

PUBLIC HEARING
of
City of Isle of Palms
5:30 p.m., 2015, Tuesday, May 26, 2015

A Public Hearing of City Council was called to order at 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 25, 2015 in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Bergwerf, Bettelli, Buckhannon, Carroll, Ferencz and Loftus, Mayor Cronin, City Administrator Tucker, Assistant Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland; the absences of Councilmembers Harrington and Ward were excused. A quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Mayor Cronin 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. Mayor Cronin announced that the purpose of this Public Hearing was to receive comments on two (2) ordinances; one (1) was for the fiscal FY16 Capital and Operating Budgets, and the second was for the approval of the updated Comprehensive Plan. The Mayor reminded those in attendance that the Comprehensive Plan was a document that synopsized the trends of the City using the most recent data and setting goals for the future of the island.

ORDINANCE 2015-04 - AN ORDINANCE TO RAISE REVENUE AND ADOPT A BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF ISLE OF PALMS, SOUTH CAROLINA, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2015, AND ENDING JUNE 30, 2016.

Mayor Cronin asked the City Administrator to review the highlights of the FY16 budget.

Foremost to announce to the residents of the City was that the FY16 budget does not include an increase in property taxes. Administrator stated that the City has had good performance for all of the tourism revenues and good performance in building permits and business licenses; those projections were translated over in the General Fund for FY16.

Also important for this budget is that both the revenues and expenses for Concept C, the newest parking management plan going forward; implementation of this concept is planned for the next beach season. Expenses have been estimated to be one hundred ninety-four thousand dollars (\$194,000) related to the implementation of the plan with the first year being the most expensive; estimated revenues have been budgeted at eight thousand dollars (\$8,000).

Another new item for the FY16 budget is the inclusion of revenues for the new Beach Preservation Fee that went into effect in January of this year. Expenses to be paid from these funds is another shoal management project in the very early fall if the City manages to secure the requested modifications to the permit.

Highlighting the major expenses in the FY16 budget are as follows:

- The purchase of new financial software as recommended by the City's auditors;
- The scheduled replacement of patrol vehicles;
- Parking enforcement of the parking management plan;
- The purchase of a new rescue truck re-budgeted from FY15 in the Fire Department;
- The work associated with bringing the Public Works site into NPDES compliance;

- Minor rehabilitation/maintenance of various issues at City Hall, such as painting doors, working on the handicap ramp, etc.
- The purchase of a mower and groomer in the Recreation Department and replacement of the tennis courts fencing;
- Work toward the replacement or rehabilitation of the public restrooms on Front Beach; the impetus for much of the work will be toward receiving significant financial assistance from Charleston County; and
- Replacement of a dune walkover.

The single largest expenditure for the Marina Fund would be moving forward with a comprehensive plan for the marina.

In addition, the City continues to move forward with the savings plans for the assignment of fund balance for purchase of capital assets, i.e. fire apparatus, garbage packers, drainage projects, underground infrastructure, roads and replacement of the underground storage tanks. The FY16 budget represents the third year the City has set aside funds to avoid debt by saving for these major capital purchases.

Administrator Tucker reminded those present that next year will be a re-assessment year when property values are adjusted; they designed in such a way that a local government does not lose money nor experience a windfall. The re-assessment may result in a change to the millage because values have changed.

Mayor Cronin explained that a key reason for that taxes will not increase for island residents is because City has gotten a larger Local Option Sales Tax credit against property taxes.

Ordinance 2015-05 – An Ordinance Amending the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Isle of Palms, South Carolina, Pursuant to the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994.

With no questions on the budget, Director Kerr took the podium to review the changes to the Comprehensive Plan.

The Director stated that the plan document for this hearing is an updated versions; he stated that State law requires that the City update its Comprehensive Plan every ten (10) years, and the City has chosen to review it every five (5) years. He added that a review has invariably created changes.

Director Kerr reported that the City adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 1997, updated it in 1998, also in 2004, 2009 and now in 2015.

The Director then read the following excerpt from the Plan's Introduction:

"This Comprehensive Plan is intended to document the history of development on the Isle of Palms, identify the community's problems and needs and articulate a vision for its future. The Plan is also intended to help guide future decision making in matters affecting the physical, social and economic growth development, and redevelopment of the community.

This Plan is not a final product; it is part of a continuing planning process and should be updated and revised as new information becomes available or as new problems and needs arise.”

According to Director Kerr, the primary changes included in this update are:

- Using 2010 census data, rental and second homes increased by twenty-six percent (26%), some of which could be attributed to the Villages in Wild Dunes.
- Also from the 2010 census, the island population over sixty-five (65) years of age increased by thirty-four percent (34%) with every other age decreasing slightly;
- The Plan supports nourishment projects for the erosion problems on the island beaches;
- The Plan addresses the Biggert-Waters Act and how important it may be to the housing on the island relative to flood insurance; and
- New additions to the Plan are description of the Mayor Carmen R. Bunch Park, a small description of OCRM's beach water quality monitoring results, showing proof that the beach waters around the Isle of Palms are very clean, a description of the Charleston County Consolidated Dispatch operations and highlights the City's opposition to off-shore seismic testing and off-shore drilling.

Mayor Cronin directed members of the audience to feel free to take a copy of the Plan on a table in the rear of the room.

3. Adjourn

There being no further comments, Mayor Cronin closed the Public Hearing at 5:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk