

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
5:00 p.m., Thursday, August 9, 2012

The regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was held at 5:00 p.m., Thursday, August 9, 2012 in the Conference Room of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmember Bergwerf, Chair Bettelli, Administrator Tucker, Fire Chief Graham, Police Chief Buckhannon, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland. Despite Mayor Cronin's absence, 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 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 July 11, 2012 as submitted; Chair Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. **Citizens' Comments – None**

**MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved to re-order the *Agenda* to address item B under New Business at this point in the meeting; Chair Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. **New Business**

**B. Discussion of Stantec's Proposal for Island-wide Wayfinding Signs**

Administrator Tucker initiated the discussion by recalling that a proposal for expanding the scope of Stantec's contract for wayfinding signs based on the fact that, in order to get the encroachment permit from SCDOT for the signage that has been approved, the City must make a commitment for an island-wide wayfinding sign program. At the Ways and Means Committee meeting, the proposal was sent back to this Committee for further discussion; in the interim, City staff has met with Stantec and Jerry Regenbogen will present the results of that meeting as well as review the proposal that is on the table. The Administrator commented that the ensuing discussion will also address the first item under *Old Business* of beach access parking.

Mr. Regenbogen remarked that the original intent of this proposal to amend the existing contract was to comply with SCDOT's request that the City commit to a phased island-wide wayfinding sign program in order for SCDOT to approve the encroachment permit for the non-traditional signage approved in Phase 1. He then reviewed the points in the proposal and stated that steps 1-10 could be completed in twelve (12) weeks and two (2) weeks to complete the four (4) items; the fee for this amendment is twenty-four thousand nine hundred fifty dollars (\$24,950.00). (A copy is attached to the historical record of the meeting.)

At this time, Mr. Regenbogen referenced the meeting Stantec personnel had with the City's staff earlier in the week which resulted in Stantec's being asked to look into the beach access parking project that has been a multi-year project of the Planning Commission and City Council. Although Stantec has not had time to compile a detailed proposal, Mr. Regenbogen did generate a handout for the Committee detailing the components of a beach access parking

study. (A copy attached to the historical record of the meeting.) Among the initial steps in the beach access parking subject was for the City to provide Stantec with the body of work generated through Planning Commission meetings, public forums and proposals considered; Stantec will take this volume of information for review and assessment. Combined with their own study, Stantec will develop alternative solutions, some of which may be slight variations of proposals already discussed.

Administrator Tucker informed the Committee that the City was in the process of gathering the volume of work from the Planning Commission meetings, its resource materials and the public forums to assist Stantec in developing their proposal. Mr. Regenbogen stated that his staff would need to review the City's information in order to provide the City with a cost estimate for beach access parking work.

Mr. Regenbogen stated his opinion that the City's implementation of the Type A, or identification signage, like the WELCOME sign at the foot of the Connector Bridge, would be sufficient proof of commitment to SCDOT to get the encroachment permit. The City could then proceed with a phased approach to additional wayfinding signage.

Chair Bettelli recounted that the City has approved the initial signage phase of wayfinding signs for the island; the issue before the City now is to do what is necessary to get SCDOT to issue an encroachment permit to get the approved signage installed. Discussions at City Council, according to Chair Bettelli, showed reluctance on Council's part to commit additional funding when they have not seen the product approved in Phase 1.

Administrator Tucker elaborated on Chair Bettelli's comments by saying that Councilmembers want to see the impact the new signs will have before committing to more money and more signage, and this is where the problem lies, i.e. SCDOT will not issue the encroachment permit for the signs that Council has approved until such time as the City makes a financial commitment to proceed with an island-wide wayfinding sign program. The Administrator added that she would prefer to see a new proposal for Phase 2 incorporating the beach access parking study and Phase 2 for wayfinding signs with the various stages outlined and priced individually so that Council could use the amended proposal as a planning and budgeting tool for future years.

**MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved to consolidate Phase 2 of the way-finding signs and the beach access parking initiative to facilitate SCDOT's issuing the SCDOT encroachment permit; Chair Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

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

- A. Continued Discussion of Beach Access Parking – see above**
- B. Update on “NO PARKING” delineation on Avenues 42<sup>nd</sup> to 57<sup>th</sup>**

Chief Buckhannon reported that SCDOT approved the placement of the “NO PARKING HERE TO CORNER” signs from 42<sup>nd</sup> to 57<sup>th</sup> Avenues, but they have not installed them.

On the subject of signs island-wide stating “NO PARKING ON PAVEMENT,” the Chief reminded the Committee that is an ordinance issue that would still require DOT’s approval before signs could be installed. The Chief added that he has spoken to the City’s Prosecutor Chris Skipper about enforcement, and Mr. Skipper advised that the ordinance should be very exact in stating “NO PARKING ON PAVEMENT” for the City to be able to enforce.

**MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved for the City Administrator to task Attorney Halversen with drafting an amendment to the City Code for “NO PARKING ON PAVEMENT;” Chair Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **C. Update on Consolidated Dispatch**

Chief Buckhannon reported that the City will “go live” with the Tri-tech CAD system on September 25<sup>th</sup>, which is the same system that the dispatchers use in the Consolidated Dispatch Center. The metro-ethernet line has been installed between the City and the dispatch center; Charleston County will pay for this line through the end of 2012, and the City will pay beginning 2013. The City’s dispatchers have been getting training for them to become certified as Emergency Police and Fire Dispatchers, as well as two (2) other certifications; IOP dispatchers will have completed their training requirements by September 25<sup>th</sup>. Two (2) mobile data terminals MDTs, laptops, for the patrol vehicles will be added to the units already in place. These units will allow officers to communicate with the dispatchers, as well as mapping capabilities, vehicle tag checks and incident report from the field.

Administrator Tucker reported that the “kinks” in the system are continually being addressed, such as the way dispatchers have deployed assets which are different or inconsistent with the way situations have evolved on the island that have caused delays in response times. There have also been issues with where the 911 calls have been routed resulting in response delays as well; the goal is to resolve all of these types of issues before the City completely transitions to the Consolidated Dispatch Center. The Administrator reminded the Committee that retaining a team of dispatchers to monitor and assist with calls to the dispatch call center after the transition date and to provide assistance to people who come into the Public Safety Building. Another key component to a smooth transition is educating the citizens about how calls are handled in the call center that is different from the process to which they have become accustomed.

Chief Graham remarked that information about the various colloquial names a location may be known by are also being programmed into the system for those times when the caller does not know the exact address. Locations such as Breach Inlet will also be recognized with the alternate spelling of “Breech” to populate a specific address for those dispatchers unfamiliar with the island. In the mapping system, the beach access numbers on the beach will all be assigned GPS coordinates to ensure timely response.

Chair Bettelli reiterated the need for all houses on the island to visibly display the street numbers; Chief Graham added that Fire Department personnel are speaking to various groups on the island – Keenagers, Exchange Club, Wild Dunes Community Association, Disaster Expo, etc. – in an effort to accomplish that goal. Administrator Tucker noted that address placards need to be obviously placed inside properties licensed and used short-term rental units.

**5. New Business**

- A. Consideration of 2013 Beach Run Hosted by Charleston County PRC -**  
discussion postponed
- B. Discussion of Stantec's Proposal for Island-wide Wayfinding Signs –**  
handled earlier in the meeting
- C. Discussion of Overflow Parking at the Marina**

Administrator Tucker acknowledged receiving a complaint about marina employees, primarily from Morgan Creek Grill, parking on Waterway Boulevard. Since receiving the complaint, the management of the restaurant has advised its employees to leave more space between their vehicles to improve the line of sight. In addition, the Administrator copied SCDOT on some of the communication indicating that this problem is similar to the problem at Intracoastal Court; SCDOT has been out to these locations to determine if additional signage should be posted. The Administrator suggested that the City needs to think of alternate employee parking during the tourist season.

Chair Bettelli asked whether the marina tenants are working together to deal with the problem; Administrator Tucker assured him that they are and that the City will continue to do what it can to alleviate the problem.

- D. Consideration of Expanding Kiosk Hours of Operation for 2013 Beach Season**

Administrator Tucker indicated that officers stop writing tickets between 5:45 and 6:00 p.m. each day and that the recommendation to expand the hours to 7:00 or 8:00 p.m. came from a staff meeting. Chief Buckhannon reported that people are waiting until that time to come to the beach to avoid paying the parking kiosks; these situations primarily occur on the weekends with large groups coming and creating havoc on Front Beach. Extending the hours is considered one (1) measure to control the issue.

If the Committee were to consider extending the hours, the Administrator indicated that this is an important decision because it will impact IOP residents and Front Beach businesses. Councilmember Bergwerf voiced her opinion that the residents would not be amenable to extending the hours; many do not come to Front Beach until the meters off.

Chair Bettelli recommended broaching the Front Beach businesses about their impression of the suggestion. He was also interested in knowing what other area beaches are doing.

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

**Award of a Contract to Safe Industries in the budgeted amount of \$27,086.31 for Self-contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBAs)**

**MOTION:** Chair Bettelli moved to recommend approval to the Ways and Means Committee for the award of a contract to Safe Industries; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

### **Fire Department – Chief Graham**

Major calls in the month of July were responding to and stabilizing the person who jumped from the top floor of Coconut Joe's restaurant on July 8<sup>th</sup> and responding to a motor vehicle accident involving a car and a golf cart on July 17<sup>th</sup> where a passenger from the golf cart was thrown from the vehicle. For the month, personnel responded to one hundred sixty-seven (167) calls with eighty-one (81) being EMS calls. The Fire Inspector performed eleven (11) inspections and found eleven (11) violations. The radio system is undergoing coverage acceptance testing that will take two to three (2-3) weeks to complete; the Chief indicated that communications had improved.

### **Police Department – Chief Buckhannon**

Chair Bettelli commended the Police Department for their good work in "keeping alcohol off the streets of the Isle of Palms."

July as a very busy month for the Department; he described incidents of theft from vehicles, petit larceny, underage possession of alcohol and burglary. In the month, dispatchers received fifty-four hundred twenty-two (5,422) calls; four thousand seventy-six (4,076) calls were for the IOP Police Department. From the three hundred forty-six (346) traffic stops, one hundred seventeen (117) tickets were written; in addition, thirty-seven (37) arrests were made during the month. Twelve (12) noise complaints were made during July, and six (6) warnings were given. Currently the Department has two (2) officers attending the Police Academy in Columbia.

### **Report on Patrols in Area Behind Island Center**

Based on comments made at the July 17<sup>th</sup> Public Workshop relative to individuals living behind the Island Center, Chief Buckhannon reported that officers patrol the area religiously because there have been instances of people living under the bridge in the past. Since that meeting, officers have been instructed to leave the vehicles and walk from the bridge, through the wooded area, to the back of the shopping center. The Chief indicated that people have been found in that area typically in October when the weather is cooler and there are fewer bugs.

**7. Executive Session**, not needed

**8. Miscellaneous Business**

**Next Meeting Date: 5 p.m., Tuesday, September 11, 2012 in the Conference Room.**

**9. Adjourn**

**MOTION: Chair Bettelli moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:22 p.m.; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland  
City Clerk