow for resident parking, and making more golf cart parking available. Committee members agreed it would be necessary to see a cost/benefit analysis for the partial elimination of parking along Palm Boulevard and options for increased residential and golf cart parking.

Committee members also discussed pressuring SCDOT to return to the Isle of Palms to reevaluate the traffic in front of the Sea Island Shopping Center now that it is a busier time of year.

Discussions regarding the managed beach parking plan:

- i. Implementing paid parking on the designated public beach parking zones**
- ii. Including the existing unregulated areas adjacent to the Recreation Center to the Residential Parking District**

The Committee reviewed and discussed several options for the paid parking program and the existing unregulated parking areas adjacent to the Recreation Center.

MOTION: Council Member Pounds made a motion to implement paid parking along both sides of Palm Boulevard including all of the existing right-of-way beach parking zones, and Breach Inlet parking lot, adding the right-of-way on Hartnett between 27th and 29th avenues to the residential district zone, and making enforcement hours consistent with the front beach and residential parking districts from 9am to 6pm March 1 to October 31 with a combination of parking rates consistent with the existing rates on the front beach. Council Member Ward seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Administrator Fragoso said she will have Treasurer Suggs provide data for the potential revenue loss from eliminating enforcement from March 1-15 and October 16-31.

5. Old Business

A. Update on Public Safety Building rehabilitation project

Administrator Fragoso reported the project is still on schedule and on budget. Chief Graham gave an update on the project status, stating they are 50-75% done with the new siding and paint. The insulation has been removed from the room and ready for new panels. Work is being done in the Police and Fire bays, the second floor has been painted and new flooring has been selected. The new HVAC is being installed on the third floor of the fire department.

B. Discussion of existing rules for dogs on the beach and consideration of recommendations from the Police Department

Chief Cornett reported that while more warnings have been issued regarding dog bites, these bite incidents have happened when dogs are permitted off leash. He said officers are making a concerted effort to educate the beachgoers about the rules for dogs on the beach.

Administrator Fragoso reviewed the dog ordinances from surrounding beach communities. Chief Cornett reviewed pros and cons of several options for amending current dog ordinances, including: allowing dogs to be off-leash in designated beach areas, allowing dogs with dog obedience certification off leash on the beach, requiring all dogs be on a leash on the beach, not allowing any pets on the beach during peak season, and setting year-round off-leash hours.

Committee members agreed no change in the City's ordinances is needed at this time and encouraged Chief Cornett to continue with increased enforcement and education of current ordinances.

7. Highlights of Departmental Reports

A. Fire Department – Chief Graham

Chief Graham reported there were 120 calls for service, including 31 beach/water-related calls in June. She said the training for the new truck has been completed and it is now in service. She also reported that the radio programming starts today. She shared the cost of refurbishing Engine 2 has increased, and the cost of a new truck is not considerably more. She will discuss this further with Administrator Fragoso.

B. Police Department – Chief Cornett

Chief Cornett reported there were 1,630 calls for service in June, 1,630 parking tickets were issued, and 102 incident reports were written along with five coyote sightings. He also reviewed the citations written for July 4, including aggravated assault and DUI. There was a significant increase in citations written for state law violations over last July 4. He commended the staff for their hard work in managing the holiday weekend.

He shared that he has received complaints from CDC about IOP Police Department staff taking dispatch calls. CDC is currently short-staffed, and he has directed his staff to dispatch calls that do not need to be routed through CDC, i.e., parking complaints. He told CDC his responsibility is to the people who live, work, and visit the Isle of Palms.

Regarding requests for a weekly crime blotter, he said he will add a link to Raidsonline to the Police Department's webpage.

Lastly, he shared that the concern he heard the most during community meetings was about speeding. He would like to institute traffic units once they are fully staffed.

8. Miscellaneous Business

The next meeting of the Public Safety Committee will be Monday, August 3, 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 10:34am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk