

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

9:00 a.m., Monday, March 3, 2014

The regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was held at 9:00 a.m., Monday, March 3, 2014 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Bergwerf and Carroll, Chair Bettelli, Administrator Tucker, Police Chief Buckhannon, Fire Chief Graham, 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: Councilmember Carroll moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 10th, 2014 as submitted; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Citizens' Comments – None

4. Old Business

Review of Timeline for Replacement Message Boards

Marie Langlois from Stantec was present to update the Committee on progress on the electronic message boards. Assistant Dziuban distributed photographs of the existing message boards at the intersection of 14th Avenue and Palm Boulevard and at Breach Inlet along with computer-generated images of the proposed electronic message boards; copies are attached to the historical record of the meeting.

Ms. Langlois repeated that Stantec has submitted the encroachment permit for the signs and reported that the permit application has been approved. The construction documents for the design are eighty-five percent (85%) completed; a draft of these documents will be sent to the City by the end of the week. She noted, for the message board itself, the dimensions will be the same size; she will offer the City two (2) versions of electronic message boards; one (1) will be "the Cadillac" and the other will be the "Honda Accord" from which the City will choose. Once that decision is made, Stantec will send the construction documents out for bid.

Councilmember Carroll asked whether the electrical service currently in place would be sufficient for the new signs; Ms. Langlois responded that she does not anticipate having to run additional power.

Ms. Langlois noted that one difference between the models of electronic message boards was the capability to display in more than one (1) color. Chief Graham commented that she could see value in having more than one (1) color, for instance, using yellow lettering generally, but using red when the City is notifying the public of hazardous conditions.

According to Administrator Tucker, the decision relative to the model will likely be made by staff depending on the cost and cost differential in order to move the project forward. The Administrator explained that one (1) reason for bringing this back before the Committee was

based on concerns voiced by a member of City Council who has heard discussion in the community against the City's using electronic message boards. Since staff was moving forward to complete the work task, the Administrator wanted to get confirmation from the Committee to proceed. The primary differences in the proposed sign and the existing one are that the new sign will be in the wayfinding theme and the lettering will be electronically changed.

Councilmember Carroll asked what would prevent a business on the island from installing electronic advertising at their business. Director Kerr responded that the sign code, generally, would not allow this sign for a commercial operation, but there is a provision in the sign code that states, if it is a municipal information sign, it is exempt from the code.

5. New Business

A. Update on Generator Replacement

Administrator Tucker recalled that the replacement of the City Hall generator was included in the FY14 budget; the existing generator does not power one hundred percent (100%) of the building. Some years back the City got a transfer switch that was paid for by a hazard mitigation grant, and it was put on the building, knowing that the goal was to power the entire building. There are going to be visual differences other than a new location with the new generator, and the Administrator thought it necessary to make the Committee aware since it will definitely be noticed and talked about by the residents. The bid is due to be opened on Friday, March 14th; if the numbers are favorable, the recommendation for an award of a contract will go straight to the Ways and Means Committee.

Director Kerr had three sketches of options that were available for the new generator, which will be significantly larger than the existing one. In the first option, the new generator was drawn as being perpendicular to the building in the same location; to do this, City Hall loses one (1) parking and it creates an unattractive entry to City Hall. Consideration was given to placing the new generator on the other side, but a set of stairs and an air conditioning stand are there now. The plan would be to place the new generator away from and parallel to the building.

The RFP requests the contractor to re-orient the stairs ninety degrees (90°), no longer running parallel to the rear of the building. With the stairs moved, the contractor will install the generator as close to the rear of the building as possible and parallel.

The new generator is approximately twice the size of the current one; since it has more power, it requires more fuel and sits on a fuel tank with four times (4 X) the capacity of the existing one. The foundation will be approximately a foot taller to keep it above floor level.

The generator will be encased in a sound attenuating enclosure that will produce the same noise level of the present one despite being twice as powerful. The exhaust pipe will run up the side of the building and two feet (2 ft.) higher to help to dissipate the fumes.

5. New Business

A. Review FY15 Operating and Capital Budgets for Police and Fire Departments

The first budget to be reviewed is the Consolidated Dispatch Center; Administrator Tucker pointed out that the personnel expense reduces dramatically for FY16 and disappears entirely in FY17. The City plans to continue to maintain a dispatch presence on the island to respond to the ten-minute hits, to monitor the radio at the Consolidated Dispatch Center, and to staff the reception window on the police side; additional tasks are being assigned to the position, for instance, the issuance of hurricane stickers and some data management functions as well.

Chief Graham commented that having the dispatchers to call to get information on which incident channel a call has been assigned to has been most helpful to fire department personnel.

Responding to Councilmember Carroll's inquiry, the Administrator stated that Sullivan's Island is included in this budget the same as they were for FY14 with the CPI increase; the City's dispatchers monitor calls for Sullivan's Island just as they do the Isle of Palms.

All of the City's expenses related to Consolidated Dispatch are paid from the General Fund. Chair Bettelli asked whether the City could use some Municipal Accommodations Tax or State ATAX to fund cover some of these expenses; the Administrator indicated that funding sources could be re-visited as the budget process continues.

Proceeding to the Police Department's operating budget, Administrator Tucker stated that several things are working to the advantage of this department's expenses, i.e. less CALEA expense since 2013 was the City's accreditation year and expenses for Consolidated Dispatch as also lower. The FY15 budget includes a six percent (6%) merit pool to ensure that the City keeps pace with surrounding communities; the retirement percentage is also going to increase. Vehicle fuel and oil has also been increased based on mileage year-to-date; likewise vehicle maintenance has increased.

As was noted in the February Council meeting, the Personnel Committee is studying the feasibility of the City's hiring its own mechanic for fleet, generator and small engine repair. Chief Graham remarked that, when a vehicle is off-island for repairs, it is out of service and manpower has left the island.

Other changes to the Police operating budget are a decrease to the line item Telephone and Cable due to the removal of seventy-two hundred dollars (\$7,200) for the Metro Ethernet line. Uniforms have been increased for additional Taser batteries and new uniform shirts that allow ballistic vests to be worn on the outside. Contracted services are lower than FY14 primarily due to the decrease in personnel expenses at Consolidated Dispatch.

The FY15 Parking Meter budget includes sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) for six (6) full-time Beach Services Officers, which will be offset by forty-thousand dollars (\$40,000) in grant funds from Charleston County. Other expenses in this department are for FICA and workers compensation.

The Police Department FY15 Capital Budget includes the purchase of one (1) patrol vehicle, two (2) four-wheel drive vehicles and the beach services club car. The budget has a provision to replace the recording equipment, if it fails, and to replace one (1) computer server. One hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) is budgeted for the implementation of possible beach access parking alternatives, and one hundred sixteen thousand (\$116,000) is being set aside for replacing the City's radios in FY16.

Responding to Councilmember Carroll's question about extending the life of the patrol vehicles, Chief Buckhannon stated that the City has two (2) benchmarks for replacing vehicles, i.e. one hundred thousand (100,000) miles along with a life of six (6) years. One (1) vehicle being replaced was delayed in last year's budget and now needs approximately five thousand dollars (\$5,000) work; this vehicle was useless to the Department during the recent ice storm because the heater no longer works.

Also to be funded from the Capital Projects fund is the replacement of two (2) desktop computers for two thousand dollars (\$2,000) and the replacement of two (2) light-bars for patrol vehicles at two thousand seven hundred dollars (\$2,700).

Funding from the tourism funds is as follows:

Municipal Accommodations Fee	
Police Non-capital Tools	\$11,700
2 in-car digital cameras and 1 fully ruggedized mobile data terminal	
Police Capital Outlay	30,000
1 4WD patrol vehicle	
Police Professional Services	50,000
1/3 provision for implementation of beach access parking solutions	
 Hospitality Tax Fund	
Police Non-capital Tools	1,600
Radar unit replacement	
Police Professional Services	50,000
1/3 provision for implementation of beach access parking solutions	
Police Capital Outlay	29,000
Replace 1 patrol sedan	
 State Accommodation Tax Fund	
Police Non-capital Tools	6,300
Scheduled replacement of body armor	
Police Professional Services	50,000
1/3 provision for implementation of beach access parking solutions	
Police Capital Outlay	17,500
Replace Beach Services all-terrain vehicle	

Other less significant funds are the Federal Narcotics Fund that will provide funding for a detective's uniform and Miscellaneous items; the State Narcotics Fund will also fund uniforms; the Victim's Assistance Fund covers the cost of the Victim's Advocates phone, employee training and a small contingency as well as other minor expenditures.

Also in the budget data for the Police Department was a schedule detailing the calculations for justifying the percentage of expenses to assign to tourism funds and a new tool that takes the departmental expenses for FY14 and FY15 and assigns them to the various funding sources with the percentage of the total department's budget that total represents.

Councilmember Bergwerf voiced surprise that the percentages from tourism funds were so low; she stated that the cost of doing business on the island is falling to the citizens when the cost of doing business is incurred by the tourists.

Administrator Tucker stated that, during the budget process in recent years, staff has heard the concerns from members of Council about the use of tourism funds as stated "in order to balance the City's budget." The Administrator indicated that staff has been very conservative in assigning tourism funds to the overall City function, and this new tool shows that to be true.

The Administrator explained that Councilmember Carroll has asked that staff look at overall City revenues and what generates those revenues, from the standpoint of how many homes at six percent (6%) versus four percent (4%) and what amount of the property taxes are attributable to those homes versus full-time residences. Once that is done, a similar look is taken at expenditures to determine how close the City is to mirroring at expensing things to what is driving revenues. Administrator Tucker indicated that it has been an interesting exercise for staff, but one not yet complete.

The Administrator explained that accomplishing the goal of allowing tourism funds to support some expenses by making "transfers in" fuels the argument that the budget is being balanced with tourism funds. The City does not expense things within those funds, except Beach Services Officers, but there is no line-item for salaries in the tourism funds for the funding of additional part-time firefighters in the summer season. Note 1 at the bottom of the new schedule shows the transfers in to the General Fund that occurred in FY14.

Based on the calculations of the percent of work to be assigned to the Police Department, Administrator Tucker remarked that an argument could be made that twenty-two percent (22%) of the Police Department function could be assigned to tourism funds. Councilmember Carroll voiced the opinion that the percentage seemed low, knowing that two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the island's residences are non-owner occupied; since the calculations were based on the increase in calls in the tourist season from the remainder of the year, the Administrator agreed this was a conservative estimate.

The same type of worksheet was in meeting packets relative to the Fire Department, and copies of all worksheets are attached to the historical record of the meeting.

The Administrator went to the bottom of the page that indicates a twenty percent (20%) increase in the FY15 Fire Department Operating Budget over the FY14 budget; the increase is based on the three (3) additional firefighters and adjustments made to wages in the Fire Department. The next several lines are functions of payroll and are, therefore, impacted by the changes and the overall six percent (6%) merit pool.

Councilmember Bergwerf commented on the large increase to overtime wages and asked if the amount of overtime will be reduced by the addition of personnel; Chief Graham responded that overtime is based on thirteen percent (13%) per shift person. Administrator Tucker noted that in both the Police and Fire Departments, even with no absences, it is the nature of the shift calendars to produce overtime.

Councilmember Carroll asked to have the percentage of the increase that is directly attributable to additional personnel calculated and reported to the Committee.

Other line items that are increasing in FY15 are vehicle fuel and oil, irrigation at the Public Safety Building, and electricity and gas based on actual expenses year-to-date. The increase in non-capital tools and equipment is attributed to the purchase of a keiser sled, which is a very heavy piece of equipment used in training to simulate ventilating a roof with an ax; it is also good for physical therapy and developing upper body strength. The increase to maintenance and service contracts was detailed on the next page; another increase attributed to the additional personnel is the expense for uniforms. Increases have been made to insurance as in prior years. Employee training is impacted by forty-five hundred dollars (\$4,500) for three (3) EMT courses for new firefighters and sixty-eight hundred dollars (\$6,800) for the initial cost of web-based training.

Chair Bettelli noted that the web-based training cost was described as "initial cost" and asked whether there would be an annual fee; Chief Graham indicated that there would be an annual fee, but that the set-up fee is the most expensive. Chief Graham added that employees in other departments can use the courses for a small fee per person and that the system has been endorsed by ISO and fire accreditation.

Proceeding to the Capital Budget, Administrator Tucker noted that the rescue truck is scheduled for replacement at two hundred twenty-nine thousand dollars (\$229,000) and will be paid from the Assigned Fund Balance established last year. Other capital purchases are as follows:

Replace Ford F-250 purchased in 2007	\$ 30,000
RAD-57 medical monitor for carbon monoxide and oxygen	5,000
Replace ATV for beach patrol/missions, purchased July 2010	26,000
Retainage on Public Safety Building	15,000
Assign Fund Balance for Future Expenditures	
Replace Rescue 1, 2 ladder trucks, 2 pumper trucks	\$375,000
Radio replacements (Phase 2 compliance, FY17)	133,000

Chief Graham reported that she is trying to get pricing on refurbishing the rescue truck by re-chassis the truck since the box is good; she noted that costs are higher than she had expected. Dialogue has also occurred on purchasing a trailer to be hauled by a truck to serve the same purpose.

Chief Graham stated that the Ford F-150 does not have ninety-three thousand miles (93,000) as indicated; the truck with that mileage is the Ford F-250. She plans to move the purchase out

another year; despite requiring approximately three thousand dollars (\$3,000) in repairs recently, it is a “good, solid truck.”

Councilmember Carroll asked whether the ATV purchase could wait another year; Chief Graham commented that these vehicles are used on the beach, and, despite being washed off after each use, the atmosphere takes its toll. In her experience, to keep an ATV more than three (3) years is inviting trouble.

Councilmember Carroll asked the same question about the web-based training system; Chief Graham suggested a short demonstration of the program at the next meeting.

The next page shows the funding sources for capital purchases and the funds to assign for future expenditures amount Capital Projects, Municipal Accommodations Tax and State Accommodations Tax funds.

Funding expenditures from the Capital Projects fund include replacing two (2) laptop computers and the retainage on the Public Safety Building.

The purchases of the beach ATV and the RAD-57 monitor will be funded from Municipal Accommodations Fee; from the Hospitality Tax fund, purchases of two years (2 yrs.) SCBA airpacks and cylinder replacements, to avoid having different models of equipment, bunker, gear and fire hose and appliances are planned. The second beach ATV is scheduled to be paid from State Accommodations Taxes.

The Firemen’s 1% Fund shows anticipated revenue of one hundred forty-nine thousand dollars (\$149,000); the Fire Department personnel have elected to spend the bulk of these funds for supplemental insurance and retirement benefits. Administrator Tucker reminded the Committee that this is the fund for which the firefighters make their own decision on how the money is spent; typically operating expenses cannot be expensed here. When a spending request is made, it must be signed by fifty-one percent (51%) of the Fire Department personnel, as well as the Mayor, the City Administrator and Chair of the Public Safety Committee.

As in the Police Department, the new spreadsheet that lists operating expenses and their funding sources with the percentage assigned to each fund for the Fire Department was in meeting packets.

In the notes as the bottom of the page are a list of the “transfers in” and a statement that an analysis of monthly call statistics estimates that fifty-six percent (56%) of the calls for the Fire Department are for non-residents.

C. Consideration of Improvements to 21st Avenue Median

Administrator Tucker indicated that a property owner has advocated that the City consider placing attractive, vegetative medians to replace the concrete medians that are currently in place; the Administrator stated that she has heard the same request for 41st Avenue. To make this change would require an SCDOT encroachment permit, and to do something vegetative means irrigation and maintenance on the part of the City. If the Committee decides to move

forward, a design would have to be generated and submitted to SCDOT for approval, and then make the improvements and maintain them.

After brief discussion of line-of-sight issues and the costs to install and maintain, the Committee agreed to take no action on this request.

D. Contracts in Excess of \$10,000

Award of a contract to Technology Solutions in the amount of \$15,019.66, state contract pricing, for Front Beach surveillance cameras

Administrator Tucker commented that it was advantageous to the City that Technology Solutions was now on state contract because they are the vendor the City used when it purchased its original surveillance system, as well as the vendor for the system at the Recreation Center; therefore, the City has familiarity with their work and their service.

This purchase will provide cameras for the Front Beach and a camera at the intersection of 14th Avenue and Palm Boulevard. The City has asked SCDOT for the cost of having cameras on the bridge itself similar to the ones on the Ravenel Bridge and that, if the City cost-participates, the City could get them as well. The Administrator explained that, during the recent ice storm, the City advised residents to go to the IOP website to check SCDOT traffic cameras to monitor which bridges were open and which were closed. If there were cameras on the Connector, visitors could check the traffic cameras to know about the traffic volume coming on the island and, possibly, decide to visit another day.

Chair Bettelli noted that twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) was budgeted from the Municipal Accommodations Fund for the cameras.

Chief Buckhannon commented that this purchase will increase the number of cameras on Front Beach from four to eight (4-8).

MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to recommend to Ways and Means the award of a contract to Technology Solutions in the amount of \$15,019.66, state contract pricing, for surveillance cameras; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Highlights of Departmental Reports

Fire Department – Chief Graham

Chief Graham reported that on February 1, personnel reported to an accident on 7th Avenue where the hydrant was sheared off and water spewed freely. On February 15th, a vehicle left the road, flipped over and landed top down in shallow water in a creek; IOP personnel assisted with the inflatable boat. In the month, personnel responded to forty-two (42) calls, twenty-five (25) of which were EMS calls. The average EMS response time was twelve and a half (12½) minutes. The Department has one (1) vacancy; interviews are scheduled for next week.

Councilmember Carroll noted that, based on Council action in February, the Fire Department now has three (3) new positions to fill; Chief Graham expressed hope that the interview process will produce two or three (2-3) viable candidates.

Police Department – Chief Buckhannon

Chief Buckhannon reported that the Department had two (2) events where residents could get their annual dog licenses, i.e. Doggie Day at the Rec and at Wild Dunes; more than one hundred (100) dogs were registered. The objective for 2014 is Coffee with a Cop and will start next month; the training has been completed. The Department has just received a resignation from an officer who has taken a position with the North Charleston Police Department; one (1) BSO from last year is returning from last year, and the process continues to hire five (5) more. The new parking kiosks have been installed; programming remains to be done to set the per hour fee.

Responding to Councilmember Carroll's inquiry, Chief Buckhannon said that the officer who is leaving has been with the City for six (6) years and is seeking more specialized law enforcement.

7. Miscellaneous Business

A. Children's Charities Collections

Chief Graham stated that Fire personnel will be collecting two or three (2-3) Fridays toward the end of March for an hour or so. The Chief noted that all of the money collected for this charity is used locally.

B. Annual Mosquito Abatement

Administrator Tucker reported that the City has signed the documentation for this to begin.

C. Report on Expenses related to Winter Storms

The Administrator reported that the City spent approximately thirty-six hundred dollars (\$3,600) on supplies related to the storm response and eighteen thousand four hundred dollars (\$18,400) in payroll overtime for a total of twenty-two thousand dollars (\$22,000). If the storm's effect had been more serious with downed trees and power out for a number of days, that number would be replicated over and over.

Next Meeting Date: 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, April 9 in the Conference Room.

8. Adjourn

MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:47 a.m.; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland, City Clerk