

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

6:45 p.m., Tuesday, June 28, 2011

The City Council of the City of Isle of Palms held a Public Hearing at 6:45 p.m. on Tuesday, June 28, 2011 in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the Hearing were Councilmembers Bergwerf, Bettelli, Buckhannon, Duffy, Loftus, Piening, Stone and Thomas, Mayor Cronin, City Administrator Tucker, Attorney Halversen, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland.

1. Mayor Cronin called the hearing to order and acknowledged that the press and public had been duly notified of the hearing in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

### **2. Public Hearing**

**A. Ordinance 2011-05 – 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, 2011 and Ending June 30, 2012.**

**B. Ordinance 2011-07 – An Ordinance Amending Title 5, Planning and Development, Chapter 4, Zoning, Article 2, District Regulations, and Article 7, Signs, of the City of Isle of Palms Code of Ordinances to Delete All References to “MF Multifamily Residential District.”**

Having read the ordinance titles into the minutes, Mayor Cronin invited Administrator Tucker to the podium to review the highlights of the FY12 Budget.

Administrator Tucker explained that this hearing was on the “green” version of the FY12 Budget; copies have been made available for the public at this meeting, and, once ratified, the budget will be posted on the City’s website. The Administrator described the high points as follows:

- The FY12 Budget does not include any new fulltime personnel.
- As in prior years, the budget indicates transfers into the General Fund of four hundred sixty-eight thousand dollars (\$468,000) from Hospitality and Accommodations funds to pay for tourism-related positions in the Police, Fire and Public Works Departments.
- A merit pool of three percent (3%) has been included for those employees deserving of salary increases.
- The change to the State Health Plan is expected to generate an annual savings to the City of sixty-seven thousand dollars (\$67,000).
- The fuel budget for all departments has been established using four dollars twenty-five cents (\$4.25) per gallon for unleaded and diesel.
- City Council voted to payoff the 2009 Mack truck early to save approximately twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000) in interest expense.
- Approximately two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) has been budgeted for the completion of the 53<sup>rd</sup> to 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue Drainage Project.
- For continuing the drainage improvements, the budget includes eighty-six thousand dollars (\$86,000) for design and engineering of a drainage project between 46<sup>th</sup> and 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenues.
- Reserves have been established in the FY12 budget in the amount of one hundred fifty-thousand dollars (\$150,000) for the reconfiguration of the Recreation Center ball fields

and replacement of the lighting and in the amount of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for future beach renourishment projects.

- Six hundred thousand dollars (\$600,000) was included for focused erosion control for a portion of the 2008 Beach Renourishment Project should the toggles be met to proceed with construction.
- The dredging project at the IOP Marina, anticipated for the fall, was funded at three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000).

Administrator Tucker noted that the FY12 Budget, as presented, has been accomplished with no millage increase to the residents of the island.

The Administrator continued by explaining that, since the First Reading of the Budget and now, the City Council instructed staff to budget for one (1) phase of the parking management plan for beach access parking as proposed by the Planning Commission. Improved parking management has been an ongoing project for the Planning Commission since 2009; at the most recent joint meeting between the Planning Commission and City Council, the idea of parking nodes at selected beach accesses on Ocean Boulevard between Breach Inlet and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue was discussed.

The budget that received First Reading included funds earmarked for design services to identify a project, but it did not include money for implementation and construction of a project. The "green" budget includes two hundred ninety thousand dollars (\$290,000) to implement the first phase of a parking management plan that is the construction of four (4) parking nodes at the sixty-foot (60 ft.) wide beach accesses at 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Avenues. The initial four (4) nodes are contemplated for FY12, with four (4) more intended by the end of the next fiscal year. Administrator Tucker emphasized the point that the increase to the FY12 budget for the parking nodes does not have a tax impact on the populace of the island; the nodes will be funded from Municipal and Accommodations Tax fund balances. Attached to the historical record of the meeting are photographs of the four (4) beach accesses where the nodes are expected to be constructed.

According to the Administrator, the parking nodes will extend one hundred twenty (120) feet from the edge of the right-of-way, will be approximately sixty (60) feet wide, will have a pervious surface and will be buffered on the sides; each node will accommodate eight to ten (8-10) cars and have a pay-to-park kiosk. The sections of rights of way between Breach Inlet and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue that are currently being used by day-trippers for parking will be posted "Residential Parking Permit Only;" day-tripper parking will only be allowed in the parking nodes between Breach Inlet and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The cost of implementing the residential parking stickers has been included in the implementation costs of the parking nodes.

Administrator Tucker noted that the City's Beach Management Plan indicates that approximately eighty (80) spaces are now available in the area being addressed; the long-term goal is to replace those right-of-way parking spaces with eight (8) parking nodes containing eight to ten (8-10) spaces each.

Three (3) permits will be required for the parking nodes – two (2) from SCDOT and one (1) from OCRM. Administrator Tucker added that the City would be working with the design engineers for a design that would be the least obtrusive to the neighborhood.

Mayor Cronin commented that two (2) ordinances will have First Reading at the City Council meeting that are required to initiate the process. In the coming month, a Public Hearing will be scheduled to seek input from the citizens; based on the results of the Public Hearing, the ordinances will have Second Reading or be modified if necessary.

Relative to Ordinance 2011-07, Administrator Tucker explained that this ordinance is an item of housekeeping. As a result of other work with the City Code, references to the MF – Multifamily zoning district were noticed; research found that no residences on the island are identified in a MF district; therefore, this ordinance to remove all references to that district from the Code.

Mayor Cronin now opened the meeting to public comments.

Guy Taylor, 625 Ocean Boulevard, expressed his appreciation at the staff's presentation of a budget that did not increase from the previous year, therefore, did not require a millage increase. On the subject of the parking nodes, Mr. Taylor stated that they were not a new concept; he reported that a similar idea had been presented in 1986 for the island's residents, but it was rejected. In the first draft of the City's Comprehensive Plan in 1993-94, the idea was put forth again in the "long list of wants." Mr. Taylor stated, in conclusion, that the parking nodes were a good idea, but he stressed that they should be available for daylight hours only.

Thomas Johnson, 200 Palm Boulevard, spoke to the financial aspect of the parking nodes proposed for Ocean Boulevard; he noted that the City faces a net deficit on Phase 1 of the project, which concerns him as a taxpaying citizen. He admitted that parking is a major problem on the island; he added that he does not understand how parking can be allowed on Palm Boulevard, but not on Ocean Boulevard. Mr. Johnson also expressed concern about the environmental impact of the nodes and the impact on the nesting turtles; he asked whether an environmental impact study was planned before proceeding with the parking proposal.

Cheryl Burns, 915 Carolina, thanked Council for addressing the parking problem in her neighborhood and stated that she thinks the parking nodes are a good plan.

Jimmy Carroll, 11 Tabby Lane, also addressed the parking nodes; his written comments are attached to the historical record of the meeting.

Clay Cable, 116 Palm Boulevard, commented on the parking nodes; his written comments are attached to the historical record of the meeting.

Melinda Mitchell, 702 Ocean Boulevard, voiced her opinion that the idea of parking nodes for Ocean Boulevard was not fully vetted; she remarked that the City was spending a lot of money for thirty (30) parking spaces, which she did not think would alleviate the parking problems. Ms. Mitchell stated that she preferred for the City to build a parking garage in the commercial district. In addition, she commented that a parking area one hundred twenty (120) feet from the edge of

the roadway would be too close to the dunes and would damage them. She suggested that Council table the project to allow for more discussion.

Barbara Gobien, 5 Fifty-first Avenue, noted that other speakers had expressed their dislike for the parking nodes proposed for Ocean Boulevard, but few persons had offered viable alternatives. Like Ms. Mitchell, Ms. Gobien said she would rather see a parking garage in the commercial district than small parking lots in residential neighborhoods; she noted that her neighborhood is a parking lot in the summer season. She cited the concerns over public safety vehicles trying to travel down her street on any given afternoon. She thanked the Planning Commission for its efforts in seeking out answers to the parking problems on the island, and she encouraged the residents attending the hearing to “think outside the box” and to send their ideas to members of Council or the Planning Commission. Ms. Gobien stated that the Isle of Palms “is for the residents, not the day-trippers.”

Stacey Johnson, 200 Palm Boulevard, stated that she is the Beach Sweep Coordinator for the island. She stated her opinion that parking is a problem on the island “a handful of few days of the year,” but she does not believe parking lots on the beach side of Ocean Boulevard is the best solution. She indicated that the City should consider parallel parking on Ocean Boulevard. She also opined that parking along Palm Boulevard on the other end of the island is a much more serious problem than parking on Ocean. She commented that day-trippers were not an issue to her, but she admitted that they are noisy, create a litter issue and do not necessarily spend money at island businesses. In her opinion, the majority of people who visit the Breach Inlet area are there to participate in water sports and are, generally, environmentally aware. Ms. Johnson described the island as being “schizophrenic” in the way it promotes itself.

Dan Austin, 403 Carolina Boulevard, took opposition with Ms. Johnson’s comments about the day-trippers who park along Carolina Boulevard; he stated that he has personally been disrespected by people who parked in his yard to go to the beach. He commented that this area is the oldest neighborhood on the island and, therefore, deserves dignity and respect.

### **3. Adjourn**

With no further public comments, Mayor Cronin closed the hearing at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland  
City Clerk