

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
5:30 p.m., Tuesday, November 11, 2008

The regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was held at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 11, 2008 in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Chairman Buckhannon and Committee member Bettelli, City Administrator Tucker, Police Lieutenant Wright, Fire Chief Graham, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland.

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

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

**MOTION: Councilman Bettelli moved to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of October 7, 2008 as submitted; Chairman Buckhannon seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. **Citizens' Comments - None**

4. **Old Business**

A. **Status of Public Safety Building**

Change Order #5 in the amount of \$13,259.49 covering (1) the reinstallation of two (2) water taps, (2) changes in the thirty inch (30") drain and water main, (3) an additional twelve inches (12") of pavement removal across Palm Boulevard and (4) addition of exterior shower and supply piping.

Administrator Tucker reported that, when the water line was moved to place the drainage line, taps to two (2) residences had to be disconnected, so item (1) is to reinstall those residential taps. The additional pavement, Item (3), will be placed tonight as the plates are removed from Palm Boulevard. The exterior shower and supply piping (4) was included in the original design, but this shower and piping were not included in the design for the plumbing for the building. Therefore, when Mashburn bid the contract, this item was not included in their bid since it was not in the design upon which the bid was based. The Administrator pointed out that these changes were underground and could not have been anticipated.

**MOTION: Chairman Buckhannon moved to approve Change Order #5 totaling \$13,259.49 and to recommend its approval to the Ways and Means Committee; Councilman Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Administrator Tucker explained that, due to nature of this project as compared to the design/build for Fire Station 2, the City will continue to see change orders as the project progresses. In addition, she reported that the contingency for this project has started at \$747,000 and was now at \$719,000, including Change Order #5, and she commented that she that amount would be sufficient to complete the Public Safety Building.

Dave Johnson, the Project Manager from Cole+Russell, was available to attend the meeting since he was in town from Ohio to attend the regular bi-weekly project meeting and to provide the Committee with the report on the construction progress. Mr. Johnson stated that the construction progress is on time and should be completed "right on schedule." He reported that "slabs on grade" were being placed and should be completed next week, indicating that the first floor slabs would be in place. Steel is expected to arrive next week, which is earlier than was originally anticipated; the steel will be the joists for the second floor. He also stated that concrete for the second floor should be poured by the end of the month of November; the second floor is the next big step in the construction process. He noted that, once the paving was completed this evening, drainage would be complete up to J.C. Long and Pavilion; drainage work now will be in the immediate vicinity of the building.

Chief Graham added that the on-site storm drainage work was scheduled to begin next week. She reported that there have been no injuries on the project and that there have been no breaches in security at the site.

Administrator Tucker mentioned that, over the next several months, she will be working with Chief Graham and Chief Buckhannon on the components of the project that are not related to the actual construction of the building, for example the building security, alarms, phones, hardware, etc. The other components are included in the budget for the Public Safety Building.

**B. Status of SCDOT demonstration project at 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Palm Boulevard**

Councilman Bettelli informed the Committee that he had witnessed an occasion when five (5) out of six (6) vehicles did not stop as they approached the intersection from Wild Dunes and proceeded onto Palm Boulevard.

Lieutenant Wright stated that police officers have been issuing warnings, but not tickets, when they see vehicles not adhering to the traffic signs. He reported that he had been told by SCDOT that the signage that was needed for the intersection was "on order" and that additional signs would be placed northbound on Palm Boulevard to warn drivers of the upcoming stop sign. Lieutenant Wright reported that the Police Department had not received any phone-in complaints about the intersection in the past month.

When asked how the Fire Department was dealing with the changes at the intersection, Chief Graham stated that the trucks avoid the intersection whenever possible, because it appeared to Fire Department personnel that drivers do not know who is supposed to stop.

### **C. Radio Communications in Commercial Buildings**

Administrator Tucker asked that this item be deferred until later in the meeting because she had been working with Building Director Kerr on this issue, and he was delayed because he was involved in a meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals.

### **D. 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue Barricade**

Councilman Bettelli reported that he had recently received an email from a resident requesting that space be provided on one (1) side of the barricade at the end of 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue to allow access to launch a kayak or canoe. He stated that he and Director Pitts had removed a portion of a berm on the left side of the barricade to provide the requested access.

## **5. New Business**

### **A. Discussion of Timing for Engine Replacement**

Administrator Tucker noted that replacement of the 1991 fire apparatus was in the budget for FY 2009-2010, but she was proposing tonight that the City opt to order the new engine in this current budget year with no budgetary impact until FY 2009-2010. At the annual fire chiefs' meeting, Chief Graham learned from the fire apparatus vendors that there will be price increases in January and July 2009 and a third in January 2010; the increases are to pay for new NFPA requirements on fire pumpers. The new requirements are a black box type device, similar to what is on airplanes, and emission control equipment; none of these changes would improve the ability of firefighters to fight fires or improve the safety of the firefighters as they travel to and from a fire scene. The Administrator also pointed out there was the potential for unusual maintenance problems from the first edition of this new, untested equipment. Administrator Tucker stated that, for the reasons delineated above, she and Chief Graham were proposing that the City place an order for the equipment, that has been budgeted to be replaced in 2010, before the end of this calendar year, therefore, not purchasing a truck equipped with all of the new requirements and save between fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) and fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). The Administrator further explained that this action would not have a budgetary impact, because the only thing happening now was the placing of an order with delivery to be taken next year and a payment on the lease/purchase due around July 2009.

Having distributed a copy of the City's Capital Plan, she pointed out that there is a truck listed with a final payment of \$31,183 to be paid in FY 2010; conceivably there is only one (1) year with a possibility of the City's making two (2) truck payments.

In conclusion, Administrator Tucker stated that it as her advice for the Public Safety Committee to recommend to Ways and Means for the City to issue the order for the new truck, noting that financing and delivery of the truck would not take place until FY 2010 – the original Capital Plan and that there would be a substantial savings in doing so. The City paid \$204,000 for the 1991 Spartan truck that would be retired; the City would propose to sell it and place the proceeds into the purchase of the new truck.

Administrator Tucker commented that another benefit to placing the order at this time was that the City could purchase a truck that would be very similar to the last pumper purchased; she noted that there were benefits to everything being in the one place, in moving equipment from truck to truck, etc. The trucks that will be manufactured containing the new requirements will have to be configured quite differently, thereby making it more difficult for personnel to move between trucks.

Councilman Bettelli asked Chief Graham to describe the condition of the 1991 pumper; she reported that the truck was functional, but that maintenance was very high to keep it running. She stated that, if the City were to keep this truck, she would want to have it completely refurbished. Administrator Tucker recounted that, in last year's budget preparation, Chief Graham had requested that the purchase of a new pumper be moved up one (1) year because of the increasing amount of money required to keep the 1991 truck operational; at that time, Council decided to leave the purchase in FY 2009-2010.

**MOTION: Chairman Buckhannon moved to recommend to Ways and Means for the City to place the order for a new pumper before the end of 2008; Councilman Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**B. Consideration of Award of Contracts in Excess of \$10,000**

Administrator Tucker reminded the Committee that these three (3) police vehicles had been approved in the 2008-2009 budget. Included in the meeting packets was information Chief Buckhannon had gathered to illustrate, in several areas, the most cost effective purchase; Chief Buckhannon recommended the Dodge Durango for the two (2) 4-wheel drive vehicles and the Chevrolet Impala for the squad car.

Chairman Buckhannon asked if any of the required police equipment could be moved from one vehicle to another rather than purchasing new; Lieutenant Wright answered that some of the equipment would be relocated, but the cage would be new because the new Durangos are configured different to the one the City currently has.

**MOTION:** Chairman Buckhannon moved to recommend to Ways and Means the vehicle purchases as follows:

- **2 Dodge Durangos from Butler Chrysler-Dodge in Beaufort; \$21,659.00/ea, includes addition of 4 wheel drive and sales taxes; state contract pricing; and**
- **1 Chevrolet Impala from Love Chevrolet in Columbia, \$19,173.00, includes sales taxes; state contract pricing.**

**The motion was seconded by Councilman Bettelli and PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **6. October Department Reports**

### Fire Department – Chief Graham

Chief Graham reported that October had been a relatively quiet month. Among the highlights was the fact that nine (9) inspections had been done that uncovered a total of forty-five (45) violations to the fire code; one business had twenty-three (23) violations, but the most serious have been corrected and the balance will be corrected very soon.

In light of the recent water use restrictions, the Department used only twenty thousand (20,000) gallons of water to back flush the pumps; the back flushing was performed on a biweekly basis, rather than a weekly basis.

During the month, there was the annual Fire Prevention Parade, which is always a big success. The Fire Department had assisted with the Ecothon; Chief Graham reported that the event had been small, but all of the participants were very enthusiastic.

Councilman Bettelli remarked at how impressed he was each and every time the Departments came together to work in a crisis, like the flooding that occurred at the end of the month.

### Police Department – Lieutenant Wright

Lieutenant Wright reported that the Police Department had experienced a very busy October. One of the outstanding cases was that a resident had been defrauded of \$536,000 dollars; the City's officers took the report and turned it over to the FBI. Overall the reports in October were up fourteen percent (14%), while they are up nine percent (9%) for the year. The Lieutenant noted that the City detectives have a lead on the burglaries that were reported last month.

Chairman Buckhannon asked about the level of staffing in the Police Department; Lieutenant Wright stated that there were two (2) individuals that were ready to be hired.

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

##### **C. Radio Communications in Commercial Buildings**

Building Director Kerr had arrived to participate in this discussion. Administrator Tucker related that this issue had come to the forefront as a result of the radio communication problems that the Fire and Police Departments had experienced in The Villages. In researching the problem of wireless technology in buildings constructed of steel and concrete, it has been learned that it is a universal problem. Many municipalities have addressed the issue by requiring that bi-directional devices be installed during the construction of large commercial buildings. Director Kerr commented the State Building Code Congress has sole authority to establish building codes in the state of South Carolina. From the Building Code Congress, he learned that the City could have an ordinance requiring the necessary technology as long as the equipment was not built integrally into the building, but added after construction was completed. Administrator Tucker stated that Director Kerr would be working with Chiefs Graham and Buckhannon and the City Attorney to compile an ordinance for the Committee's consideration in the coming future. The Administrator also pointed out that, if the City does not pass such an ordinance, it will fall to the City to provide a method of overcoming the problem in order to provide the level of service that is expected by the residents of the island.

#### **7. Miscellaneous**

Chairman Buckhannon requested that Administrator Tucker gather the information from previous discussions on a bike path along Palm Boulevard between 21<sup>st</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup>.

Chairman Buckhannon reported that he had been approached by residents who were interested in changing the hours that the City allows dogs to run off-leash on the beach. Councilman Bettelli commented that he had mixed feelings about the subject, but that he was presently not in favor of relaxing the City's current policy.

Since she had arrived late, Chairman Buckhannon, with the permission of the Committee, allowed Betsy Michaels, who lives on 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue, to express her opinion on a change in the City's policy. Ms. Michaels stated that there were many dog owners who were unable to get on the beach early in the mornings to let their dogs run because of jobs or getting children off to school. She suggested that possibly this time of year, dogs could be allowed to run free from 4:30 p.m. until dusk and in the spring and summer from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.; both of these ranges are times when there is much less activity on the beach.

Administrator Tucker suggested that Ms. Michaels review the City's existing ordinance and return to the Committee with specifics on the changes she would like to see.

Next Meeting Date: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 13, 2009.

**8. Adjourn**

**MOTION: Councilman Bettelli moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 p.m.;  
Chairman Buckhannon seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland  
City Clerk