

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
5:00 p.m., Monday, August 5, 2013

The regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was held at 5:00 p.m., Monday, August 5, 2013 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmember Bergwerf, Mayor Cronin, and Chair Bettelli, City Administrator Tucker, Fire Chief Graham, Police Chief Buckhannon, 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 Meetings' Minutes

MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of July 9, 2013 as submitted; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Citizens' Comments

Katie Shank, Special Events Coordinator for the local chapter of the ALS Association of South Carolina, was present to request a change of date for the 13th Annual ALS Hope 5K Beach Run/Walk. This event has traditionally been held in June, but they are seeking to move it to September 21, 2013.

Administrator Tucker noted that this event is on the list of approved annual events for the island.

Assistant Dziuban asked that Ms. Shank contact Director Page to ensure that there is not a conflict with a City event.

The Committee agreed to the date change.

4. Old Business

A. Update on NO PARKING signs for Palm Boulevard near 40th and 41st Avenues

Chief Buckhannon reported that SCDOT had visited the site and were reviewing the situation; the engineer inquired about the chalk line on Palm Boulevard and the possibility of extending it to this area. The Chief noted that the chalk line ends at 37th Avenue.

The Administrator noted that if the line were to be extended it could, in effect, make some areas no parking areas because the residents have planted vegetation in the right-of-way.

B. Update on Battery2Beach Signage

This issue was bounced back to this Committee at the July Ways and Means Committee meeting when concern was voiced about the proposal from Stantec to locate the signage along the City's route and to develop the encroachment permit for SCDOT for the installation of the signs on existing poles.

Mayor Cronin said that he would contact Tom Bradford of Charleston Moves to get more information and report at the September meeting; the Mayor is especially interested in know how the Battery2Beach signs are going to look and what other local governments are doing.

C. Update on Public Safety Building

Administrator Tucker reported that it has taken a minimum of four (4) weeks to identify someone with the appropriate credentials to supervise the repairs to the diesel piping; a person has been found and a price agreed upon. Once the City receives the necessary insurance documentation, the work can begin.

5. New Business

A. Discussion of Parking on 42nd Avenue and 9th Avenue

Administrator Tucker noted that these are two (2) separate issues that are non-related.

On the 42nd Avenue issue, Robert Clark of SCDOT has responded to a letter from Vincent DiGangi that includes photographs of the problems he sees on 42nd Avenue and a list of six (6) possible solutions; SCDOT is also in a review process of the issues to determine whether modifications are necessary.

Mayor Cronin noted that Mr. DiGangi brings up public safety issues, but the Mayor disagreed that crowding and disruption create public safety issues, but referred to them as nuisances for the residents.

Chief Buckhannon added that only recently NO PARKING HERE TO CORNER signs were installed in that area.

On the subject of parking, Councilmember Bergwerf asked the status of Stantec's work since the individual interviews with members of City Council; the Administrator stated that she anticipated a report or feedback relative to those interviews quite soon.

Ninth Avenue is a popular parking spot for surfers; obstructions have been placed in the right-of-way on one (1) side of the street; NO PARKING signs have been installed on one (1) side of the street and not the other; and there is a property owner who has never had a defined driveway. This property owner has tried to stop parking in the right-of-way in the area that he alleges is his driveway; in an effort to have a defined driveway, the owner has applied for an encroachment permit from SCDOT for a driveway on 9th Avenue. The Administrator stated that she had tried to obtain a copy of the sketch for the proposed drive to determine what the best configuration of parking and no parking should be for 9th Avenue.

Chief Buckhannon reported that SCDOT has denied the permit for the driveway on the front of the house and recommended that the driveway be constructed on the side of the house; the problem for the homeowner is that his septic system is located to the side of the property. He has appealed SCDOT's decision.

The Chief reported meeting with SCDOT engineers on 9th Avenue relative to parking on the street and told the engineers that the City does not have a preference for which side of the street is no parking; they are weighing the value of moving the no parking to the other side of the street. The engineers told the Chief that, as time passes and one side of the road begins to deteriorate, the City can relocate no parking to the other side of the street.

Administrator Tucker noted that, if the soil were more stable, parking could be increased to both sides of the street since the rights-of-way are wide enough to support it.

B. Consideration of 2 a.m. Bar Closings Ordinance

Once Charleston County passes its ordinance requiring bars to close at 2:00 a.m., the Isle of Palms will be the only local government that does not have a similar ordinance on the books. According to Chief Buckhannon, there have not been any significant problems, but that may change when the City is the only jurisdiction without a law on the books, the situation could become problematic. The question is whether or not City Council wants to consider passing an ordinance with a designated bar closing time.

Councilmember Bergwerf asked what time the island's bars close presently; she was told that the Acme Cantina has been known to stay open, but The Windjammer closes at 2:00 a.m.

Administrator Tucker reported that the County attorney communicated with all local governments when Charleston County began its deliberations.

Administrator Tucker stated that the City considered such an ordinance before and decided against it because the matter appeared to be self-policing. Responding to the Mayor's inquiry, Chief Buckhannon indicated that sporadically the City has had problems in the past, but it is not a steady issue.

The Committee agreed to wait and see if a problem developed before taking any action.

C. Report on SCDOT Findings Regarding Traffic Concerns near Wild Dunes

The Administrator noted that a copy of a communication between Robert Clark of SCDOT and Dave Kynoski was included in meeting packets. Chief Buckhannon confirmed that the signs have been installed at Palm Path Way indicating NO PARKING HERE TO CORNER to increase sight distance for traffic using this entrance. Based on a speed study, the speed limit on Palm Boulevard has been increased to 35 mph, but the signs have not yet been installed. No decision has yet been made on the raised median.

D. Discussion of Letter of Concern Regarding Traffic Violation

Mayor Cronin explained that he had inadvertently sent the communication he intended for the resident of 42nd Avenue to Administrator Tucker.

E. Contracts in Excess of \$10,000

1. **Award of a Contract to Motorola Solutions in the amount of \$11,020.17 for service and support for Dispatch Center, included in the FY14 budget**
2. **Award of a Contract to Vic Bailey Ford in the amount of \$52,186.00 for two 4-wheel drive police vehicles, at state contract pricing and included in the FY14 budget**

MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to approve both contracts detailed above; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chief Buckhannon commented that the two (2) vehicles are Ford Explorers.

Relative to the Motorola contract, Administrator Tucker explained that the budget for the annual maintenance agreement (24/7 for 12 months) was ten thousand eight hundred dollars (\$10,800), meaning that approval of this contract will result in an over-budget condition of two hundred twenty dollars seventeen cents (\$220.17). Motorola Solutions did present an alternate contract for less time that might be a possibility as the City winds down its Dispatch facility, but the preference today is to go with the 24/7 contract.

The difference to the budget is due to a price increase since the budget was prepared.

VOTE: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Highlights of Department Reports

Fire Department – Chief Graham

Personnel responded to a reported boat accident involving a dock behind the 2500 block of Waterway Boulevard; upon arrival, crews found two (2) patients with obvious traumatic injuries who were transported by EMS for further treatment. On July 6th, personnel responded to a man pinned under a boat trailer; the trailer was removed and the patient was transported by EMS for further treatment. In the month of July, personnel responded to a total of one hundred forty-one (141) calls; eighty-one (81) of which were for EMS.

Police Department – Chief Buckhannon

Chief Buckhannon reported that, in the month of July, weekly follow-ups with the eight (8) rental companies on the island continued to collect documented property identification information to be entered into the Department's records management system. More than one thousand (1,000) property identification tags have been distributed for marking and identifying property. The original goal of the program was to meet with a minimum of three (3) real estate companies and to get a minimum of six (6) companies involved; to-date, the annual goal for this program has been exceeded.

Two (2) Meet and Greets were held in the month; the first was held at the corner of 20th Avenue and Waterway Boulevard for residents of 17th to 20th Avenues, Myrtle Boulevard and Dunes

Boulevard; four (4) residents attended. The second was held at 2301 Waterway Boulevard for residents of 21st to 25th Avenues and the 2100-2400 blocks of Waterway Boulevard.

During the month of July, dispatchers responded to four thousand eight hundred thirty-five (4,835) calls; three thousand five hundred thirty-five (3,535) were for the Police Department. A total of four hundred sixty-seven (467) traffic stops occurred in the month and one hundred ten (110) citations were issued. Officers wrote two hundred fifteen (215) reports in the month; ten (10) vehicles and four (4) houses were broken into in July. Of the sixty-three (63) arrests made in July, thirty-nine (39) were for liquor law violations. From a total of nineteen (19) noise complaints, fourteen (14) citations were written.

Mayor Cronin asked whether the number of liquor law violations were attributable to alcohol on the beach, and Chief Buckhannon said that they were. The Mayor then asked whether enforcement was more vigorous or there have been more incidences of alcohol on the beach. The Chief responded that he believes the same enforcement methods are used throughout the year, but people are more open about alcohol on the beach and the island is experiencing more people.

Chief Buckhannon stated that he believes that the later parking enforcement and longer hours for the parking lots has helped a great deal with the large crowds the Front Beach was attracting on Sunday evenings. The Chief noted that officers are vigilant about alcohol on the beach especially in the area between 9th Avenue and 22nd or 23rd Avenues where there is the greatest concentration of people.

Mayor Cronin informed Chief Buckhannon that he would be very interested in seeing the traffic counts for July when they are available.

Administrator Tucker related that personnel from Charleston County Consolidated Dispatch had attended the Department Managers' Meeting held earlier in the day and they participated in role playing for the types of calls typical of the Isle of Palms. Issues that arose from that meeting are the need for some of the Department Managers to tour the new dispatch facility to see the resources available to those personnel and the personnel from the Consolidated Dispatch took away more insight into the Isle of Palms. Staff fully supported having the team from Consolidated Dispatch get out in the Isle of Palms' community, i.e. the Exchange Club, Keenagers, Wild Dunes Community Association doing similar outreach to make sure that the transition is as smooth as possible. In addition, the Administrator expressed the desire for Councilmembers to see the facility and to see how it will work.

Mayor Cronin asked for dates and windows of time for consideration at the flood insurance meeting of August 13th.

6. Miscellaneous Business

Next Meeting Date: 5:00 p.m., Monday, September 9th in the Conference Room.

7. Executive Session

MOTION: Chair Bettelli moved to go into Executive Session at 5:52 p.m. to discuss potential litigation related to the Public Safety Building; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Committee returned to regular session at 5:58 p.m., and Chair Bettelli announced the Committee had taken neither an action nor a vote in Executive Session.

8. Adjourn

MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:59 p.m.; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk