

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
2:00 p.m., Monday, January 9, 2017

The regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was called to order at 2:00 p.m., Monday, January 9, 2017 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmember Bergwerf, Bettelli and Carroll, Administrator Tucker, Fire Chief Graham, Police Chief Buckhannon, Assistant Administrator Fragoso and City Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Administrator Tucker 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.

MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved to add the Election of Chair and Vice Chair to the Agenda; Councilmember Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Councilmember Bergwerf nominated Councilmember Bettelli for the position of Chair; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the vote unanimously supported Councilmember Bettelli.

For the position of Vice Chair, Councilmember Carroll nominated Councilmember Bergwerf; Chair Bettelli seconded and the vote unanimously supported Councilmember Bergwerf.

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

MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 2, 2016 as submitted; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **Citizens' Comments**

City-sponsored Events

a. **2017 Special Olympics Polar Bear Plunge – Deputy Chief Stan Gragg**

Chief Gragg distributed an advertising flyer stating that the Polar Plunge was scheduled for Saturday, February 18th at The Windjammer beginning with registration at 10:30 a.m.; he reported that last year, the IOP event raised eighteen thousand six hundred dollars (\$18,600), and state-wide the total was in excess of eight hundred eighty-five thousand dollars (\$885,000).

MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved to approve this event as a City-sponsored event and to add the annual polar plunge to the City's list of annual events; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

b. **Volleyball at The Windjammer**

Bobby Ross was before the Committee requesting that he be allowed to host a youth volleyball league at The Windjammer as a City-sponsored event; he plans to have a spring and summer leagues starting in mid-March and running through the first week of August. In addition he would like to hold two (2) volleyball tournaments this year, Saturday, May 6th and Saturday, July 8th.

On the subject of beach renourishment, Administrator Tucker stated that, although the City's permit includes the entire shoreline, the City has no funding for the area from Breach Inlet to 14th Avenue. He, therefore, should not be concerned about a project interfering with the league or tournament play.

MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to designate the volleyball leagues as a City-sponsored event and to add the volleyball leagues to the City's list of approved annual events; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to designate the planned volleyball tournaments on May 6th and July 8th as City-sponsored events; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Randy Bell of 22-41st Avenue again appealed to the Committee for intervention on the continued speeding issue on 41st Avenue, and he commended the monitoring efforts of Police Department. Mr. Bell stated that the speeding was not limited to commercial vehicles, but it was an incessant flow of traffic that gets worse with every holiday weekend. He said that not a day goes by when he does not witness vehicles traveling at fifty miles per hour (50 mph) up and down the street. He indicated that he did not think it was practical to have police cars there all the time and their presence was not solving the problem. In his opinion, two (2) solutions were available, i.e. the installation of speed bumps on the street or the installation of a STOP sign at Wildwood and 41st Avenue; something was needed to break up the traffic flow by causing people to stop. Mr. Bell added that many of the drivers are texting and not paying attention to driving; he thought the City should approach the problem as a public safety issue.

4. Old Business

Discussion of Encroachments on the rights-of-way

Chief Buckhannon reported that officers are identifying the encroachments in the right-of-way focusing on the area between 42nd Avenue and 30th Avenue; to-date, they have identified forty-two (42) properties between 42nd and 57th Avenues that have hard obstructions in the right-of-way. Officers have taken photographs and gotten copies of the plats, and the City Attorney has drafted a letter to be used as a template for notifications to homeowners of their obstructions in the right-of-way. If the homeowner wants to keep the obstruction(s) in he must get an encroachment permit from SCDOT.

5. New Business

A. Discussion of 2017 July 4th Fireworks – Brent Munnerlyn, Munnerlyn Pyrotechnics

Chair Bettelli introduced Mr. Munnerlyn and reminded the Committee that the 2016 fireworks display was produced by his company. He initiated his comments with an explanation of the types of fireworks shows available as follows:

1. Hand-fired shows where the shells and fuses are lit manually;

2. Electronically-fired shows when the shells are wired in and pushing a button to fire them;
3. Scripted shows like the 2016 event here when a computer runs the sequencing and fires the display; and
4. Choreography or pyro-musicals where the firing of the shells is choreographed to music.

The hurdle for a choreographed show on the island is the absence of a speaker system or band and people are scattered all over; one (1) way to overcome that is to broadcast the music over an FM radio station, which is relatively easy to do. He would like to produce this type of show for the City in 2017; it is similar to the 2016 display, but involves much more time at the computer. Mr. Munnerlyn said that he did not think that any other group offered this type of show in the Charleston area.

Councilmember Bergwerf asked what the additional cost would be.

Administrator Tucker recalled from a similar show in the past that the City would be required to buy the radio time.

When Councilmember Carroll asked what the budget was in FY16, Chief Graham recalled that the budget had been unusually low based on the prior year's actual expense; therefore, additional funding was required when Munnerlyn was hired at twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) to produce the show. The Councilmember commented that he had enjoyed the 2016 fireworks show and did not think the music was needed.

Councilmember Bergwerf said that she would support shortening the show by a couple of minutes to add the music.

Mr. Munnerlyn said that moving the equipment and the racks onto the pier was more difficult than anticipated and took longer than planned; a ramp would be very helpful to get their racks and equipment onto the pier and would dramatically reduce setup time.

Since the City does not own the pier, any ramp would have to be temporary.

MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to recommend to the Ways and Means Committee that the City contract with Munnerlyn Pyrotechnics for the same July 4th fireworks display as in 2016 and to stay within the same budget.

The motion died for lack of a second.

According to Chief Graham, last year's contract with Munnerlyn stated that, if the City was pleased with the fireworks display, the City had the right to renew for three (3) more years. The Chief said that she would like to see the budget increased a little to keep things as they are.

Mr. Munnerlyn noted that fireworks from China are more expensive than last year, so he asked for time to prepare a proposal for the Committee. He advised that the cost for the 2016 show

would have to be increased by ten percent (10%) based on their increased costs or be a decrease in the length of the show.

Although the FY17 budget allocated thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000) for the fireworks, Administrator Tucker commented that the City needed some of that money for incidentals, food, signs, etc.

Chair Bettelli told Mr. Munnerlyn that Committee members had heard only praises for the 2016 show.

Administrator Tucker asked that Mr. Munnerlyn also investigate charges for the radio time and confirmed that the City wanted to exercise its right to renew.

Mr. Munnerlyn asked that the City provide him the amount budgeted for the 2017 fireworks show.

B. Discussion of parking for golf carts, motorcycles and bicycles at Front Beach and other items coming from the Parking After-action Meeting

All of the issues brought up at the after-action meeting were assigned to the Public Safety Committee for additional information gathering.

On the subject of parking for non-vehicular modes of transportation, Chief Buckhannon first asked whether the elected body was going to support giving up parking spaces/areas to create parking for bicycles, motorcycles and golf carts. If the decision was to keep all parking spaces, the only space available for parking golf carts would be the grassy area across from The Windjammer; the City would need to create a curb cut for golf carts to get to the site legally. The Chief reminded Committee members that golf carts can park the same as a car in places where parking is allowed on the island. The Chief commented that parking spaces for motorcycles already exist in the median area across from The Windjammer; if additional parking was wanted, the City would lose parking space to create them. One (1) parallel vehicular parking space can accommodate three (3) motorcycles; to double the existing motor-cycle parking would require the loss of three (3) car spaces. Bicycle parking could easily be achieved by the purchase of bike racks to be located around Front Beach, and the racks are relatively inexpensive.

Responding to Councilmember Bergwerf's inquiry regarding the need for additional motorcycle parking, Chief Buckhannon remarked that the motorcycle spaces near the Windjammer are full at times, but not frequently. He stated that the more urgent need for legal parking at Front Beach was for golf carts.

Councilmember Bergwerf asked why the loading zone for Code Del Pesce was so large, but Chief Buckhannon contended that the space is really not oversized and that one (1) large delivery truck fills the space. The space actually belongs to the hotel and will revert to them when it re-opens, and the surrounding restaurants will lose the space as a loading zone.

The Administrator stated that funds were available in the section of the budget dedicated to Front Beach expenses.

MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved for staff to investigate the cost of creating a curb cut in the grassy space across from The Windjammer and also the cost of 3 bicycle racks for Front Beach.

The Chair did not think a motion was needed for information gathering, and the motion died for lack of a second.

Chief Buckhannon said he would have estimated costs for the curb cut for the February meeting.

To determine the number of bike racks to purchase, Councilmember Bergwerf asked how many bicycles could be stored on one (1) rack. Chief Buckhannon responded that the number could be as few as two (2) or as many as fifteen (15); he noted that he did not think space was available for one (1) of the larger racks.

Councilmember Bergwerf suggested that Committee members walk the Front Beach area to determine where bike racks might be located.

Administrator Tucker commented that bike racks should also be placed at City Hall and at the Public Safety Building.

C. Consideration of award of a contract to Benson Ford in the amount of \$24,468, state contract pricing, for one (1) 2017 Police Interceptor Sedan with accessories

MOTION: Chair Bettelli moved to recommend to Ways and Means to award a contract to Benson Ford for the purchase of one (1) Police Interceptor Sedan at a cost of \$24,468, state contract pricing; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded.

Chief Buckhannon stated that the vendor price does not include the light bar, cage, etc.

Responding to Councilmember Carroll, the Chief replied that the budget for this vehicle was around thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000).

Chair Bettelli remarked that the City does recuperate some of the expense when the existing car is auctioned.

Vote: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

D. Consideration of award of a contract to Vic Bailey Ford in the amount of \$27,186, state contract pricing, for one (1) 2017 Police Interceptor SUV with accessories

Motion: Chair Bettelli moved to recommend Ways and Means the award of a contract to Vic Bailey Ford for one (1) Police Interceptor SUV as detailed above in the amount of \$27,186, state contract pricing; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

E. Results of ISO Evaluation

Chief Graham said that this was the third or fourth time that the City's ISO rating has gone down; the City had its evaluation in August 2016. This year the process differed in that the evaluators gathered information when they made the two and a half (2.5) day site visit and did "the number crunching" and write-up after returning to their offices. Entities other than the Fire Department were assessed; they were the IOP Water and Sewer Commission, communications, the building codes, and more. The Chief is of the opinion that the addition of more personnel since the last evaluation played a key role in the City excellent score. One (1) of the evaluators stated that it was difficult to attain a rating of one (1), but it was harder to maintain it. The City went from a rating of three (3) to a rating of (1).

The Chief said that the City's understanding was that the businesses will see lowered insurance premiums, as well as some homeowners. She noted that staff was asked not to inform the businesses; ISO will inform the insurance companies who will in turn notify the policy holders. The rating will become effective on April 1, 2017.

Chief Graham noted that these inspections will be more frequent than they have been in the past, which was every two to two and a half (2-2.5) years.

Administrator Tucker told the Committee members that receiving the ISO rating of one (1) was the first time it has happened in her career.

Chief Graham indicated that her goal in the ISO evaluation was not to get a one (1), but to be the best the Department could be regardless of the numbers.

6. Highlights of Departmental Reports

Fire Department – Chief Graham

The Chief reported that on December 11th, personnel responded to a call for a boater in distress in the area of Long Creek; when Boat 1020 located the vessel, they found an individual aboard the disabled boat. He was transported to the marina. On December 22nd, personnel reported to a call for a plane upside down on the beach at Capers Island; upon arrival, personnel determined that no individuals were injured and that the plane was not leaking fuel. Again the individuals were taken to the IOP Marina. On December 27th, personnel responded to a gunshot wound in the leg on Cameron Boulevard; the City crew assisted Charleston County EMS with packaging and loading the patient for transport. For the month of December, personnel responded to fifty-two (52) calls with twenty-one (21) of them EMS calls. Over 2016, personnel responded to four hundred forty-seven (447) medical calls and a total of one thousand seventy-eight (1,078) calls. Twenty-seven (27) pre-incident surveys were completed in the month, and the Fire Inspector inspected nine (9) public buildings and found seventy-seven (77) violations. The major maintenance expenses were attributed to the Public Safety Building related to the heating/air conditioning unit and the fuel tank.

Police Department – Chief Buckhannon

Between December 14th and 16th, four (4) “thefts from motor vehicles” occurred, and the cases were assigned to investigations. On December 7th, three (3) officers attended the Keenagers Meeting, and on December 8th, Officers Reynolds and Taylor participated in Santa’s Cookie Workshop as Santa and his elf. For the month of December, dispatchers answered three thousand eight hundred ninety-six (3,896) calls and a total of sixty-one thousand four hundred thirty-one (61,431) calls; the IOP Police Department received a total of forty-eight thousand three hundred sixty-seven (48,367) calls in 2016. Officers made one hundred eighty-five (185) traffic stops that resulted in fifty-eight (58) tickets being issued; for the year, officers made thirty-one hundred thirty-one (3,131) stops and wrote eight hundred nineteen (819) tickets. In the year 2016 on the island, there were forty-one (41) burglaries, one hundred eighteen (118) thefts and fourteen (14) motor vehicles stolen. The Animal Control Officer wrote ten (10) citations and picked up nineteen (19) animals. In the course of 2016, officers received twenty-three hundred twenty-six hours of training. The Livability Officer had five (5) noise complaints in the month; only one call was founded and the person(s) received a warning ticket. Residents notified the Department of eleven (11) coyote sightings.

Chief Buckhannon responded to Councilmember Bergwerf that the City has no traps out for coyotes at this time.

The Police Department currently has four (4) vacancies, but offers have been sent to three (3) candidates, and arrangements are being made for them to attend the Academy; two (2) more interviews are scheduled this week. One (1) officer who left the Department left law enforcement entirely, one (1) retired, one (1) went to another agency and the fourth became a stay-at-home dad.

Responding to Councilmember Carroll, Chief Buckhannon reported that the CALEA on-site went very well, and the hearing will be in Mobile, Alabama at the end of March.

7. Miscellaneous Business – None

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

8. Executive Session – not needed

9. Adjourn

MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:19 p.m.; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk