

## CITY COUNCIL

7:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 18, 2014

The regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Isle of Palms was held at 7:53 p.m., Tuesday, March 18, 2014 in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Bergwerf, Bettelli, Buckhannon, Carroll, Ferencz, Harrington, Loftus and Ward, Mayor Cronin, Administrator Tucker, City Attorney Halversen, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Mayor Cronin 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. Following a brief invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, Clerk Copeland called the roll.

### 2. Reading of the Journals of Previous Meetings

**MOTION: Councilmember Bettelli moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 25, 2014 as submitted; Councilmember Loftus seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. Citizens' Comments – None

### 4. Reports from Standing Committees

#### A. Ways and Means Committee

From the meeting held earlier in the evening, Mayor Cronin reported that the actual year-to-date income to the General Fund is one hundred fourteen percent (114%) of prior year at this time. On the revenue side, Property Taxes are running at ninety-three percent of budget. With two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of the year passed, expenditures in the General Fund are running at fifty-nine percent (59%) of budget. Cash on-hand totals three point four million dollars (\$3,400,000) which is thirty-eight percent (38%) of annual General Fund expenditures.

From tourism-related funds, the Mayor reported that Municipal Accommodations Taxes are head of the same period last year by nine percent (9%) and Hospitality Tax collections are running ten percent (10%) ahead of where they were this time last year. The City has received no additional funds from State ATAX or the Charleston County Accommodations Tax Pass-through since the last meeting.

#### 1. Approval to increase to \$50 the annual parking lot pass fee from the current fee of \$45

Mayor Cronin announced that the Ways and Means Committee has approved increasing the annual parking lot pass fee to \$50.

#### 2. Award of a contract to Lawns Done Right, Inc. in the amount of \$9,000 for the clearing and cleanup of Carmen R. Bunch Park

**MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to award a contract to Lawns Done Right as stated above; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- 3. Approval of change order in the amount of \$5,000 to Salmons Dredging contract for Tidal Wave Watersports dock rehabilitation to substitute an aluminum gate with electric keypad for the timber gate**

**MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to approve the \$5,000 change order to Salmons Dredging as detailed above; Councilmember Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- 4. Approve to reimburse up to \$5,500 to marina tenants for consultant and planning expenses.**

**MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to reimburse marina tenants for consultant and planning expenses; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded.**

Administrator Tucker confirmed to Councilmember Ward that this expense would be unbudgeted.

Councilmember Loftus noted that he had voted against this motion at the Ways and Means Committee meeting because the City has budgeted seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) in the FY15 budget engineering, planning and design of the marina property; the City cannot be assured that the same consultant would be the entity doing the work in FY15. He added that this effort does not fall under the City Administrator's purview as he believes it should be; he voiced the opinion that the City's process is effective and should be followed in this circumstance.

**VOTE: The motion PASSED on a vote of 7 to 2; Councilmembers Loftus and Ward cast the dissenting votes.**

- 5. Award of a contract to L&L Contractors in the amount of \$19,900 to provide electrical service to the Tidal Wave dock**

**MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to award the contract to L&L Contractors as stated above; Councilmember Ward seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Administrator reported that the winter storms had cost the City twenty-two thousand dollars (\$22,000) in supplies and overtime.

Administrator Tucker confirmed to Councilmember Ward that these expenses were paid from the Disaster Preparedness Fund.

Councilmembers then reviewed the FY15 Capital and Operating budgets and ways to balance the budget by adding revenue streams, increasing revenues, cutting expenses and/or assigning additional support from tourism and victims funds. Included in the next Ways and Means Committee meeting of April 22<sup>nd</sup>, Council will hold its annual budget workshop to delve into budget detail in order to have a balanced FY15 budget.

## **B. Public Safety Committee**

From the Public Safety Committee meeting of March 3, the Committee reviewed the timeline for replacement of the message boards; Councilmember Bettelli noted that schematics and mockups of the new signs were included in meeting packets. The Committee received an update on the replacement of the generator at City Hall and a recommendation for its placement on the site. Since the new generator will power all of City Hall, it will be approximately twice as big as the existing generator with a fuel tank four times (4x) the capacity of the existing one. The Committee also reviewed the FY15 Operating and Capital budgets for the Fire and Police Departments. A resident asked that the Committee consider vegetative improvements to the 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue median; 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. The Committee agreed to take no action on this issue. The Committee also gave unanimous approval to a contract in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for surveillance cameras at Front Beach and at the intersection of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Palm Boulevard.

Administrator Tucker interrupted Councilmember Bettelli to explain that this item was pulled from this agenda by Chief Buckhannon as he works to resolve a couple of issues.

Reporting for the Fire Department, Chief Graham had told the Committee that on February 1<sup>st</sup> personnel responded to an accident on 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue where the hydrant was sheared off and water spewed freely. On February 15<sup>th</sup>, 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 minutes (12½) minutes. The Department has one (1) vacancy plus the addition of the three (3) new fire-fighters for Station 2.

At the meeting, 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.

Councilmember Bettelli announced that Fire personnel will be collecting for Children's Charities two or three (2-3) Fridays toward the end of March for an hour or so, and the documentation has been executed for mosquito abatement through Charleston County.

The next meeting will be at 10:00 a.m., Wednesday, April 9, 2014.

Councilmember Loftus asked whether the Committee had discussed noise complaints and if any citations were written; Councilmember Bettelli responded that they were discussed and that he would e-mail the Councilmember the exact numbers for February.

On the subject of the electronic message boards, Councilmember Ferencz asked whether the Committee had sought input from residents about whether this is the type of sign they want. She noted that she has had residents saying: "You aren't going to have neon signs, are you?" She continued by asking whether the City was going to have to buy a new computer, was the electrical wiring in place and what happens when the computer goes down?

Councilmember Bettelli suggested that Councilmember Ferencz answer those questions with his phone number or that of the City Administrator.

Administrator Tucker responded that the City is working with Stantec on this project and the type of system that is contemplated does consider all of the computer and electrical requirements. The goal is to simply change from having to change out the message by hand and to keep the sign looking similar to what is in place now with the exception of using the style in similar design with the wayfinding sign initiative. The change will be that the messaging will be electronic as opposed to be changed manually.

Councilmember Ferencz asked who would control the electronic, and the Administrator responded that the job will continue to be done by the Recreation Department.

Councilmember Loftus stated that he has not spoken to one (1) resident who is in favor of this change. He added that, since the City is looking at ways to reduce expenses, he believes that this project should not go forward; he noted that electronic message board originally was in the ATAX budget, but members did not support it.

Councilmember Bettelli said that, once he describes the replacement sign, he has gotten only positive input from residents. Mayor Cronin noted that the residents have no idea how labor intensive manually changing the signs is; plus having electronic messaging will mean almost instantaneous ways to warn citizens and visitors of dangerous water conditions or an approaching storm.

Councilmember Ferencz asked whether the City knew of other beachside communities using this type of signage; Councilmember Buckhannon stated that this type of electronic sign is used at Pawley's Island. Administrator Tucker added that there are other communities in this area that are using them, and the City is using their vendors and their specifications.

Councilmember Bettelli explained that this type sign falls under SCDOT regulations, which is the reason the City involved Stantec. The Administrator noted that the City does have SCDOT permits for the two (2) signs.

**C. Public Works Committee**

From the Public Works Committee meeting of March 11<sup>th</sup>, Councilmember Ward related that Director Pitts had explained that the overtime accrued in January was attributable to the ice storm. In February, the focus of work was cleaning the beach paths on the island. The Director reported that garbage collection continues to trend downward, which he attributes to single-stream recycling.

Charleston County has selected the Isle of Palms as the test site for recycling on the beach; Charleston County will be paying Mr. Schupp for additional trips he will make collecting the recycled material.

**MOTION: Councilmember Ward moved to proceed with the pilot program for recycling on the beach; Councilmember Harrington seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mayor Cronin said that the City has sought a way to do this for several years, but could not find a vehicle to make it happen.

Administrator Tucker stated that she is still negotiating the expense with the County, but continues to move forward.

The Committee also discussed recycling at the marina; Councilmember Ward asked the City Administrator to inform Council on what is happening at the marina.

Administrator Tucker stated that she and the marina tenants are working hard to get the large recycling containers removed; the two (2) containers take up valuable parking space and are visually unattractive. Their use has been in decline since single-stream recycling was introduced to the island. The original goal had been to relocate them, but, if recycling by the marina tenants continues, their removal from the marina is favored. Currently there are two (2) other recycling containers on the island – one at Front Beach in the municipal lots and a second behind the Sweetgrass Pavilion in Wild Dunes. If the frequency of pickup can be increased for the one in the municipal lot, there would still be a way for people to recycle who miss recycling day or who have an excess of recycling to dispose of recyclable materials.

Since the meeting, the City is working with the marina's biggest recycler, Morgan Creek Grill, to determine how they can continue to do so; it would take thirteen (13) recycling bins to hold the volume they generate. The big containers will not be removed until that issue is resolved.

The Committee has asked the Administrator to look into ways that more lighting can be attained at Front Beach; Councilmember Loftus expressed concern about crime and noted that the Number One deterrent to crime is lighting. He did present three (3) ways to add lighting;

1. Wind the small lights that are encased in heavy-duty plastic around the base of the palm trees;
2. String lights on industrial-strength wiring under the ball of the palm trees from tree to tree in an arc on both sides of the street; and

3. Use money from the Plant-a-Palm fund to plant live oaks at the end-caps at Front Beach and use lights like the ones on Coleman Boulevard.

Administrator Tucker assured the Committee that she would research these ideas.

The Committee then reviewed the FY15 Revenue Projections and Operating and Capital budgets.

Consideration was given to resurfacing the alleys between 42<sup>nd</sup> and 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenues and between 44<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> Avenues; the Committee decided not to go forward on this request due to concerns about whether they were City-owned streets.

The Committee did review the streets that Charleston County will be resurfacing in coming months and noted that the only section of Palm Boulevard to be resurfaced is between 41<sup>st</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

The next Public Works Committee meeting will be at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, April 20<sup>th</sup> in the Conference Room.

Mayor Cronin announced that the City's annual Hazardous Household Materials and Shred Day will be April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from 9 a.m. to noon.

#### **D. Recreation Committee**

For the Recreation Committee's meeting of March 3, 2014, Councilmember Carroll referred to the Director Page's monthly report, noting that spring captains' meetings were held March 4<sup>th</sup> for adult softball, 3-on-3 basketball, and 6-vs-6 soccer with competitions beginning March 18<sup>th</sup>. The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Half Rubber Tournament is scheduled for Saturday, August 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. A regional basketball tournament was on the island for March 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. Baseball is getting underway with games starting on Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. The IOP Beach Run has been scheduled for Saturday, July 19<sup>th</sup>; sponsors are being secured and applications are being developed. DNR has scheduled two (2) boater education classes at the Recreation Center on Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>. A Wellness Trivia Day was held at The Windjammer on Wednesday, February 26<sup>th</sup> with keen competition among City staff. Island Gras held on Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup> was a success despite the weather. Upcoming events include St. Patty's Craft on Thursday, March 13<sup>th</sup>; the Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 19<sup>th</sup> and the Piccolo Spoleto Sand Sculpting Contest on Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup>.

Discussion followed relative to the FY15 Operating and Capital budgets; the Department anticipates a five percent (5%) increase over the current year in its Operating budget. The bulk of the increase is attributable to items that are beyond the Committee's control, such as insurance, the merit pool increase, and an increased need to part-time instructors.

The Recreation Committee's next meeting will be at 5:00 p.m., Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup> in the City Hall Conference Room.

#### **E. Personnel Committee**

From the regular meeting of March 6<sup>th</sup>, Councilmember Ferencz reported that the work on evaluation tool used by the City is a job in-progress. The Committee Chair and Administrator Tucker devised a description of the tasks before the Committee for 2014 with a timeline and priorities. Items on this list include the review of IOP wage ranges in comparison to other local governments, review and action on recommendation from Department managers for an evaluation tool, review the evaluation process, tool and performance measures for the City Administrator. The discussion continued related to having an in-house mechanic versus contracting services on an emergency basis; the Committee continues to gather information. Councilmember Ferencz noted that the total fleet value at the Isle of Palms exceed four point two million dollars (\$4,200,000) in addition to four (4) street pumps valued at thirteen thousand dollars (\$13,000) each that were inadvertently omitted from the fleet value. Another on-going task is gathering the wage ranges from neighboring municipalities for comparison to the City's ranges. The status of staffing City-wide, the Committee was told that the Fire Department is trying to fill vacancies and hire three (3) firefighters for Station 2; the Police Department is recruiting for six (6) Beach Services Officers and replacing one (1) patrol officer; and the Recreation Department is engaged in hiring eight to nine (8-9) summer camp counselors. Councilmember Ferencz stated that the Committee is looking at the evaluation tool for the City Administrator; rather than looking at the tool being used and tweaking it, the Committee Chair wants to look at the job description to know what the Administrator is being asked to do. She noted that the Administrator's job description was written in 1993. The Committee is also studying the job descriptions written by Archer in the compensation study they performed in the mid-2000s. The Committee also reviewed the Operating and Capital budgets for General Government and the Building Department. In conclusion, the Committee deferred to the April meeting a discussion of the strategic plan versus the Comprehensive Plan; this discussion resulted from MASC training as a result of MASC training Councilmembers Ferencz and Harrington attended in February.

February Safety Sweepstakes winners were Shelia Redmon from the Recreation Department, Jeff Swain from the Police Department, Joseph Ancrum from the Public Works Department and Chris Fassos from the Fire Department.

The Personnel Committee will hold its next meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, April 10 in the Conference Room.

#### **F. Real Property Committee**

Reporting on the meeting of March 5<sup>th</sup>, Councilmember Loftus stated that he would be brief since much of the information has been covered already. The Committee unanimously agreed to recommend to Ways and Means an increase in the parking lot annual pass fee to fifty dollars (\$50.00). The marina tenants asked for removal of the recycling containers at the marina. Councilmember Loftus commended Administrator Tucker for the great job she has done spearheading recycling on the beach and the changes at the marina. The Committee also received an update on the City Hall generator replacement and information on the placement of it on the site. The Committee discussed the land clearing, cleanup and access road for Mayor Carmen

R. Bunch Park and unanimously recommended awarding the contract to Lawns Done Right to perform the work. The change order for the aluminum gate at the watersports dock was also

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approved by the Committee. The Committee also had a lengthy discussion on the consultant and planning expenses to be reimbursed to the marina tenants, which was approved earlier in the meeting. Tidal Wave Watersports approached the City about amending its lease to satisfy the demands of their insurance company, but the request was withdrawn before this meeting.

As other Committees, the Committee reviewed the Operating and Capital budgets for the entities under its purview, i.e., the marina and Front Beach. In the marina tenants report, the Committee was told that all tenants were current with their rents through February and that Morgan Creek Grill owes ninety-seven hundred dollars (\$9,700) in additional rent that they have agreed to pay by the end of April.

The Real Property Committee will hold its next meeting at 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup> in the Conference Room.

Councilmember Buckhannon found it interesting that Tidal Wave Watersports wanted to change its lease because many activities they are involved in are outside their lease; they stated that they were changing the lease to reflect things that they are already doing. He then asked who would be charged with enforcing all leases with the City.

Administrator Tucker responded that the enforcement of leases was under her purview.

**5. Reports from City Officers, Boards and Commissions**

- A. Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee** – minutes attached
- B. Board of Zoning Appeals** – no meeting in March
- C. Planning Commission** – minutes attached

**6. Reports from Special or Joint Committees** – None

**7. Petitions Received, Referred or Disposed of** – None

**8. Bills Already in Possession of Council**

**9. Introduction of New Bills, Resolutions and Proclamations**

**Red Cross Month Proclamation**

Due to the lateness of the hour, the Committee waived the reading, and Administrator Tucker relayed the essence of the proclamation. A copy of the proclamation is attached to the historical record of the meeting.

**MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved for approval of the proclamation declaring April as Red Cross Month; Councilmember Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**



**Sarcoidosis Month Proclamation**

City Council took the same action on this proclamation, and a copy is attached to the historical record of the meeting.

**MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to approve the proclamation declaring April as Sarcoidosis Awareness Month and October 1<sup>st</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> as Sarcoidosis Awareness Week; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**10. Miscellaneous Business**

**Next Meeting Date:** 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 29, 2014.

**11. Executive Session – not needed**

**12. Conclusion/Adjournment**

**MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m.; Councilmember Ward seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Copeland  
City Clerk