

**Public Safety Committee**  
2:00 p.m., Monday, February 6, 2017

The Public Safety Committee held its regular meeting at 2:00 p.m., Monday, February 6, 2017 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, Assistant Administrator Fragoso, Fire Chief Graham, Police Chief Buckhannon and City 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 Meetings Minutes**

**MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 9, 2017 as submitted; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. **Citizens' Comments**

Robert and Cassie Hess introduced themselves and stated that they were present to ask permission to hold the Chucktown Showdown Paddleboard Race at the Isle of Palms on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Mrs. Hess stated that, although it is primarily a paddleboard race, other types of water vessels that have six or eight (6-8) paddlers may participate; in prior years, the event has been held at Brittlebank Park in downtown Charleston. Having spoken with the management of the Windjammer and gotten their approval; the plan is to start and end at the Windjammer, and the Windjammer has agreed to host the event and provide necessary facilities for the racers.

Mr. Hess told the Committee that the race has taken place for four (4) previous years, but they are trying to make it more of a spectator event which is one (1) reason behind moving it to the Front Beach on the Isle of Palms. Ways that the event would benefit the City are in bringing approximately two hundred (200) spectators and participants to the island – some of whom will stay on the island, eat at island restaurants, and park in the municipal parking lots. The event will have a course of approximately ten (10) miles for the more experienced paddlers, a three to five (3-5) mile course for the beginners and a kids' course for an afternoon race. They have spoken with the Coast Guard who will provide five to six (5-6) safety boats, and DNR will also arrange for volunteers to assist. In the past, participants have paid a fee of eighty dollars (\$80), but, until details are finalized with the Windjammer, they will not know what the fee will be for this event.

When asked if they represented a for-profit organization, Mrs. Hess stated that, in previous races, any proceeds have been donated to Special Olympics; for this event, they are planning to donate to Surfers Healing, a program around the nation, allowing children with autism to get up on surfboards with professionals. For nine (9) years the one-day camp has been held at Folly Beach.

Responding to Chief Graham's concern, Mr. Hess stated that the race course would run parallel to the shoreline about two hundred to three hundred (200-300) yards out. The race will have multiple courses, but the weather conditions will dictate which way the race will run. One (1)

course would start at the Windjammer and go up to 52<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and back, and a second course could possibly go around Sullivan's Island.

If the weather was too rough, the race would be cancelled, but race fees would not be refunded.

According to Mr. Hess, this race will be a big event for paddleboarders; he stated that he is sponsored by BIC.

Mrs. Hess reported that there are only a few competitive, stand-up paddleboard races on the east coast, and one (1) of the biggest in the world is held in Wilmington, North Carolina with paddlers from all over the world. They hoped that changing the venue would draw more participants.

Administrator Tucker referred to the earlier statement that, if the race were cancelled, the fees paid by the participants would not be refunded; therefore, the fees less the expenses already incurred would be all profit. She stated that the City has to be very careful about for-profit occurrences on the beach; the City has "fiercely" protected the IOP beach from any type of commercial activity, which is why all proposed events must go through this vetting process. From her brief look into Surfers Healing, she said that it shows no activity in South Carolina, leaving her with the question of where the money would go. The Administrator asked that they put all of the detail information on the event on paper before it is presented to City Council. The donation in 2016 was between twenty-five hundred and three thousand dollars (\$2,500-3,000).

The Administrator also told them that, if the event was granted City-sponsored event status, the City would require the sponsor to have insurance for it and to have the City named "an additional insured," not just a certificate holder.

Chief Graham asked how the race participants would be identified and not mistaken for swimmers; Mrs. Hess replied that the participants would have numbered race bibs. The participants would also be required to have personal flotation devices and leashes.

Councilmember Carroll suggested that Mr. and Mrs. Hess return to the Monday, March 6<sup>th</sup> meeting with a written proposal.

Administrator Tucker stated that she had thought someone from Johnson and Johnson would attend this meeting; she explained that Johnson and Johnson has for many years held an event in Wild Dunes in November with a lot of splash. Since construction will be happening in Wild Dunes during that time, they are likely to want to hold it off-site but still on the Isle of Palms.

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

##### **A. Status of efforts to remove encroachments from rights-of-way**

Chief Buckhannon reported that forty-two (42) hazardous encroachments have been identified between 41<sup>st</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> Avenues, and letters would be going out to those property owners this week. In addition, thirteen (13) hazardous encroachments have been identified from Breach Inlet to 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The Administrator told the Committee that they will be getting calls and emails from the recipients of these letters; she stated that there are very few streets that are not included in the list. Some of the people are long-time residents on the island, and some of the encroachments have been in place a long time. If the Police Department is to be successful in this assignment, they are going to need “one hundred percent (100%) support” from the policy-setting body.

Councilmember Bergwerf asked how the Police Department was going to deal with the corrals for rollout carts. The Chief said that the corrals are illegal to be in the right-of-way unless the property owner got an encroachment permit from SCDOT, and they do not issue encroachment permits for items like that. The Chief added that they are not dealing with the corrals yet.

Councilmember Carroll expressed his opinion that the removal of these encroachments was another step in the beach parking management plan.

Administrator Tucker noted that, other than 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, the letters are going to properties that are designated as residential parking only, but the encroachments do inhibit friends, neighbors and relatives from parking on the side of the road.

#### **B. Status of golf cart parking on Front Beach**

The Administrator stated that the Committee agreed to have a curb cut onto the grassy area across from the Windjammer at the corner of JC Long and Ocean.

According to Chief Buckhannon, the curb cut was needed to make it legal for the golf carts to get to that area although they have been parking there for a long time; the purchase order calls for a six foot (6 ft.) wide cut. Once the work is done, the appropriate signage will be put up indicating “Golf Cart Parking Only;” he stated that bicycle parking was also planned for that space.

#### **C. Discussion of 2017 Fireworks Show**

Chief Graham recalled from the last meeting that a representative of Munnerlyn Pyrotechnics attended and gave a look back at the 2016 show and what he would like to do for 2017. She informed the Committee that the City actually got more show that it paid for; therefore, if the budget was not increased, the City would not get the same show it got in 2016 because of the extras. The Chief stated that she would like to stay with the same company because she thought he and his crew did “a fabulous job” despite the difficulty they had in setting up.

Councilmember Carroll reiterated that the City has a contract with Munnerlyn with an option to renew the same show for three (3) years at the same price; Chair Bettelli stated that the Administrator had made the City’s desire to renew the contract very clear.

Chief Graham said that the City could renew the show he bid on at the same price, but it would not be the same show the City had in 2016 because of the extras it got at no charge. She said that another option would be for the show to be shortened by a couple of minutes.

Administrator Tucker suggested that Chief Graham contact Mr. Munnerlyn to remind him that the City was waiting on his proposal, and she added that another vendor was making inquiries.

**D. Discussion of livability progress on overgrown lots**

Since this subject came up in a citizen's comment at the Public Works Committee meeting, the Administrator wanted the members of this Committee to understand the City's process for handling overgrown lots.

Chief Buckhannon stated that, when the Department receives a complaint or notification that a lot is overgrown, an officer must survey the property to insure that it fits in the guidelines of the City's policy. The officer then attempts to contact the owner to tell him of the problems with his lot; contacting the owner is easier with properties that have been improved or have houses on them; the owner is also more inclined to do what is necessary. The lots that are more difficult are the ones that have not been developed, are still natural and border on a neighborhood, the beach or a golf course. If the same standard were to be used on those lots, the island would be virtually cleared, which no one wants to see.

Of the three (3) lots identified, one (1) owner has cleared it off, and it has become a relatively barren lot with grass and a tree or so. Working with the Building Department to identify the owners of the remaining two (2) lots, the City Attorney drafted a letter that spelled out what must be done to the lots, and it was mailed last week.

Councilmember Carroll asked whether the letter was sent by certified mail and with a signature required upon receipt. He then inquired about what would happen if the owner did not reply; he wanted to know if the City would have the lots cleared and put a lien against the property.

The Chief responded that the City has never had to go that far. If the City was forced to take that kind of action, it would be in unknown territory.

**5. New Business**

**A. Consideration of an award of a sole source contract to Parkeon in the amount of \$24,978.75 for 2 additional parking kiosks for the municipal parking lot (MUNI ATAX Budget – page 24, line 153, Front Beach Area Capital Outlay - \$25,000)**

**MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved to recommend awarding a sole source contract to Parkeon for 2 kiosks for the municipal lots; Chair Bettelli seconded.**

Chief Buckhannon explained that that the City was making a sole source award because it currently has sixteen (16) kiosks from this company, and the mechanisms in the new ones will be the same as the others for ease of maintenance and repairs.

**VOTE: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**B. Consideration of an award of a contract to Lowcountry Custom Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$1,200 for the installation of 2 concrete foundation pads for 2 parking kiosks (MUNI ATAX budget – Page 24, line 144, Front Beach Area Maintenance and Service, \$5,000)**

The award is a companion to the new kiosks; it is the concrete pad on which the kiosks will be mounted.

**MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to recommend the award of a contract to Lowcountry Custom Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$1,200 for the installation of 2 concrete pads for 2 new parking kiosks; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**C. Consideration of disposal of outdated surplus radio equipment**

Chief Graham stated that the radios she wants to dispose of are the analog radios that the City used before it got the first digital radios. When the Chief originally decided to keep them, the intent was that they could be used to communicate with extra people who would be on the island in the aftermath of a storm event. She said that the radios cannot be used in the United States, but could be useful for parts since the radios are no longer manufactured.

**MOTION: Chair Bettelli moved to approve the disposal of out-of-service, analog radios by Chief Graham at her discretion; Councilmember Carroll seconded.**

The Chief intends to use the radios that were recently taken out of service when radios are needed on water missions; she indicated that she was not convinced that the new radios have the submersibility that the manufacturer claims, and she does not want to learn the hard way.

**VOTE: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**D. Consideration of bike racks (MUNI ATAX Budget - page 24, line 144, FB Maintenance and Services or line 151, FB Miscellaneous and Contingency, \$,7,500 or MUNI ATAX Budget – Page 23, line 105,– General Government Professional Services, \$30,000)**

Since the talks of bike racks began, the Administrator has learned that the variety of racks available covers a wide range from thematic bike racks to the utilitarian racks that are commonly seen.

Looking at the pictures of some thematic bike racks, Chair Bettelli questioned that the average cyclist would know that they are bike racks, and Councilmember Bergwerf commented on the high price tags on the decorative ones.

Administrator Tucker thought that the “beachy” racks would have an added value at Front Beach.

For the more utilitarian racks that would accommodate two or three (2-3) bikes, the prices range from three to five hundred dollars (\$300-500), and Chief Buckhannon estimated the installation of

one (1) to run around two hundred dollars (\$200). Racks can be purchased that hold from two (2) to twenty-five (25) bicycles.

Although Councilmember Bergwerf thought the thematic racks were “adorable,” she did not think they were as efficient as they could be.

The Chief said that “beachy” racks were offered to address discussions about the Front Beach area looking tired and drab; the thought was that maybe this type rack would dress-up the area a little.

Suggested locations for bike racks were a large rack in the grassy area to be dedicated for golf carts across from the Windjammer, a medium sized one at the public restrooms, at the Public Safety Building and at City Hall. The Chief recommended racks that hold three to five (3-5) bikes at public buildings and a rack holding nine or ten (9-10) where the golf carts would park; the City was looking to purchase five (5) bikes. The Committee then considered the costs of stainless steel racks.

**MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to recommend to Ways and Means Committee purchasing 1 stainless steel rack holding 10 bikes and 4 stainless steel racks holding 5 bicycles each plus installation in an amount up to \$8,000; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chief Graham announced that Bob Maibach, the departmental training officer, intends to retire on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017, but Chief Graham reported that she has not received a written notification.

## **6. Highlights of Departmental Reports**

### Fire Department – Battalion Chief Jason Smith

On January 8<sup>th</sup>, personnel responded to the report of an outside fire between two (2) businesses on Front Beach, and, on January 17<sup>th</sup>, they responded to a structure fire at a residence on Waterway Boulevard. En route, the crew was alerted that sparking and burning was emanating from the oven; once the power was secured to the oven, the lower burner was found to have gone bad. The owner was advised to keep the power to the oven off until the burner could be replaced. The Department responded to a total of forty-two (42) calls in the month, and seventeen (17) of them were EMS calls. Personnel completed thirty-two (32) pre-incident surveys, and the Fire Inspector conducted twelve (12) inspections. The primary contributor to vehicle maintenance costs was work to ladder truck 1002; also included was the expense for enhancing the security capabilities for the Public Safety Building. In January, two (2) firefighters completed the written and practical testing for the position of engineer, and will, therefore, be eligible for promotion when a position becomes available. Members of the Fire Department continue serving the residents of the island in many ways, i.e. changing batteries in smoke detectors, assisting when a resident falls, and conducting station tours for both visitors and residents. Fire Department personnel are required to get sixteen to twenty (16-20) hours of fire training each month based on rank; IOP personnel received an average of thirty-nine (39) training hours in January. Since two (2) members of the Department continue on extended leave and the month having three (3) pay periods, overtime was higher than normal. The Department has no vacancies at this time.

Chief Graham noted that EMT training would be over and above the required fire training, and those hours were not included in the report.

Responding to Councilmember Carroll, Battalion Chief Smith stated that several firefighters/engineers have completed Instructor Orientation Workshops (IOW) that qualify them to teach certain training courses. Frequently classes are held at Station 1 with IOP personnel teaching courses that are attended by personnel from other jurisdictions in the tri-county area.

#### Police Department – Chief Buckhannon

The Chief reported that January had been a relatively quiet month for the Police Department with a few traffic stops and driving under the influence stops; he reported that, on the last day of the month, officers were called to a significant attempted theft on Waterway Island Drive. The items of jewelry that were taken were valued at approximately one hundred twenty-eight thousand dollars (\$128,000) along with four hundred dollars (\$400) in cash. The victim had seen the subject rifling through her car; when she confronted him, he removed some jewelry from his pocket and started to run from the scene, but was placed under arrest still possessing some of the jewelry and the cash. The Chief recognized both Sergeant Storen and Pfc. Reynolds who have been nominated for the 2016 DUI Hero Pin Award with the SC Law Enforcement Network for their dedication and actions in making the roadways safer through DUI enforcement. Three (3) officers attended the January Keenagers meeting where the Charleston County Consolidated Dispatch Center gave a presentation on the Smart 911 system and 9-1-1 texting. In January, the City's Communication Socialists received forty-five hundred ninety-one (4,591) calls, and, of that number, thirty-six hundred eighty-four (3,684) were for the IOP Police Department. Two hundred eighty-four (284) traffic stops were made with fifty-four (54) of them being issued traffic tickets. Eighty-one (81) service tickets were written, seventeen (17) arrests were made in the month, and the Animal Control Officer wrote three (3) citations. Detectives started the month with six (6) open cases; fifteen (15) cases were assigned to them; twelve (12) were closed; they will start February with nine (9) cases. Five (5) noise complaints were made in January; three (3) were unfounded; one (1) received a ticket and the other a warning. Citizens reported three (3) coyote sightings. In conclusion, Chief Buckhannon reported that three (3) patrol officers have been hired, leaving three (3) openings; advertising for BSOs is on-going with a start date in March.

#### **7. Miscellaneous Business**

**Next Meeting Date:** 2:00 p.m., Monday, March 6, 2017 in the Conference Room

#### **8. Executive Session –not needed**

#### **9. Adjournment**

**MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:20 p.m.; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:  
Marie Copeland  
City Clerk