



**PUBLIC MEETING WITH POTENTIAL NEW MARINA OPERATOR**  
**5:30pm, Monday, July 11, 2022**  
**24 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Isle of Palms, SC**  
**broadcasted live on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms>**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Council members Bogosian, Hahn, Anderson, Ward, Streetman, Pierce, Miars, and Mayor Pounds;

**Also present:** Mike Schuler, CEO, Coastal Marinas, LLC

**Staff Present:** Administrator Fragoso, Director Kerr, various department heads

Mayor Pounds reviewed George Washington's Rules of Civility at the start of the meeting. He gave context and background for the assignment of the marina lease to Coastal Marinas, LLC. He also detailed some of what the lease allows and changes, such as ownership of the shared parking space, that will benefit residents. He said the purpose of tonight's meeting was to allow residents the opportunity to hear details about the marina directly from Mr. Schuler and to ask questions of Council, staff, and Mr. Schuler regarding the potential lease transfer.

Mr. Mike Schuler thanked the Council, staff, and community for their attendance at the meeting. He introduced himself as the CEO of Coastal Marinas, LLC and the owners of Seabreeze Marina, Old Village Yacht Club, Bohicket Marina, and Ripley Light Yacht Club. He believes his company has created a new level of concierge services related to marinas that are family and pet-friendly.

The plan for the marina is to not change what is already working, give IOP residents better access to the water, and upgrade the retail offerings and operations over time.

He said the vision is "simple: maintain the island community character of the Isle of Palms while investing time and resources to make responsible improvements to the marina and its operations over the course of time. We have 23 years. Resulting in a successful and sustainable marina that the entire community can be proud of."

Regarding potential noise creation, Mr. Schuler said, "We do not anticipate any changes that are likely to create noise issues. Furthermore, you have got my commitment here today: if any changes are made over the course of the next 23 years that negatively impact our neighbors, we need to hear about it, and we are not going to be supportive of it if it is going to negatively impact our neighbors."

He spoke to concerns about congestion at the marina, and he believes he can create efficiencies at the marina that will address and relieve that issue. He said the look, feel, and function of the

marina will remain largely the same. He will be focused on making it more efficient. He said the “family-friendly atmosphere is valued and will be improved.”

He stressed numerous times that changes at the marina will take place over a period of time.

Speaking directly to the issue of onsite beer and wine consumption, Mr. Schuler said, “the goal is to recognize the historic, current, and ongoing conditions regarding on-premise consumption.” He added that they are not opening a bar and are not planning on creating or encouraging a bar-like atmosphere.

He reviewed the current conditions around dry boat storage and spoke about potential opportunities for improvement. He said, “We are not building dry stack. Our go-forward plan is to operate as the marina is currently operating and hopefully do a better job.” They are studying different ways to create and operate efficient dry boat storage.

Of the boat club, Mr. Schuler said he believes it to be “the single most effective way to improve IOP resident access to the water.” He addressed concerns about noise, safety, priority access, and parking. He noted that any major changes to the marina will require collaboration with the City.

To a submitted question about kayak access at the marina, Administrator Fragoso said, “The City took possession of the public dock that was previously encumbered by a water sports operation. We are in the process of developing design plans for a new and improved public dock which will include a dedicated kayak launch. It will be fully ADA compliant, and we are also conceptualizing a wider pier that would accommodate some swings and benches so that we can get as many people on the water. Those plans are being developed today. They have to go through permitting, and we are anticipating to be ready to start construction later next year.”

Mayor Pounds reiterated that Mr. Schuler will not be adding dry stack boat storage and his plans will not be affecting the plans for the greenspace at the IOP Public Dock.

In response to a submitted question about making the “marina experience the best it can be,” Mr. Schuler said it boils down to better access for the residents, and that will be at the forefront of their future plans. He said their goal is to offer a better way for IOP residents to enjoy their public asset.

In response to another submitted question, Mr. Schuler said that boat launching and trailer parking will be free for residents and previously purchased annual boat launch passes will be recognized.

A submitted question asked Mr. Schuler to detail how he plans to store boats and the equipment used to launch them. The same person also asked if there are any planned alterations to the bulkhead or ramp to accommodate the launching of boats. Mr. Schuler reiterated that they plan to operate the marina as it is currently operated. They will evaluate how to better operations after they move into the space. They continue to research types of equipment that will be less noisy.

A resident present in the room asked who was responsible for the maintenance to the floating docks and bulkhead, and the Mayor responded that those are the responsibility of the City.

To a question asked about other types of rentals at the marina, Mr. Schuler said there will be no jet skis or parasailing. There is already someone at the marina renting out kayaks.

Mr. Schuler said they are planning to make improvements to the parking lot that will hopefully keep the dust down. Those plans will be discussed with the City.

Several financially-related questions were submitted by former Council Member Randy Bell. Mayor Pounds answered, "Our fiscal 23 budget has projections out through 27 of income, expenses, and ATAX contributions. So roughly \$150,000 from ATAX money to cover the debt for the marina and about \$50,000 for other maintenance."

Answering a question about dredging, Mayor Pounds said, "The current lease does not list dredging as a responsibility of either the City or the tenant. The past two times the marina has undergone dredging, the City has either partnered with neighboring groups and paid for the permitting or paid for the dredging itself. So again, to Mike's comment about other lease provisions, this does not change what is currently sitting out there today."

A question asked how Mr. Schuler will determine who is allocated a slip or dry storage and if current leases will be terminated at year end. Mr. Schuler responded, "In terms of whether existing slip agreements would be terminated, we haven't gotten quite that far in terms of exactly what we would do. I don't know that I would feel right about terminating people's leases, so I am going to say that's not kind of where my vision is today. I think we would work really hard to make sure any leases moving forward would be prioritized to everything that we have discussed."

To another question regarding dry boat storage, Mr. Schuler said, "I just want to make it clear. Our goal moving forward is to operate the marina as it is currently operated. If we find opportunity, creativity, and resources that do not impact our residents' quality of life, then I would like to think this whole community would be behind it. But for the record, no dry stack. No boats are getting launched into the water with a forklift. If we do have any equipment that is assisting in the process, it would by nature have to be small and it would have to be something that would not impact or neighbors. Again, we are working on some options, but I would anticipate that boats are going to continue to be launched by trailer just as they have since the beginning."

58:41

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane  
City Clerk