

## RECREATION COMMITTEE

9:00 a.m., Tuesday, April 5, 2016

The regular meeting of the Recreation Committee was held at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, April 5, 2016 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Kinghorn and Rice, Chair Carroll, Administrator Tucker, Recreation Director Page, Assistant Administrator Fragoso and Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Chair Carroll called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and public were duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

### 2. **Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

**MOTION: Councilmember Rice moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of March 1, 2016 as submitted; Chair Carroll seconded.**

Councilmember Kinghorn asked to clarify statements attributed to him in the March 1 minutes; he stated that he believes that space is available in the existing footprint of the Recreation building to relocate the Cardio Room. As the budget is built each year, he questioned whether the Department Managers searched out assistance from professionals to make decisions about the need to replace or maintain/repair an asset for another year or so; he indicated that he would like to see a more measured process.

Councilmember Rice and Chair Carroll withdrew the motion and second, respectively.

The Committee agreed that Clerk Copeland should re-listen to the tape of the March meeting, but state the clarifications in the minutes of this meeting; the Committee will defer approval of the March minutes until the May meeting.

### 3. **Citizens' Comments – None**

### 4. **Departmental Report for March 2016 – Director Page**

The Director stated that the Recreation Department is going to celebrate another Island History Evening where residents can share their interesting experiences before, during and after Hurricane Hugo; during the evening, the Rec staff will promote the Disaster Expo to be held from 4:00 p.m. til 6:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup> in the bay of Fire Station 1.

Like the coyote video, Administrator Tucker voiced concern that some stories from Hugo might not be appropriate for younger children and would only scare them; Director Page said she would keep that in mind as they move forward with planning.

In March, fifty-three (53) Keenagers attended the group potluck lunch meeting; the next meeting will be April 6<sup>th</sup>. The Front Beach fest was a huge success with approximately two thousand (2000) people in attendance; staff will closely duplicate the event again next year keeping with the beach music theme that appeared to be the draw this year. For the Egg-cellent Craft Easter egg decorating activity, the staff boiled eggs the day before for children who saw no reason for the tool to remove the eggs from the dye when their hands fit into the dye cups just fine.

The inclement weather brought the annual Easter Egg Hunt into the gym, but it did not dampen the fun of the fifteen hundred to two thousand (1,500-2,000) attendees. In hindsight, the Director said that the number of people should have been limited at the door, but, once the lightning and thunder began, staff was anxious to give everyone shelter quickly.

Summer camp registration began yesterday and will continue through the week for residents. According to the Director, a man arrived Sunday night with his sleeping bag and pillow and more people joined him around 3:00 a.m. to ensure that their children got enrolled; by the time the Director arrived at 6:00 a.m., parents were lined down the sidewalk.

The last Middle School Dance will be held Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>; the Yard Sale will be Saturday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>; Music in the Park will be Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.; and the Sand Sculpting Competition will be Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9:00 a.m. The IOP Beach Run is scheduled for Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup>.

At the Chair's request, the number of participants for athletics has been added to the report. Councilmember Kinghorn asked for feedback on receiving the monthly Recreation reports only electronically and eliminating the paper copies entirely; Assistant Fragoso noted that the report is usually on the intranet. Until the City purchases tablets for Council, Councilmember Rice wanted to continue with the *status quo*.

## **5. Old Business**

### **A. Update on Departmental Survey**

Enclosed in meeting packets was a new version of a survey for the Recreation Department which has been condensed from the original version. Councilmember Kinghorn brought *Survey Monkey* to the Director's attention as a means of reaching a large group of the island's population; she indicated that she would look into it. Responding to the Councilmember's question about the Department's email base, Director Page reported that everyone who has registered for an activity through the RecTrac program and who has signed up for the Department's e-newsletter is in the database.

Councilmember Rice suggested distributing the surveys to people at the dog park, who likely are not in the Rec Trac program.

Related to further discussions on raising money, the Administrator wondered about adding "Would you be willing to donate funds to the City to expand programs and facilities, and, if so, please provide contact information" to the survey.

Councilmember Rice suggested asking if residents are aware the Rec Department's Building Fund.

Councilmember Kinghorn indicated that such a question could limit funds and would restrict funds from being used otherwise.

Administrator Tucker then suggested adding the words “tax deductible” before contribution to encourage residents.

Councilmember Kinghorn recommended that the survey be more solicitous, such as

- Are there areas that we can improve upon?
- What could we do differently? or
- How can we serve you better?

### **B. Further Discussion of Funding Opportunities**

Director Page had asked for this to be on the agenda because she did not think she had a clear directive from the Committee on what she was being asked to do.

Councilmember Kinghorn asked the Director to benchmark some of her peers in what they do to raise non-tax dollars and non-program registration dollars, be it grants, private contributions, foundations, etc., and what success or experience they have had. The goal being to raise more non-City funds to improve and enhance programs.

### **C. Discussion of Inclement Weather Policy for Recreation Events**

Director Page stated that having a policy that would fit every situation was difficult; for athletics, the half rubber tournament, the beach run, the Department uses “rain-out hotline,” which is very beneficial because one only has to sign up for the service to receive a text notification if the event has been rained out. For the Holiday Street Festival and the Island Beach fest, staff always makes sure that Windjammer is available to house the band, but getting volunteers and vendors to come back on a rain date is very difficult; every effort is made to hold the event as scheduled.

Councilmember Kinghorn asked what the Recreation staff had concluded they would do differently in another weather event like the one that occurred for the Easter Egg Hunt.

Primarily the Director replied that they would have to control the number of people entering the front door, and, in her opinion, they waited a bit late to do that. When they did try, the lightning and thunder started and they wanted to get everyone out of harm’s way as quickly as possible.

Responding to Chair Carroll, the maximum number of people allowed in the gym at one time is six hundred seventy-five (675); so by moving people down the hallway the overcrowding thinned out. When reviewing the footage from the cameras, the Director could see that people had congregated near the door, leaving more room at the rear of the gym than people realized. Since classes were going on in the other rooms, they were unavailable at the time.

Complaints that Councilmember Kinghorn heard were that people had not been notified that no egg hunt would be offered in the building.

Administrator Tucker remarked that notification of that sort could be on the event posters, saying that “in case of rain, fun and games will be in the gym, but no egg hunt.”

Since it was not raining at 9:30 a.m., Director Page was anticipating a lot of people to attend.

In the thirty-nine (39) years that Director Page has staged an Easter Egg Hunt, this year was only the second time that an event has been rained on; Administrator Tucker added that it may be only the third event that has been dampened by rain.

Councilmember Kinghorn opined that having a Rec staff member outside in the line communicating with people and giving out candy or water as an act of customer service would have lessened the anxiety.

## **6. New Business**

### **A. Review of FY17 Operating Budget, foreshadowing staffing**

Administrator Tucker pointed out that column H should read FY16-17, not FY15-16.

An item not included in this version of the budget and that will be presented to the Personnel Committee is the addition of Parks and Facilities Specialist position who would be responsible for the maintenance and general upkeep of all of the City's properties and buildings. The evidence of having a person responsible for the property and not having a person responsible is quite evident when looking at the Recreation Center versus the Front Beach, for example. In addition, this person would supervise the City's contracts like landscaping, elevator maintenance, general housekeeping, etc. and plan for replacements for future budgets; currently the City takes care of these matters reactively, and often the repairs/maintenance become more costly because they have been allowed to go on too long with no one intervening.

The obvious place to put this person would appear to be the Public Works Department, but they are already overtaxed in the growing season that coincides with the height of garbage and debris season; since the Recreation Department has success with grounds and buildings, the decision was to have this position fall under Director Page's supervision.

When Chair Carroll said that he would like to compare IOP with other comparable local governments as to staffing, the Administrator replied that she would do so, but that it would be difficult to find a similar sized municipality that was also a tourist mecca that always wants to present itself in the best possible light all of the time.

Councilmember Rice stated that the City "desperately needed this position;" she reported being on Front Beach recently and had found the condition of the benches to be "embarrassing."

Director Page agreed that the City needed this position and indicated that she would welcome this person to her team that often assists the Public Works Department with cutting the rights-of-way, cleaning beach accesses, etc.

As to City contracts with outside vendors, the right person in this position would maximize those contracts insuring that the City was getting what it was paying for or finding out why and correcting the work. This person would know of things to be added, deleted or changed in a contract so that the end result was the best for the City at the lowest cost.

Globally for all departments, the following changes are included:

- a three percent (3%) wage adjustment is presented that consists of a one percent (1%) cost of living adjustment and a two percent (2%) merit increase;
- a one percent (1%) increase to the group health insurance;
- the fuel calculation is based on the last two (2) years average amount paid and the last twelve (12) months actual usage; and
- property and liability insurance have been increased by five percent (5%), and flood insurance has been increased by fifteen percent (15%).

Administrator Tucker reiterated that the impact of this person would not be added to the budget until approved by the Personnel Committee. They will be presented with a total of four (4) positions, with job descriptions and potential budgetary impacts upon which to decide; if approved, some or all will be included in the next version of the budget.

Hypothetically, Councilmember Kinghorn asked what the Recreation Department would do if the budget were to be frozen.

The Administrator explained that she has dealt with that situation twice at the Isle of Palms; once with the economic downturn and another time when she was concerned about tracking over budget and informed the Department Managers not to send purchase orders to City Hall for approval until spending leveled off. The downside of freezing salaries is that the City begins to lose people and filling vacancies is expensive or service delivery suffers because that vacancy is not filled.

A second scenario presented by Councilmember Kinghorn was to freeze the budget, not to have Council decide upon each line but rather allow the Administrator and Department Manager to make those decisions. If that were done, could they find savings in the expenses to still provide a two percent (2%) merit pool for employees.

Administrator Tucker acknowledged that it would be tough since the City budgets so conservatively, but a special activity could be cut.

Councilmember Kinghorn thought that a capital project could be delayed and the funds necessary for employee increases could be transferred in from the Capital Projects fund; he thought that was the cleanest way to handle the problem. He indicated that this was a reason that he continued to look for alternative sources of money – expenses were only going to continue to rise; therefore, he was looking for a way to incentivize Department Managers to generate more revenue outside the norm.

An addition to the Capital Projects Budget for the Recreation Department is a generator and transfer switch for ninety thousand dollars (\$90,000) that would be partially offset by a hazard mitigation grant of sixty-seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$67,500). The need for alternate power at the Recreation Center was brought to the City's attention when it went through the earthquake exercise; since the building now does not have a generator, its use was limited in the aftermath of the disaster.

The remaining budget pages illustrate what funds will be paying for other capital items.

<u>Municipal Accommodations Fee Fund</u>	
4 outdoor basketball goals	\$18,000
Playground or exterior scoreboard equip. As needed	10,000
50% of replacement soccer field lights	62,300
<u>State Accommodations Tax Fund</u>	
Replace outdoor water fountain	5,000
Special activities	51,000
<u>Capital Purchases Fund</u>	
Replace golf cart	5,000
Replace outdoor water fountain	5,000
Replace 11 HVAC units in Expansion, (only with failure)	30,000
50% of replacement soccer field lights	62,500
Replace baseball field fencing	15,000
Replace 4 outdoor basketball goals & posts	18,000
Generator & transfer switch	90,000

The final page shows the full Recreation Department FY17 proposed budget spread by funding source; the box at the bottom of the page indicates that eighty-five percent (85%) is expected to come from the General and Capital Projects Fund and the remaining fifteen percent (15%) is to come from the tourism funds.

#### **B. Award of a contract for an artificial holiday tree for Front Beach**

Director Page stated that she had gotten three (3) written quotes, but she had found it difficult to get like-for-like products due to a difference in the type of lights used; the quotes came from Display Sales, Barry Minors, Inc. and Downtown Decorations. After talking with the vendors and comparing the products, she recommended that the contract go to Display Sales at \$16,999.76.

The Administrator pointed out that sales tax does not appear to be applied in looking at the quote; Director Page assured her that the price was all encompassing. Director Page said that she would contact the vendor and get a new quote.

**MOTION: Chair Carroll moved to award a contract to Display Sales for one holiday tree at \$16,999.76 including sales taxes; Councilmember Kinghorn seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **7. Miscellaneous Business**

Councilmember Kinghorn commented that, on Recreation programs, any time that it does not generate net revenue, it is deficit spending; therefore, the goal should be, when a program is run,

to get net revenue gain which helps to build that program, serve other citizens and stay in the black.

Councilmember Rice stated that the value of the programs is more than monetary and that everything could not be measured financially.

Director Page reported that the athletic programs all pay for themselves because there is a registration fee and sponsorships.

Councilmember Kinghorn notified the Committee that he would be out of the country in May.

The Director stated that her idea of a recreation center was to provide opportunities, not necessarily paying for everything that is done.

Next Meeting Date: 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, May 4 in the Conference Room.

**8. Adjournment**

**MOTION: Councilmember Kinghorn moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:34 a.m.; Councilmember Rice seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland  
City Clerk