

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 3, 2016

The regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was called to order at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, March 3, 2016 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Bergwerf and Carroll, Chair Bettelli, Administrator Tucker, Fire Chief Graham, Police Chief Buckhannon, Assistant Administrator Fragoso and Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

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

2. **Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

**MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 8, 2016 as submitted; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. **Citizens' Comments**

Elizabeth Campsen, 32 Intracoastal Court, addressed the Committee about the managed beach access parking plan as it relates to her neighborhood; she explained that Intracoastal Court intersects with Waterway Boulevard close to 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue. Over the past three (3) years, the overflow marina parking has become an issue, and many in the general neighborhood have become very upset about the parking on Waterway because that is their only way out of their neighborhood. She stated that she has seen parking as far down on Waterway as 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue. She indicated that she had tried to calm her neighbors with the idea that the Option C parking plan would be in effect this summer and it would designate their area as residential only parking, solving their problems. When the sign plan was presented, she saw that the City would not be placing "Resident Only" parking signs on Waterway Boulevard. Representing her neighborhood, she asked that the City reconsider "resident only" signs there. She indicated that she had read the ordinance and the reasons for instituting the plan, and all of them apply to her street. She quoted from Section 8-2-22 of the Ordinance that states

"City Council has determined after a traffic survey of the residential areas of the City and after a public hearing, that such areas are severely impacted by nonresident parking along the rights-of-way of the streets by reason of adjacent beach and commercial uses."

Mrs. Campsen said that she had closely followed the ATM progress on the marina redevelopment plan, paid special attention to Section 4, Parking, and found it to be "woefully inadequate." She stated that she and her neighbors feel "that the City is turning a blind eye to the needs of residents to get that area under control." She added that, according to the City Code, there is not sufficient parking at the marina for the tenants that are there now. The ATM calculations of the current spaces is less for vehicles and boat trailers, and their proposal going forward is less than the Code recommendation. Mrs. Campsen said that they look at the cars and trailers every day in season; she commented that she does not see how less parking in a redeveloped area would help. She stated that enforcement of the Code as to her residential area and a sign would help to limit it; it might encourage/force the tenants there to abide by the zoning laws and parking regulations for their businesses and keep their patrons on-site.

In addition, Mrs. Campsen reported seeing speeding, bad behavior and many intoxicated persons in the same area where children are skating, riding bikes, playing ball, etc.; the parking is a public safety issue for these residents.

#### **4. Old Business**

##### **A. Discussion of Encroachments on Rights-of-way**

Chief Buckhannon stated that, legally, property owners should get encroachment permits from SCDOT to put landscaping, trees, sculpture, etc. in the right-of-way; he estimated that ninety to ninety-five percent (90-95%) of the island's encroachments are not permitted.

Administrator Tucker stated that the City always advises people that an encroachment permit is necessary; when a member of the City staff sees a new encroachment going in for which there is no encroachment permit on file, the City informs the owner that he must have an SCDOT encroachment permit. The typical things that SCDOT will permit are ingress and egress and low vegetation that would not prohibit a car from rolling over it since the rights-of-way are designed for cars to pull out of the lane of travel if there is a problem. Therefore, anything that inhibits the ability to do that is not something they typically permit on the side of the road. There are encroachments on the island that have been in place for years, and they all need to be removed for safety reasons and fairness.

Chief Buckhannon recalled that several years ago the City took the stance that it would go after new encroachments, but the old would be left alone. Property owners with new encroachments are warned that they must get a permit or the encroachment must be removed; they are given thirty (30) days to do so; the City will also assist the owner with the encroachment application. If the encroachment is not removed after thirty (30) days, the property owner can get a citation. If the property owner has applied for the encroachment permit, but it does not arrive in the thirty (30) day window, they can be given a thirty (30) day extension.

Councilmember Carroll asked if there was a cutoff date when the City would not require the removal of right-of-way encroachments; the Chief recalled that Council had made the decision about two (2) years ago, and, at that time, pictures were taken of all the encroachments on the island. In a follow-up question, the Councilmember asked what agency has enforcement authority on this issue, and the City Administrator stated that both the City and SCDOT have the authority. Administrator Tucker explained that, in an unincorporated area, SCDOT has the authority to require the removal of encroachments in the right-of-way; in practice, they send a "Deficiency Notice" stating that a property owner has encroachments in the right-of-way that are deficient to their standards and the property owner is required to remove them in a certain space of time. In tandem with the City, SCDOT has the authority to do it here as well, and, since they are SCDOT rights-of-way, they should be more vigilant in ensuring that they are left clear. In the road agreement with the municipalities, the statement is included that the City will help to keep the rights-of-way free of obstructions; the problem is that the road agreements are all different depending on when the road was constructed.

Councilmember Carroll said that he has driven all of the side streets from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and seen such diversity of what people can and cannot do – some rights-of-way are too narrow to allow parking and others are landscaped to the edge of the road.

Councilmember Bergwerf reiterated her opinion that it is an unsolvable problem.

Chair Bettelli stated that, over the years, some residents have said that they would sue the city if it tried to force them to remove the right-of-way obstruction.

According to Councilmember Carroll, from 44<sup>th</sup> to 57<sup>th</sup> Avenues on the ocean-side, there is sidewalk and palm trees, and there is not enough room to park between the sidewalk and the road, and it is illegal to drive across the sidewalk to park. From 41<sup>st</sup> to 44<sup>th</sup>, the sidewalk is attached to the road but can be used to pull off the road and to park in the grassy area.

Chair Bettelli said that this would continue to be a topic of discussion at meetings, and he asked that any time a Committee member sees an encroachment going in to notify the Building Department.

Administrator Tucker recalled that, in 2007, pictures were taken of all the encroachments on the island, and they were categorized according to safety; they were categorized from completely unsafe to relatively minor and easily remedied. When Council saw the pictures, they backed off from requiring that all be removed.

Councilmember Carroll reported that he had received multiple calls in the past week about no signage for resident only parking on Waterway Boulevard in the area of the marina and 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

The Administrator recalled that three (3) areas of the island intentionally were not included in resident-only parking, i.e. Breach Inlet, the Recreation Center and the area around the marina. Since Council could not reach a consensus on how to handle these areas and because the discussions were holding up progress on the parking plan for other areas of the island, Council chose not to include them in an area of resident-only parking and to address them separately at a later date.

Councilmember Bergwerf noted that an ordinance change would be required for Council to go back now and make Waterway Boulevard resident-only parking.

The Administrator urged the Committee not to make any changes to the beach access parking plan ordinance; she stated that changes need to be made as an “after-action” – to live through this season and then go through the ordinance thoroughly to ensure that every issue is addressed.

## **B. Updates Related to Coyotes**

Administrator Tucker announced that the City has hired a trapper who has set one (1) trap in the Breach Inlet area based on the photograph of the four (4) coyotes on the beach, and the City has received notification that Wild Dunes has also hired a trapper.

Councilmember Carroll asked about enforcing the ordinance on overgrown lots, and he was told that the enforcement process has already started.

In her travels around the island, Councilmember Bergwerf noted that the island not only had some overgrown lots, but also areas of intended vegetation that could also become habitats for the coyotes. She added that part of the problem is people feeding their pets outside and allowing animals to be out overnight. For those who do leave their animals out, the trap is as likely to catch the pet as a coyote; she asked what could be done to encourage people to follow these simple steps.

The Administrator said that people have to be willing to listen and get the message about the facts; she commented that people need to do the things that make the coyotes unwelcome because that is the way to get control them.

According to Chief Buckhannon, if an area is known to be an issue, like at Breach Inlet, a trap is put in that area; he confirmed that the City will not put traps on private property. The City's website has a link to the DNR website where someone can find a list of professional trappers.

#### **C. Status of Rescue Pumper**

Chief Graham reported that she had gone to E-1 on Tuesday afternoon to inspect the new rescue pumper; a couple of minor things were found that need to be changed. The City should take ownership in a two to three (2-3) of weeks. When other people were around to inspect their equipment, they made very positive comments about the IOP truck; Chief Graham stated that she believes the truck will serve the City well for many years.

When the old truck was put out to bid, Awendaw had the highest bid at twenty-eight thousand one hundred dollars (\$28,100). Awendaw has asked to take possession of the truck now rather than wait until the new truck arrives; if the City were to have a need for it, Awendaw would respond through mutual aid.

The Administrator indicated that the deal would be consummated in the next couple of days.

#### **D. Status of the Connector Camera**

Chief Buckhannon announced that the Connector camera will be live on Monday, March 7<sup>th</sup>. Administrator Tucker reported that, over the course of a year, the City had spent eighteen hundred dollars (\$1,800) more than anticipated to make the camera operational.

Administrator Tucker announced that the mayors of the three (3) East Cooper communities are working in joint advocacy to the County to fund and put up cameras on the approaches to the islands.

Following-up on Councilmember Carroll's comments on social media, Administrator Tucker agreed that people pay attention to Twitter, which is very helpful to get information out quickly; in addition, Mount Pleasant and Charleston re-tweet the City's Twitter announcements. The feed from the IOP Connector camera will be added to SCDOT's SC511 service.

#### **E. Discussion of Additional Crosswalks on Palm Boulevard**

Chair Bettelli reported that the City has five (5) crosswalks between 21<sup>st</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> Avenues.

Chief Buckhannon stated that SCDOT would not allow the City to have crosswalks at every corner; when there are too many crosswalks, they become ineffective. If the City wanted to add a crosswalk between 28<sup>th</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> Avenues, the Chief recommended that it be at 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue to follow a theme of a crosswalk about every three (3) blocks.

Administrator Tucker stated that staff needs to know whether it should contact SCDOT to paint a crosswalks there or the City proceed with painting or a stamped crosswalk on the pavement.

Chief Buckhannon indicated that, if the crosswalk were to be in for this beach season, the City would have to absorb the expense if it were only to be a painted crosswalk with signs put up; he was not inclined to think that SCDOT would respond to the City's request in time. The Chief opined that the City could get the encroachment permit in thirty (30) days.

Chair Bettelli suggested that the City paint the lines this year and budget for the stamped crosswalk next year.

**MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to proceed with an encroachment permit and painting lines for a crosswalk at 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **F. Body-worn Camera Policy**

Chief Buckhannon stated that the City has a policy that was re-written in the past thirty (30) days; the re-write met the requirements of CALEA and the City's insurance carrier, and it was approved by the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy Training Council pursuant to state law. With this process completed, the City is in-line for any available funding; the next step will be applying for funding to purchase or be reimbursed for the equipment.

Responding to Councilmember Carroll, the Chief reported that the City has twenty (20) cameras; five (5) of which are worn out. All officers on the road wear body cameras, and based on the wear and the environment, the cameras only have a three-year (3 yrs.) lifespan. The cameras must be manually activated, and an officer is to have the camera on when engaging with the public or on a call.

Administrator Tucker explained that the handheld ticket devices recently purchased are going to be exchanged with a model that uses small iPads for capturing information.

### **5. New Business**

#### **A. Review of Ten-year Capital Plan**

Since members of this Committee have heard the presentation on the preparation of the Capital Plan, the Administrator has chosen not to repeat it.

## **B. Review of FY17 Capital Budget**

### Fire Department

Administrator Tucker recounted that Chief Graham has voiced concerns to her and the City Treasurer that certain fire apparatus might not last until the year they are scheduled to be replaced; the entire fleet suffered from being in tents or temporary facilities or outside during the period that personnel had to be outside the fire stations. The replacement dates were established before that situation occurred and then, in 2015, there was Joaquin and the Fire Department had to respond to a fire call in the middle of the storm. Those trucks that had already suffered outside are now suffering from post-Joaquin effects. The trucks are well-maintained and have had repairs, but they continue to deteriorate.

The Administrator opined that, in budget discussions, Chief Graham would have moved more equipment forward to be replaced sooner on the Capital Plan than the City would be able to afford to do; the Committee was made aware of this because there could be a failure or trucks out of service or increased maintenance costs to keep them going.

Chief Graham reported that Engine 1, the newest fire apparatus in the fleet, had broken down on I-26 and was being towed to the shop in North Charleston. She commented that they have been experiencing a lot of electrical problems on a repeated basis for the past couple of years, and they attribute them to the trucks being kept outside for an extended period of time.

Responding to Chair Bettelli's comment, Administrator Tucker reported that the Fire Department seeks grants every year, but is usually put out of the running by needy communities with fewer resources than the Isle of Palms.

The Chief stated that she has engaged the mechanic to go over each truck in detail and to predict the remaining useful life.

The Administrator directed attention to the shaded area at the top of the Fire Department Capital Plan where she reported that the anticipated purchase price of the replacement pumper truck purchased in 2003 was increased upward by ninety-nine thousand dollars (\$99,000); another change was made to the 2003 ladder truck with an increase to the replacement cost of two hundred seventy-four thousand dollars (\$274,000). The annual set aside for these assets will be increased accordingly. The 2004 ladder truck has been moved from FY20 to FY19, and the replacement cost has been increased by one hundred forty-eight thousand dollars (\$148,000).

Although they are hard to find, Chief Graham will try to replace these apparatus with demonstration vehicles to keep the costs down.

Two (2) 2008 Ford pickup trucks are being deferred for the third year and the 2010 pickup is being deferred for the first time.

Radios for the Fire Department are budgeted for three hundred ninety-nine thousand dollars (\$399,000), but the City has been putting funds aside for several years for this purchase.

Addition of 1 Ford F-150	\$23,000
Both Trainer and Inspector have dedicated vehicles	
Normal replacements:	
Thermal imaging camera	12,000
Ram extrication device	5,000
To have a set at both stations	
Replace 2 Yamaha jet skis	13,000
Stretching useful life to 4 years	
Replace small Avon rubber boat & motor	deferred to FY18
RAD-57 oxygen & carbon monoxide monitor	5,000
only with failure	
2 <sup>nd</sup> set of cutters for vehicle rescue	6,000
new cars made of heavier steel and current cutters do not penetrate	
**Estimate for wireless signal boosting for MDTs	23,000
Retainage on PSB construction contract	15,000

\*\*When the City joined the Consolidated Dispatch, the equivalent of laptops were installed in the vehicles, and, for the Fire Department, what they are hearing is also being keyed in as a visual of the same information that was spoken. The devices operate on a wireless system, similar to phones; the laptops in the fire apparatus go to sleep and are disconnected from the system, requiring them to reconnect to the wireless signal and perform the full security log on.

Chief Graham reported that, in using a demonstrator for the past six (6) months, only once did the MDT (mobile data terminal) log off. She added that this purchase would be a one-time expense.

Chief Buckhannon stated that the large apparatus shield the signal, and, when they are in the fire bay, the building shields the signal even more. Although there are dead spots on the island, the MDTs for the Police Department are constantly moving.

Under Special Projects are the savings for both equipment and the FY17 allocation for the radios.

Police Department

The Police Department FY17 Capital Budget includes the replacement of one (1) patrol car and one (1) four-wheel drive patrol vehicle. Being on a three-year (3 yrs.) replacement cycle, the computer server with backup system has rolled forward at a cost of twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000). The purchase of departmental radios will be three hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000) including the FY17 savings addition of fifty-eight thousand three hundred thirty-three dollars (\$58,333). The only item under Special Projects is seventeen thousand dollars (\$17,000) for a new body camera system; Chief Buckhannon reported that the new camera system has a robotics system built into it that will automatically burn one (1) or more DVDs as requested. The City can also apply for state grants that will reimburse a portion of the expense.

**6. Highlights of Departmental Reports**

### Fire Department

Personnel responded to a call on February 8<sup>th</sup> on Barnacle Row where a man had fallen approximately thirty feet (30 ft.) from a ladder; the patient was transported to a local trauma center. On February 24<sup>th</sup>, personnel responded to a call of debris washing ashore at Breach Inlet and numerous pieces of boat wreckage were found, collected and taken to Fire Station 1; the Charleston County Sheriff's Office and the U.S. Coast Guard searched the waters around both islands and offshore for signs of a boat mishap, but nothing was found. The situation is under investigation. In the month, personnel responded to a total of forty (40) calls; nineteen (19) were EMS calls. Twenty-six (26) fire inspections were performed, and ten (10) violations were cited. All career personnel participated in driver and pump operator training, officer exam preparation and response protocol review. Vehicle maintenance costs were relatively higher this month due to the replacement of a fuel pump on Engine 1002 at more than sixty-six hundred dollars (\$6,600) and the replacement of the steering gear box assembly on a ladder truck for approximately twenty-five hundred dollars (\$2,500).

Chief Graham reported that Bill Jenkins was retiring after thirty-five years (35 yrs.) of volunteer service to the IOP Fire Department. Seth Bacon was promoted to Captain, and Jeff Stickney was promoted to Engineer to fill Captain Bacon's previous position.

### Police Department

In the early hours of February 20<sup>th</sup>, officers responded to a call of three (3) subjects attempting to break into a car; with the aid of a Sullivan's Island police officer and two (2) County Sheriff's Deputies, a perimeter was established and the three (3) suspects were arrested. During an interview with one (1) of the suspects, he stated that they had come to IOP to break into cars because "they are always unlocked and have valuables inside." Command Staff commends Pfc. Storen for being selected as the Officer of the Quarter for the third quarter of 2015 by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Network; he conducted a total of two hundred fifty (250) traffic stops that resulted in nine (9) arrests for Driving Under the Influence. The Chief noted that Pfc. Storen consistently leads the Department in DUI arrests; he made forty-seven (47) such arrests in 2015. In addition, the Command Staff recognizes Tracy Waldron who fulfills multiple roles in the Department; she is the Administrative Assistant to Chief Buckhannon and also handles records requests from the public and attorneys, supplies various reports as requested, and assists the Communication Specialists in the Reception Office. On February 2<sup>nd</sup>, FTO Maloney went to the IOP Recreation Department for a "Kids & Cops" session; he talked about safety and participated in arts and crafts with the children. Sgt. Meekins, ACO Enourato, BSO Skinner and BSO Tyson attended Doggie Day at the Rec and sold sixty-nine (69) dog licenses. Pfc. Amanda Postell attended a "Kids & Cops" session at the Rec where she talked about bike safety and took the children outside to instruct them in riding safety.

In the month of February, the Communication Specialists responded to four thousand fifty-three (4,053) calls, and three thousand two hundred thirty-seven (3,237) calls were for the Police Department. Officers made two hundred fifty-one (251) traffic stops, and seventy-four (74) of them received tickets. Twenty-seven (27) arrests were made in February for a variety of offenses; Animal Control wrote four (4) citations and seven (7) warning tickets. With the rapid onset of the



season, training hours are dwindling. Thirty-three (33) coyote sightings were reported in the month, and they were primarily in Wild Dunes.

When discussing the recruitment of BSOs for the summer, Elizabeth Campsen suggested that the City contact Operation Palmetto Employment that helps veterans find jobs.

**7. Miscellaneous Business**

**Next Meeting Date: 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, April 6<sup>th</sup> in the City Hall Conference Room**

**8. Executive Session – not needed**

**9. Adjourn**

**MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:32 a.m.; Chair Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland  
City Clerk