

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
9:30 a.m., Thursday, October 8, 2015

The regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was held at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, October 8, 2015 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, Fire Chief Graham, Police Chief Buckhannon, Assistant Administrator Fragoso and City Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Chair Bettelli called the meeting 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 Bergwerf moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 9, 2015 as submitted; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**3. Citizens' Comments**

Dudley Spangler of 408 Ocean Boulevard stated that he has been a property owner on the island since 2005 and became a resident in 2012. He explained that he would like to provide a traditional Thanksgiving dinner for the Police and Fire Departments and any other City employees who might be working on that day; he even offered to deliver.

Chair Bettelli expressed the City's thanks and asked the Mr. Spangler call City Hall closer to Thanksgiving to coordinate with the Police and Fire Departments.

Mr. Spangler said that he would need to know the number of people to be fed and if anyone has special dietary requirements.

Mr. Spangler expressed his appreciation of the services done by the Public Safety personnel that were quite visible in the recent flooding; he stated that, from his viewpoint, "everything went off without a hitch." He also acknowledged had fortunate the island had been in light of other areas of the state.

**4. Old Business**

**A. Consideration of crosswalk(s) between Breach Inlet and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

Chief Buckhannon opined that Merritt Boulevard should not be a consideration because the spot on the ocean-side was very narrow and it was on a curve – crosswalks should not be in curves. Crossing at the Exchange Club makes more sense because it is on a straight-away and it has a space for overflow cars on the opposite side of the street.

Councilmember Carroll voiced that opinion that people will not walk half a block to cross to go to the beach, but will go directly across; he, therefore, stated that he did not see this activity as a wise use of City money.

**MOTION: Chair Bettelli moved to defer this subject to a future date; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**B. Update on golf cart path between 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Island Center**

The budget included in meeting packets was for an earthen path wide enough for two (2) carts, involving the relocation of utilities. When this golf cart path was discussed last night at the Public Works Committee, a member suggested flipping the sidewalk to the inside and having the golf cart path parallel to the roadway, saving the cost of relocating the utilities. An unknown is whether SCDOT would allow golf carts closer to the active road. The goal is to get an SCDOT representative on-site, talk about both ideas and get their recommendation before going any further. In addition, based on the current conditions in the state, Administrator Tucker said that she would wait for the appropriate timing to broach the subject with SCDOT.

Councilmember Bergwerf thought that flipping the location of the new path would not be a good idea if it would not accommodate two (2) carts.

Councilmember Carroll countered that he seldom sees carts meeting and asked whether a separation on the edges was being considered.

**C. Discussion of Quick Response Vehicle (QRV) in anticipation of FY17 budget**

In preparation for the FY17 budget, Chair Bettelli stated that the subject of a QRV would be a part of budget discussions for FY17 and stated that Chief Graham updated equipment costs and salary numbers.

Administrator Tucker recalled that this has been looked at from two (2) standpoints:

- 1) to match Mount Pleasant in staffing was in excess of \$600,000;
- 2) to use the City's personnel on overtime paired with a paramedic on Thursday through Sunday.

Councilmember Bergwerf agreed that it was something the City should go forward, but some think that all the City needs to do is buy a truck.

Chief Graham repeated that no matter what kind of vehicle is decided upon, the same people will be riding in it to deliver care; she made it clear that she does not want a paramedic on staff. Despite the fact that the City has a large volume of calls for its size, there is not a significant call volume for cardiac care. She pointed out that she does not want someone on her staff who is pushing drugs one (1) day and does not do so again for a year. The Chief stated that the City has amazing EMTs and that a QRV would not change how they care for patients, only how they get there.

If the City had a QRV dedicated to running medicals staffed by personnel working overtime and not taken off a truck, it would save wear and tear on the larger trucks. According to the Chief, if there were to be a fire, the persons staffing the QRV would not be left at the station, they would

be at the fire. She repeated that it would be the same training and the same equipment being carried in a different vehicle.

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Councilmember Carroll questioned that a person would be required to come in to staff the QRV on overtime; the Chief responded that, if the City were using existing personnel on the QRV, it would be scheduled overtime.

Councilmember Carroll asked what the estimated response time for EMS to arrive at a serious call; assuming the Councilmember was thinking of a transport unit, the Chief answered that it depended on how many call the EMS have and how backed up they may be. For the majority of the summer, the City had a QRV with one (1) paramedic on the island stationed on the Isle of Palms; at one point, the City hoped to assist in staffing an EMS unit with an EMT from the City and a paramedic from the County. She reminded the Committee that the downside to having the EMS unit assigned to the island was that, if it was given a call off-island, it was gone and it could be several hours before they returned.

Due to the volume of traffic, the City does have the option of calling the Mount Pleasant paramedics if they have a unit available, and the City would call a helicopter if the call warranted it.

Administrator Tucker stated that she believes that there is a disconnect among the community and elected officials about the difference between a transport unit and a non-transport unit, about what paramedics can and cannot do, etc. that relate to this decision. If someone is on the outside and does not understand, he may say that the island has an aging population, is an isolated island, and needs the medical ability to take care of its people by ourselves as quickly as possible. Other dynamics, which may not be understood by all, must also be figured in. The Administrator suggested that between now and budget time, the City should do an education process about what determines the need to make that determination.

## **5. New Business**

### **A. Award of a contract to Spirit, at state contract pricing, for a new telephone and internet service (the existing contract expires in the spring)**

After distributing a representation of the City's network infrastructure, Chief Buckhannon explained that all locations in the City have a bonded T, a single T or fractional T that are what the Mbps represent and are all shared over the same pipeline which is the internet coming into the City. The problem the City has, from a management standpoint, is that the Recreation Department is segregated from the rest of the City; Fire Station 2, City Hall, and Public Works are all on the MPLS circuitry, a network system. All of these lines feed into the same service provider Windstream. Because the phones and internet are being shared, the existing phone system, at times, tends to lag out or will end the call. The existing contract with Windstream is not on state contract and will expire in May for City Hall and in April for the balance of the City; the timeframe is important because, to get a new service will require a ninety (90) day transition.

Spirit Communications, currently on state contract, has presented the City with a proposal to significantly increase the band width from one and half or two and a half (1.5-2.5) megabytes to a fifty (50) megabyte pipe; in addition, each location would have ten (10) megabytes of internet

dedicated. With this carrier, the phones and the internet would not be competing on the fifty (50) megabyte pipe.

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Currently the City pays thirty-three to thirty-four hundred dollars (\$3,300 – 3,400) per month depending on the long distance calls; the Spirit service proposal is for thirty seven hundred dollars (\$3,700). The City will get significantly more band width for three hundred dollars (\$300) per month, and, since Spirit is on state contract, the City would not be locked into a three year (3 yr.) contract but could opt out at any time, and the Recreation Department would become a part of the City network. The Spirit system would make it much easier for the system manager to trouble-shoot problems across the network, the internet and phone system; this system is also more secure than the current system because it would operate through one (1) firewall.

Since Public Works was not included on the proposed design, the Administrator asked whether it would be a part of the new system.

Chief Buckhannon assured her that Public Works would be included because there is a physical connection between the Public Works building and City Hall through a fiber optic line.

In the Chief's opinion, the biggest difficulty will be trying to negotiate an "early-out" of the contract with Windstream; if that is not successful, the timing of the implementation would be extended to the April end date. In the meantime, the Chief must start the process since it will take a minimum of ninety (90) days.

**MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved to recommend to the Ways and Means Committee to award a contract to Spirit Communications for new internet and telephone service at a cost of \$44,400 annually; Councilmember Carroll seconded.**

Chair Bettelli asked whether the equipment was included in the monthly cost, and the Chief answered in the affirmative.

Chief Buckhannon directed the Committee's attention to the bottom of the cost proposal where a second cost component is listed relative to the phone system. The six hundred dollar (\$600) figure represents the monthly cost of new phones, and the cost to purchase new phones is approximately seventeen thousand three hundred sixty dollars (\$17,360). The Chief indicated that the upgrade to the telephone handsets could be done at a later time.

Chair Bettelli recommended that both figures need to be considered in the budgeting process, but, since the City works to avoid the leasing of equipment, purchasing the phones would be the more desirable option.

Responding to Councilmember Carroll, the Chief said that the City owns the existing phones and that, when they were purchased in 2009, the City paid approximately twenty-four or twenty-five thousand dollars (\$24,000 – 25,000). The phones are currently working and would work on the Spirit system. He noted that, if the City were to lease the phones, a phone would be replaced if it were to fail and the City would receive all of the upgrades at no additional cost; when a phones goes bad now, the City must purchase a new phone.

Copies of Chief Buckhannon's handouts are attached to the historical record of the meeting.

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**VOTE: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**B. Award of a sole source contract to T2 Systems in the amount of \$18,828.66 for four (4) handheld ticket writers for the Parking Management System (FY16 budget, page 40. Capital and Special Projects, \$20,000)**

**MOTION: Chair Bettelli moved to recommend to the Ways and Means Committee the award of a sole source contract to T2Systems for 4 handheld ticket writers for the Parking Management System for \$18,828.66; Councilmember Carroll seconded.**

Administrator Tucker explained that this is a sole source contract to maintain consistency of equipment.

**VOTE: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chair Bettelli asked Administrator Tucker where the City stood with Stantec at this time.

City staff has reviewed the sign plan for Managed Beach Parking and sent it back to Stantec with changes to be made; staff was successful in reducing the number of signs. Stantec is making the changes to have a plan to submit to SCDOT for the encroachment permits. Working with Stantec, the education piece of the plan to go to residents is also a work-in-process; additionally, discussion have taken place relative to the best way to disseminate the information to residents.

Attorney Halversen is also in the process of developing the ordinances that must be passed to be able to enforce the parking plan.

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

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

On September 3<sup>rd</sup>, personnel responded to 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue for a report of the possible drowning of an eighteen month old (18 mos.); after clearing the child's airway, oxygen was administered and the patient was transported by Charleston County EMS. On September 23<sup>rd</sup> personnel responded to a residence on Carolina Boulevard and found a large volume of water flowing from the ceiling; personnel secured water at the meter, vacuumed as much water as possible, covered furniture and other belongings and advised the owner that the water could not be turned back on until the broken pipe was repaired. Personnel responded to a total of seventy-six (76) calls and thirty (30) of the calls were for EMS. In the month, twenty-six (26) inspections were conducted and twenty-three (23) violations were found. Training included forcible entry and personal protective training, and medical in-service training covered airway management. Chief Graham, Captain Eagle, Lt. Nester and Firefighter Stickney successfully completed FEMA's three (3) day Wide Area Search course. The ladder truck had to be taken out of service to replace aerial cables and a couple of other services which were quite expensive; the

ladder truck also needed the replacement of two (2) tires. The invoice has not yet arrived for the work done on the air conditioning at the Public Safety Building, but Chief Graham expects it to be quite high. While off-duty, Chief Graham, Engineers Bolen, Meador, Pesature, Puckhaber and Richardson, and Firefighters Crisp,

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Douzanis and Rousse participated in the 9/11 Silent Walk across the Ravenel Bridge. The Department took advantage of opportunities to give station tours, assist residents and visitors and to install smoke detector batteries.

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

On September 9<sup>th</sup>, IOP officers assisted Sullivan’s Island Police Department with a possible suicidal subject; the tragedy was averted and the person was transported to a hospital for evaluation. In the month, officers issued four (4) “You could have been a Victim of a Crime” notices and forty-five (45) property security check notices. The Command Staff recognizes the Animal Control Officers Fitzpatrick and Enourato for their efforts in enforcing ordinances and, at the same time, building positive relationships with citizens. In addition to their daily duties, they can be depended upon to complete any task assigned and assist with maintenance of equipment and facilities. The City would not have been prepared for the rains and subsequent flooding without their help. They do an outstanding job and are courteous and professional in their demeanor; the Department appreciates their efforts. In continuing efforts to address citizens’ concerns about littering, alcohol and glass on the beach, officers issued ten (10) citations for alcohol on the beach. In the month of September, dispatchers responded to forty-six hundred three (4,603) calls with thirty-six hundred eighty-three (3,683) for the Police Department. Officers had two hundred forty-five (245) traffic stops, and seventy-one (71) of those stops were ticketed. The City has experienced a fifty-three percent (53%) increase in DUI tickets from 2014. Officers wrote one hundred thirty-seven (37) incident reports in September; they made twenty-seven (27) arrests for the month. Three (3) arrests were narcotics related, and ten (10) were for liquor law violations. Animal Control wrote six (6) citations in the month and picked up fourteen (14) animals. In September, the Department received twenty-four (24) noise complaints and nine (9) citations were written.

### **7. Miscellaneous Business**

**Next Meeting Date:** 1:00 p.m., Thursday, November 5<sup>th</sup> in the Training Room of the Public Safety Building.

### **8. Executive Session – not needed**

### **9. Adjourn**

**MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:23 a.m.; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland  
City Clerk