

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
5:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 12, 2013

The regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was held at 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 12, 2013 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmember Bergwerf, Mayor Cronin, Chair Bettelli, City Administrator Tucker, Fire Chief Graham, Police Chief Buckhannon, Fire Captain Gadsden, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban 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 Meeting's Minutes

MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 12, 2013 as submitted; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION: Chair Bettelli moved to reorder the agenda to move *Citizens' Comments* to follow Item 6, *Highlights of Departmental Reports*; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Old Business

A. Update on Status of Wayfinding Signs and Beach Access Parking – Stantec

Rick Day was in attendance to present the Stantec's draft of proposed parking modifications for the City; a copy of Stantec's draft is attached to the historical record of the meeting. The discussion started with a review of the goals of the parking management program; they were as follows:

- Balance impacts to residential property with need for beach visitor parking;
- Improve safety;
- Mitigate traffic congestion; and
- Comply with regulations.

Administrator Tucker stated that she wanted to know that these goals were consistent with the Committee's goals for parking management.

Mr. Day said that the strategies being offered could be mixed and matched; he then reviewed five (5) alternatives to assuage the parking problems on the island; the ideas ranged from simple changes, some of which the City is currently working on, i.e. remove parking near intersections and fire hydrants to more complex or expensive, such as a grand boulevard concept for Palm Boulevard involving landscaped medians, sidewalks, bike lanes and curbed parallel parking on both sides.

Councilmember Bergwerf stated that the reason for the parking study was to find ways to direct parking to commercial lots and dissuade visitors from parking in the neighborhoods; in her opinion, eliminating right-of-way parking was not helping the neighborhoods.

Mayor Cronin added that restrictions imposed on parking of Palm and Ocean would only serve to drive visitors to park in neighborhoods.

Related to removing obstructions in the right of way, Administrator Tucker suggested that one way to make that less painful for some residents to give them something in return, like the multi-use path, providing safety walking or biking to a safe and well-marked crosswalk. The Administrator indicated that she would like to see a system for improved parking management on Palm and Ocean with no parking on the side streets or a pass system for side street parking. Another street to be considered, in the Administrator's opinion, was Waterway Boulevard, where people park in the right-of-way while at the marina or getting the boat to Goat Island.

The Committee agreed that Stantec should make some modifications to the presentation and repeat it for City Council on Tuesday, March 26th. Administrator Tucker added that Council would not be asked to take any action at the meeting.

B. Review of Project Worksheet – Wayfinding and Beach Access Parking

Assistant Dziuban stated that the worksheet had been modified in preparation for the meeting and distributed a new version to the Committee; input from this meeting could generate a refined version of the Ways and Means Committee meeting next week.

When the wayfinding sign initiative was approved, the FY13 budget had been approved, so it became staff's responsibility to identify sources of money to be used; those sources are identified in the box at the top of the page. A total of fifty-four thousand dollars (\$54,000) was identified from accommodations taxes, capital projects and the General fund; Council approved an additional amount of twelve thousand four hundred fifty dollars (\$12,450) at the February meeting for a total of sixty-six thousand four hundred fifty dollars (\$66,450).

Spending approved since April 2012 totals sixty-three thousand one hundred thirty dollars (\$63,130) for Phases I and II, the purchase of fifteen (15) wayfinding signs, plus the design, bidding, etc. of signs for Live Oak Park, Municipal Court and Phase I signage.

The items listed as *Proposed Additional Service and Costs* are the costs associated with Phases III and IV that are included in the FY14 budget.

Chair Bettelli asked whether residents would see any activity in this year; he was told that the original signage approved should be installed at the beginning of this tourist season. Mayor Cronin noted that the City is in possession of the encroachment permit from SCDOT. Assistant Dziuban reported that Stantec opened bids for the wayfinding signs on Friday, March 8th, and the goal is to award a contract at the March Ways and Means Committee meeting.

MOTION: Chair Bettelli moved to re-order the agenda to discuss Item 5A *Review of FY14 Operating Budgets* at this point in the meeting; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. New Business

A. Review of FY14 Operating Budgets for Fire and Police Departments

Administrator Tucker stated that she would be leaving this meeting to attend the OCRM hearing in Council Chambers at 6:00 p.m. and will be keeping her comments to a minimum.

Briefly touching on the capital budgets, she indicated that they have not changed since the first review in February and that the capital budgets in meeting packets were organized by funding source. Chief Buckhannon is making a couple of changes in the Police Department reflected in FY14 capital budgets; he wants to provide each officer with a body-worn digital camera as an added layer of protection. Once an officer leaves his vehicle, the in-car camera cannot pick up the activities or interaction with the people involved; with the digital camera, there will be both audio and video of every call. The cameras will be purchased from State Accommodations Taxes. A second change is the use of tasers by officers to be purchased from the Hospitality Tax Fund, which will increase officer safety and reduce the need for decontamination after incident involving OC spray.

Administrator Tucker briefly explained the schedule referred to as *Estimated Reserve Requirements* as the staff's way of addressing the policy change by City Council to avoid indebtedness by establishing annual savings to purchase large fire apparatus or garbage trucks with cash.

Administrator Tucker explained that Option 1, the lines highlighted in yellow, represents the pure method that is spreading the replacement cost of each vehicle equally over the year remaining until the scheduled purchase; this method results in huge peaks and valleys in cash on-hand. In Option 2, the lines highlighted in peach, the amount of annual savings is more level year-to-year, eliminating the extreme peaks and valleys. The numbers in blue represent the annual reserve to be budgeted each year for each department and combined; for FY14 for the Fire Department, the budgeted reserve needs to be three hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$350,000). The red numbers represent the years when money needs to be spent on those assets.

Factors not considered in the schedule are the interest earned on money held, the proceeds from the sale of assets as they are replaced and the savings in interest paid on equipment leases. The schedule does include a two percent (2%) annual inflation rate on replacement costs.

Questions from other committees relative to this schedule were related to extending the useful life of these assets, determining how the purchase prices were calculated and changing the way the City deploys its assets as a way of decreasing wear-and-tear thus increasing longevity.

In the Administrator's opinion, year one was going to be the most difficult with the purchase of a garbage packer and saving for future purchases as well.

On the operating budgets, the Administrator reviewed the changes that are universal in all department budgets, i.e. a three percent (3%) performance based merit pool for employees that affects all payroll related expenditures, an anticipated six percent (6%) increase in health

insurance rates, an a five percent (5%) increase to property and liability insurance. Copies of all budgets discussed are attached to the historical record of the meeting.

A line that has a considerable increase for FY14 is workers compensation; this is the result of a year with a couple of larger claims that will not only increase the rate but also result in the City's not qualifying for the credits it has enjoyed in years past. The Administrator reminded that one (1) bad claims year results in three (3) years of higher rates to all departments in the City.

Having the greatest impact on the Police Department's operating budget is the City's planned move to Consolidated Dispatch in October or 2013; per the contract between the City and Charleston County, the City must pay the County three hundred seventy-five thousand dollars (\$375,000) in Year I to cover the costs of providing 911 services. At the same time, the City has decided to continue to keep a dispatching presence on the island to ensure that the City's residents continue to receive the level of service to which they have become accustomed. Without the costs of Consolidated Dispatch, Administrator Tucker said that the Police Department operating budget for FY14 would be reduced by two percent (2%) from FY13, rather than increasing by fifteen percent (15%).

The Administrator also noted that the amount for Consolidated Dispatch will be lower in the final budget because Sullivan's Island will continue to be responsible for twenty-two to twenty-five percent (22%-25%) of that figure.

4. Old Business

C. Review of FY14 Capital Budgets and Long-range Capital Plans for the Police and Fire Departments and Consolidated Dispatch – previously discussed

D. Discussion of Estimated Reserve Requirements – previously discussed

5. New Business

B. Consideration of Change of Expiration Date of Dog Licenses

Chair Bettelli stated that, as long as he has been on the island, dog licenses have expired with the end of the calendar year, but he is aware that many island residents buy their dog licenses at "Doggie Day at the Rec," which is typically held in February.

Chief Buckhannon noted that there have been years that "Doggie Day" has been scheduled for early in March.

MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to change the expiration of dog licenses to be April 1; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mayor Cronin added that 2013 dog licenses will expire on March 31, 2014 for a smooth transition to the new expiration date.

C. Contracts in Excess of \$10,000

Award of a sole source contract to CSDC Systems Inc. for budgeted ticket-writing to Municipal Court software in the amount of \$18,675

Assistant Dziuban noted that new court software had been purchased in FY13 and that it will get its first test tomorrow morning in municipal court. This purchase is the Police Department's piece that will scan drivers' licenses, eliminating the possibility of human errors. The purchase is for five (5) readers, the software and training; the budgeted amount was twenty-two thousand five hundred dollars (\$22,500). The purchase is considered sole source because it must interface with the court software already in place.

MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to award the sole source contract to CSDC Systems Inc. for ticket-writing readers, software and training; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Highlights of Departmental Reports

Fire Department – Captain Gadsden

Captain Gadsden reported that personnel had responded to thirty-two (32) calls in February and that eighteen (18) of them were EMS calls; one (1) BRAVO level call had a sixteen (16) minutes response time.

Mayor Cronin asked Chief Graham whether she ever went over the response times with Charleston County EMS; she responded that she does when there is a cause for concern.

Captain Gadsden also noted that Inspector Kunitzer had performed eleven (11) fire inspections in the month.

Mayor Cronin stated that a resident had suffered a mini-stroke requiring the services of IOP personnel; he has been very complimentary of the Fire Department staff involved. The Mayor reported that the resident has had brain surgery and is expected to return home this week; he will seek assistance again if needed.

Police Department – Chief Buckhannon

In the month of February, dispatchers responded to thirty-nine hundred fifteen (3,915) calls, and thirty-three hundred sixty-six (3,366) were for the Police Department. Officers made three hundred seventy-three (373) traffic stops and issued seventy-four (74) tickets. Two hundred twenty (220) reports were written in February, a ten percent (10%) increase over the same period in 2013; seven (7) burglaries occurred. In the area of livability, four (4) noise violations were reported and two (2) warnings were issued. When Mayor Cronin asked Chief Buckhannon about the MS Challenge Walk held earlier in the month, the Chief said that, for the Police Department, it has been "a non-event."

3. Citizens' Comments

Peter Zervos of 415 Ocean Boulevard stated that he lives at the corner of 5th Avenue and Ocean Boulevard and that he has been an off-and-on resident for nearly seventy (70) years. He came before to the Committee to ask that something be done about the people who do not stop at, and many who do not even acknowledge, the STOP signs.

Chief Buckhannon said that he would address the issue with his officers.

Mary Zervos of 415 Ocean Boulevard reported that a large vehicle is frequently parked at the sign at 5th and Palm impeding the line of sight; she stated that a vehicle had to creep into Palm Boulevard in order to see oncoming traffic.

Councilmember Bergwerf corroborated her description of the situation.

The Chief said he would put up a "No Parking Here to Corner" signs to aid line of sight entering Palm Boulevard from 5th Avenue.

Patrick Harrington of 523 Carolina stated that he had listened to the presentation about spreading out the parking over the island, but he did not hear anything about providing restrooms for people. He remarked that today's young people lack modesty and that he has seen much more than he would have liked.

7. Miscellaneous Business

Next Meeting Date: 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 9, 2013 in the Conference Room.

8. **Executive Session** – not needed

9. **Adjourn**

MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:23 p.m.; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded, and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk