

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

9:00 a.m., Thursday, February 2, 2012

The regular meeting of the Personnel Committee was held at 9:00 a.m., Thursday, February 2, 2012 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Bettelli and Stone, Chair Thomas, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban, Treasurer Suggs, Building Director Kerr and City Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Chair Thomas called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and public had been duly notified in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. Approval of Previous Meetings' Minutes

MOTION: Councilmember Stone moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 10, 2012 as submitted; Councilmember Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Citizens' Comments – None

4. Old Business – None

5. New Business

A. Review of Capital Budgets and Long-Range Capital Plans for General Government and the Building Department for FY 2012-2013

Assistant Dziuban explained that this would be the first of many opportunities to review, comment on and change the Capital Budgets; a copy of the schedules is attached to the historical record of the meeting. The Assistant recalled the budget calendar that indicates that, in March, Committees will review this budget again along with the operating budgets, and, then in April, the projected revenue budgets will be added for comparisons. Treasurer Suggs and Director Kerr have been asked to be present to respond to any specific questions or concerns the Committee may have.

The Capital Budgets as presented represent both the draft budget for the coming year and a projection of expenditures for the next ten (10) years; the goal is to ensure placeholders for the ongoing replacement of capital items.

General Government

Replace generator to power City Hall complex – Staff has decided that this expenditure can be pushed out for an additional year to FY14.

Court software upgrade – The software is being upgraded in the FY12 budget and will be in not be repeated until FY22.

Municipal & Livability Court wooden sign at City Hall \$ 5,000

Guests to the island do not have an indicator where they should go when court appearances are required.

Reconfigure rear entrance to City Hall 30,000

The reconfiguration has been in the budget for several years; with the planned improvements to 1207 Palm Boulevard, this timing is the right time to proceed with the addition of an awning and, generally, making the entry more welcoming.

Replace HVAC equipment (FY12 expense for Council Chambers)	5,000
This is an expenditure that will only be made when the unit fails, but it is the oldest HVAC in the building.	
City Hall parking lot fence replacement has been pushed out to FY14.	
Replace wooden welcome sign at Connector entrance	15,000
The goal is to be a consolidation of many smaller signs to be more welcoming.	
Replace City Hall computer server & backup system (3 year replacement)	12,000
According to Chief Buckhannon, this equipment, which runs all day every day, is at least 3 years old, and he recommends its replacement before it fails.	

Councilmember Stone recounted visiting communities where the “WELCOME To” sign directs visitors to the various services afforded by the community, i.e. police, fire, City Hall, recreation, marina, public parking, etc. that had proven to be very helpful.

General Government Special Projects

Undergrounding of utility lines	75,000
This is in the budget every year in case a project comes along where the City can partner with SCE&G to place more electrical lines underground.	
Implement on-street parking management program	30,000
Since this program is in-process, this figure is a placeholder to address whatever decision might be made.	
Implement system to accept credit cards	30,000
Currently the City does not accept credit cards in any department, but, in coordination with the parking management program, having that capability may become more important and moved it into FY13 for consideration. At a minimum, staff thought that the departments that would benefit most from accepting credit cards would be Recreation, Building and City Hall; the figure quoted here would cover the initial hardware costs. The on-going cost, which is three and one-half percent (3.5%) of the value of each transaction, could be included as a convenience fee to those who choose to use a credit card. As the City considers pay-to-park concepts, visitors would want to be able to go on-line to purchase a parking pass prior to their arrival on the island.	

Councilmember Stone pointed out an error in addition in this section of the schedule.

Councilmember Stone expressed belief that credit card implementation was going to be much more expensive than indicated here. He envisioned a credit card kiosk on Palm Boulevard for purchasing parking passes that would have to be wired to a phone system, for instance, but Assistant Dziuban indicated that staff was only considering the equipment to process credit cards in person, not at a kiosk to accept credit cards. Without kiosks, he thought the cost may be sufficient for the three (3) departments concerned.

The Councilmember then questioned whether the City would need to change software to integrate with and perform the accounting duties. Treasurer Suggs explained that the City does not have an integrated Accounts Receivable system today and she was confident that the City would get sufficient information for the credit card company to continue manually entering payments and to eliminate the need for new software. Councilmember Stone stated that consideration should be given to how labor-intensive the manual entry of payments could be; Director Kerr indicated that the Building Department annually processes approximately six or seven thousand (6,000-7,000) payments.

Director Kerr stated that he understood a large portion of the cost reflected making the City's website secure to accept credit card payments.

Treasurer Suggs commented that she had checked her files for the research done on the subject in 2009 and found that the costs to set-up the stations was twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000) at that time, and, at that time, the City was not pursuing on-line payments, which it would consider at this time.

Assistant Dziuban indicated that staff would do additional research to get a more accurate number for FY13.

Councilmember Stone questioned whether the City's not accepting credit cards was a serious problem or whether the City was losing anything as a result of the current policy. Since payments to the City are for building permits, business and short-term rental licenses and parking and traffic fines, the City was not losing money by not accepting credit cards. Director Kerr indicated that approximately half of the people who make payments in the Building Department initially offer credit card. Assistant Dziuban stated that as many as ten (10) people from court are routinely sent to an ATM, and Director Page has indicated that accepting credit cards at the Recreation Center would be helpful.

Councilmember Stone suggested contacting other local governments of comparable size to find out if they offer the ease of credit card payments, if, initially, the use was phased in and the start-up costs involved.

Assistant Dziuban noted that the Rec-trac program used by the Recreation Department has a module for accepting credit cards, but the City has not purchased it.

Chair Thomas asked whether a formal complaint had ever been filed because the City does not offer than convenience; he was told that there has not been a formal complaint, just general grumbling.

General Government, Facility Maintenance

Replace Council chairs	\$ 3,000
Elevator maintenance	1,650

Assistant Dziuban called attention to line 48, IT Service, and commented that everyone was aware that the City takes full advantage of Chief Buckhannon's expertise on computers, and, although the Chief has not verbalized any plans to retire, as his years of service to the community grow, that time draws closer. This line represents a placeholder for the time when the City will have to pay for that service.

With the addition error corrected, the total General Government Capital Budget for FY13 is two hundred six thousand six hundred fifty dollars (\$206,650).

Building Department

Replace staff computers (4 computers/4 year aver life = 1 computer/year)	\$1,250
Replace document folding/sealing printer	2,500

Director Kerr explained that the existing equipment is old and has been in the budget for several years and has been pushed to an out year multiple times. This piece of equipment takes the special forms used by the Building Department and prints, folds and seals them for mailing for license applications and the licenses themselves.

Building Department, Facility Maintenance

Generator Maintenance (City Hall Generator)	1,500
Rehabilitation and Improvements at 1207 and 1301 Palm Blvd.	51,333

This figure comes from discussions last month; staff is being conservative in its timeline and assuming that the project may not be completed in FY12, but carryover into FY13. If the project is completed in this fiscal year, this number would not be included in the FY13 Capital Budget.

The total Building Department Capital Budget for FY13 is projected to be fifty-six thousand five hundred eighty-three dollars (\$56,583.)

Assistant Dziuban recounted that the FY12 budget includes fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) for improvements to 1207 Palm Boulevard and fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) for rehabilitation of 1301 Palm Boulevard to convert into rental property. Any additional costs for the two (2) properties in FY12 would be unbudgeted.

Treasurer Suggs explained that she had started her calculations with the schedule for the project discussed at Ways and Means and subtracted those charges that have occurred or are expected to occur prior to June 30, 2012, such as the asbestos survey, the landscaping amount and fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) in estimated demolition costs then added the budget for 1207 Palm Boulevard to arrive at the FY13 figure.

Councilmember Stone stated that he understood that the City had awarded a demolition contract for less than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000); Assistant Dziuban agreed about the contract amount and added that the City had to monitor the air quality as the demolition takes place because of the presence of asbestos. The Assistant also pointed out that the project's estimated costs will be refined as it progresses.

According to Treasurer Suggs, the Capital Budgets and Ten-year Capital Plan will be presented to the Ways and Means Committee for discussion at the February meeting.

B. Prioritization of Projects Greater than \$250,000

This project list has been compiled over multiple years and is brought out for review and refinement every couple of years in an effort to keep these projects in mind as the City begins its budget preparations; it was last reviewed in 2009. A copy if attached to the historical record of this meeting. With new members to City Council, staff thought this year would be a good opportunity to prioritize the list as a guide to them for the coming years; Assistant Dziuban stated that Committee members were also being asked to add or delete projects as they see fit.

One (1) item that she realized should be on the list is the re-construction of the public restrooms on Front Beach. After hearing about the projects and mulling them over for a month, the Committee will be asked at the March meeting to make its recommendations for changes and its top five (5) priorities from this schedule.

Discussion of the list proceeded with the announcement by Assistant Dziuban that the construction bid for the 2012 Shoal Management Project has been issued and will be funded from the escrow of the 2008 Beach Restoration Project. In addition, she reported that the engineers have indicated that another significant project may be needed in 2013; Assistant Dziuban commented that the process of managing shoals attaching to the beach is a continual process that will occur periodically over the course of time. Responding to Chair Thomas' questions, the Assistant explained that the engineers do not think that a 2013 project would be as large as the 2008 project, but more along the lines of the shoal management project the City is currently addressing.

On the subject of funding, Assistant Dziuban related staff's belief that the 2012 Shoal Management Project will deplete the balance in escrow from the 2008 Renourishment Project; therefore, any future project does not have funding sources identified.

The Assistant reminded the Committee that, as Council contemplates the early payoff of City debt, Administrator Tucker would like to have the debt related to the 2008 Beach Renourishment project retired since sand is not considered a tangible asset. When Chair Thomas asked about potential savings from an early payoff, Treasurer Suggs replied that savings would not be significant since it was a six (6) year loan that will pay out in the next couple of years. Councilmember Stone asked what resources were available to payoff the debt; the Treasurer stated that one hundred percent (100%) of the debt is serviced from Municipal Accommodations Taxes. Treasurer Suggs added that "to accelerate payments would tax that account."

Councilmember Stone requested updated debt service and fund balance schedules, which the Treasurer said she could readily provide.

When Assistant Dziuban brought up the addition/replacement of dune walkovers, Councilmember Stone inquired whether Greenbelt Funds could be used for that purpose since Council had decided not to go forward with the acquisition of 3206 Palm Boulevard; members of the Committee noted that the walkovers at Front Beach and 41st Avenue were in serious danger and in need of replacement. The Assistant noted that the Front Beach dune walkover near the public restrooms is budgeted for replacement in FY12.

Related to the Greenbelt Funds, Assistant Dziuban explained that, due to the passage of time, she was not as familiar with the limitations on the use of Greenbelt Funds as she had been, but she uncertain whether the rehabilitation or the replacement of existing walkovers would be acceptable uses; it could be only the construction of new walkovers. If any of these are approved uses of Greenbelt funds and the City wanted to pursue this path, the staff would need direction from Council to officially withdraw the existing Greenbelt application. Because the City had been awarded the Greenbelt funds for a specific project, staff would submit a new application and repeat the qualification process. The Assistant related that Charleston County had

been instructed to put City's award on-hold since the City Council had said that it might reconsider the acquisition if people who support the project were to ban together in a single voice and come before them.

Councilmember Stone remarked that the Greenbelt Funds continue to increase as years pass, and he repeated that it should be considered for dune walkover. He suggested that the Mayor invite a representative of the Greenbelt Committee to attend a Council meeting to refresh it on the uses of Greenbelt Funds.

A wireless mesh communication system would provide wi-fi access for island visitors.

The monetary goal for the Disaster Recovery fund is three million dollars (\$3,000,000); at December 31, 2011 the fund balance was eighteen hundred thousand dollars (\$1,800,000).

On the topic of island drainage, the 53rd to 57th Avenue drainage project has been completed, and the next phase is from 46th to 52nd Avenues. Funding for design and engineering for this is included in the FY12 budget. According to the E.M. Seabrook study in the 1990s, additional drainage projects outside of Wild Dunes were estimated at ten million dollars (\$10,000,000); due to the age of that study, Councilmember Bettelli suggested that a new study be funded prior to addressing any projects recommended in the 1990s study since the Eadie's contract and the completed drainage project may will change the results

Councilmember Stone noted that the City had received quite a lot of money from Charleston County to address the drainage issues on the island and asked whether the City would continue to pursue those funds. Assistant Dziuban replied that the City would continue to seek those sources of funds for continuing the drainage initiative on the island.

Discussions have taken place about a parking garage on Front Beach with retail space on the first floor, the on-going discussion regarding the island-wide parking management system, a public safety outpost on the beachfront and the acquisition and rehabilitation of the fishing pier. Councilmember Stone asked where the City planned to construct the parking, and Treasurer Suggs responded that the idea had been where the large parking lot sits today. Councilmember Bettelli commented that a parking garage has such big dollars attached to it that there would be a great deal of public comment before any action was taken.

The renovations for City Hall were completed in 2011. Other considerations for the projects greater than two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) are a City Services Complex that would house a visitors' bureau, green space acquisitions and an emergency water access ramp using the City-owned property at the end of 13th Avenue to provide quicker access to the Intra-coastal Waterway.

For the marina, projects range from the dock reconfiguration/replacement, a full enhancement project, dry stack boat storage, a handicapped accessible elevator for Morgan Creek Grill and dredging of the marina every eight to ten (8-10) years.

In the area of public works, the reconfiguration of the Department's space is included on the list and the potential for collaboration with neighboring communities for an off-island solid waste transfer station.

For the Recreation Department, the projects on the list are reconfiguration of the ball fields to include fencing, lights, restrooms and concessions, renovation of the existing gym for a stage/performance space with retractable goals and permanent bleachers, the construction of a new gymnasium, an enclosed swimming pool and the construction of three (3) tennis courts and two (2) basketball courts.

Other projects that previous Councils have thought the City should consider are additions to the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, electronic message boards at the Connector and at Breach Inlet, a roundabout at 41st Avenue, gateway enhancements at 41st Avenue from Palm Boulevard to Waterway and at 28th Avenue from Palm Boulevard to Hartnett and several underground wiring projects.

Assistant Dziuban repeated that staff was asking that members select the top five (5) items from this list, or some from this list with additions of your own. At the March meeting, the Committee will be asked to make a group priority list. Councilmember Bettelli stated that a method that has worked well for him in the past as he generated his list was to begin by eliminating those items that he thought should not be considered in the near future to a more manageable list for prioritizing.

C. Discussion Related to Future Policies on Social Media/YouTube

Assistant Dziuban related that the City's offerings via social media are largely driven by requests from citizens for additional information; the e-newsletter and the posting of City Council meeting videos were responses to citizens' needs for more and more information. Meeting minutes are not posted until approved which means a delay of a month; with the video of Council meeting, citizens could see the meetings the next day and were not relying on the posting of minutes. At the end of last year, Assistant Dziuban switched the City Council videos to YouTube in order to afford citizens the opportunity to review not only the most recent Council meeting, but meetings from previous months, as well as the joint meeting on parking from the spring. From training sessions through the Municipal Association, Assistant Dziuban has learned the majority of municipalities are working toward the use of social media, such YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, etc. The City has been a little slower than some in order to learn and benefit from their successes and failures. Presently the City has turned off the ability for citizens to make comments because the staff wants to have policies relative to social media in place that will state how the City will use it and what will be deemed acceptable. According to Assistant Dziuban, "social media works best when given a lot of attention," and, to that end, many communities have one (1) person who is dedicated to daily updates and the constant monitoring of comments made by readers. One (1) example of an unacceptable use would be someone who posts an advertisement for a product or service he/she wants to sell, so a policy stating that all advertisements will be removed would be appropriate. Based on citizens' requests, the City is slowly moving toward the use of social media; therefore, the time has come to establish policies. As policies are developed, they will come before this Committee for consideration.

Councilmember Bettelli opined on the costs to the City for a person to monitor/respond to comments made and the daily updating of information on the site; he noted that it would reflect poorly on the City if comments were to be made by citizens or visitors that were not addressed for a couple of weeks.

Assistant Dziuban indicated that discussions of social media should focus on specific applications, such as the use of Twitter for emergency updates on road closures or weather conditions on the occasions of a severe storm event. The recommendation from MASC is to have a reason to begin and to start in a very small and controlled manner.

On the subject of costs, the Assistant said that the software need for social media is free; the cost is in staff time to maintain. The questions are: does the City want to begin to use social media? What would the application be? And what would govern it?

Chair Thomas asked if the City had any way of knowing the demand for the City's videos; Assistant Dziuban said that, typically, one hundred (100) people will view a Council meeting on the website.

Another recommendation from MASC is to activate a Twitter account, but to only use in the event of a hurricane, thereby incorporating social media into the City's disaster plan. Assistant Dziuban also indicated that one (1) person should be given the responsibility of updating the site in an emergency.

6. Miscellaneous Business

Next Meeting Date: 9 a.m., Thursday, March 13, 2012 in the City Hall Conference Room.

7. Executive Session – not needed

8. Adjourn

MOTION: Councilmember Bettelli moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 a.m.; Councilmember Stone seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk