

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
5:00 p.m., Tuesday, February 10, 2009

The regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was held at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 10, 2009 in the Training Room of Fire Station 2 located at 44 Forty-first Avenue, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Chairman Buckhannon, Committee members Bettelli and Loftus, City Administrator Tucker, Fire Chief Graham, Police Chief Buckhannon, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland.

1. Chairman Buckhannon 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: Councilman Bettelli moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 13, 2009 as submitted; Councilman Loftus seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**3. Citizens' Comments**

Chris Donovan, 2403 Waterway Boulevard, stated that the minutes for the *Citizens' Comments* from the meeting January 13, 2009 were incorrect in that they focused on the barricade at the end of the street, rather than the placement of the NO PARKING signs on the street. She asked what had been done since the last meeting; Chairman Buckhannon noted that the issues on 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue were on the AGENDA for discussion at this meeting. He did report that a letter had been sent to SCDOT, but there has been no response to date. Ms. Donovan stated that she had put some plants at the front of her property to deter parking, and the Police Department notified her of a fine of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per day per plant until they were removed.

**4. Old Business**

**A. Update on Public Safety Building**

1. Change Order #7 to Resolve Conflict between Water and Drainage along Pavilion in the amount of \$2,973.44

Administrator Tucker introduced William Rogan and Larry Bartholomew from ADC Engineering. She stated that she had requested their attendance because there have been other change orders for issues below the surface that were not known until they were encountered, so she thought the Committee would benefit from hearing the information directly from the engineers involved.

Mr. Rogan had a map of the area affected by Change Order #7 that he spread out for the members of the Committee to view as he explained the situation. He reported that one of the bid alternates had been to extend the twenty-four inch (24") RCP pipe to Ocean Boulevard to try to alleviate some of the flooding that occurs there. When the work began, personnel located an existing four-inch (4") water line was that runs perpendicularly and was not detected in the survey; he explained that water lines that run horizontally were the only ones that could be detected.

Mr. Bartholomew reported that they had used PUPS to locate the existing utility lines; he related that, when working in existing road rights-of-way, many of the utilities would not be in the same horizontal location as the survey indicated. There might also be issues with depth; he explained that the first utility that was in place took precedence and other utilities that cross it must go over or above or a structure that would be built to handle the conflict. Mr. Bartholomew informed the Committee that there had been other locations where they had work around existing utilities because the "as-builts" that had been provided to them were not completely accurate. The resolution proposed was to raise the water line as the Water and Sewer Commission preferred.

**MOTION: Councilman Bettelli moved to approve Change Order #7 in the amount of \$2,973.44 and to recommend approval to the Ways and Means Committee; Councilman Loftus seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chief Graham gave a brief update on the construction stating that the construction was still on schedule and there could be a walk through soon.

2. Consideration of \$1,500 to purchase a smaller satellite dish to replace the existing one

Administrator Tucker stated that the City has a satellite dish that affords the City the capability to do closed circuit training via ETV. The plan was to re-locate the dish to the new Public Safety Building. She continued that technology had advanced to the point that it is possible to get the same function from a smaller dish, and, for fifteen hundred dollars (\$1,500.00), the City could purchase the smaller one.

Chief Buckhannon reported that the new dish would be 1.75 meters, or 5.74 feet, in diameter, and the existing dish is 3 meters, or 9.84 feet, in diameter. If the City's dish were to be moved, it would be mounted on top of the building, but Building Director Kerr informed the Chief that there were up-coming changes to residential zoning that could affect the size of the dish. Chief Buckhannon told the Committee that the smaller dish was designed for areas like the Isle of Palms with a lighter load capacity for the wind.

**MOTION: Councilman Bettelli moved to approve the purchase of a smaller satellite dish for no more than \$1,500.00 and to recommend the purchase to the Ways and Means Committee; Councilman Loftus seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. Consideration of Plaque

Administrator Tucker recalled that the Committee had decided at the January meeting for the plaque for the Public Safety Building to include the names of the current Council. Following that meeting, she had dialogue with some Committee members where concern was expressed about including all of the people who had served on Council and been involved with the project. As a result, she had examined the plaques on the Recreation Center and on Fire Station 2 to know how Council had been treated in the past. On the plaque at the Recreation Center, the name of a former Council member, who had been instrumental in the planning stage, appears separate from the sitting Council. The Administrator explained that considerations for this plaque include a group who worked hard on the planning aspect of the building, the current City Council, and the prospect of two (2) mayors. She directed the Committee's attention to Assistant Dziuban's laptop to see the mockup Cole+Russell had prepared; in addition, there was an alternative prepared by Assistant Dziuban. The Committee agreed that they preferred the plaque designed by Assistant Dziuban. Assistant Dziuban agreed to have an accurate mock-up prepared for the City Council meeting in February.

**B. Update on 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

Administrator Tucker stated that she had been charged to communicate with City Attorney Sottile about this problem, which she did. She reported that Attorney Sottile did not have any alternatives that he thought would be useful beyond what has been done already. As a follow up to Chief Buckhannon's verbal request, the Administrator has written to SCDOT stating the City's desire to have time limited parking on 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue, either two (2) hour or no overnight, which the City would enforce.

Councilman Bettelli asked for an update of the 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Palm Boulevard Demonstration Project. Chief Buckhannon responded that there was no change from the previous month, except that a sign had been stolen. Chief Buckhannon indicated that SCDOT did not appear to be inclined to do anything more until the City made a decision about the intersection. Responding to Councilman Loftus' question, Chief Buckhannon stated that he did not think the City should make a recommendation to SCDOT until the island had experienced its first true visitors weekend that would fall, he thought, between Easter and the Cooper River Bridge Run. Councilman Loftus expressed his opinion that there needed to be an illustrated sign on Palm before a driver entered the curve that diagrammed the intersection the driver was approaching.

**5. New Business**

**A. Review of Capital Budgets for FY 2009-2010**

Administrator Tucker repeated to this Committee the reasoning behind the ten (10) years projections on the capital budgets; she also emphasized that the out-years were meant to be a planning tool for the Committee and the Council as a whole. The Administrator also stated her opinion that a plan such as this was an inhibitor to spending in order to save for the future. She stated that, included in the Fire Department budget, were the initial steps for the Department to seek accreditation equivalent to CALEA for the Police Department.

Fire Department Capital Budget FY 2009-2010

Chief Graham asked to address the request for a repeater before beginning the capital budget as a whole because of the impact of the repeater. With the permission of the Chairman, Administrator Tucker reminded the Committee that one (1) repeater was included in the FY 2008-2009 budget in the amount of twenty-two thousand dollars (\$22,000). During the procurement process, Chief Graham realized that she had component parts on-hand that would reduce the cost of the repeater; as a result, there was a balance remaining of \$10,296.79. Chief Graham is requesting to be allowed to purchase a second repeater in this fiscal year with the remaining funds. Chief Graham noted that she would be fourteen hundred dollars (\$1,400) short, but she was relatively certain that the Department could receive a two thousand dollar (\$2,000) grant to make up that difference.

**MOTION: Councilman Loftus moved to approve and to recommend to Ways and Means the purchase of a second repeater from the remaining funds in the FY02008-2009 budget; Councilman Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Chief Graham distributed a schedule of the Department's requests for FY 2009-2010 that included the justification for each item; a copy is attached. Chief Graham stated that the first three (3) items represented annual replacements; they were as follows:

Replace SCBA air packs & cylinders	4 @ \$5,000/ea	\$20,000
Replace 10 sets of Bunker Gear	10 @ \$1,400/ea	\$14,000
Replace fire hose & Appliances		\$10,500

These items were replaced before they were worn and before they became safety issues. Chief Graham responded to Chairman Buckhannon's question that there were six to seven (6-7) sets of spare bunker gear, but they were mismatched pieces.

The next item was mobile repeaters, and it had just been reduced from three (3) to two (2). Assuming that the two (2) repeaters were approved for 2009-2010, there would be one (1) on each frontline fire apparatus. The Chief explained that the repeater allowed for an enhanced signal within the emergency operation; she added that, with the change from analog to digital, the Department has gone from in-building coverage on the analog to in-street coverage on the digital system – they had encountered more and more structures on the island where they cannot communicate.

The remaining items on the Fire Department Capital budget were as follows:

Cutters, Spredders & Hose		\$12,500
ATV	1	11,000
Thermal Imaging Camera	1	10,500
Yamaha Jet Ski	1	9,000
Upgrade fill station on Rescue 1		7,000
Light weight saw	2 @ 2,000/ea	4,000
Stair Chair	1	3,000
*Bunker Gear	4 @ \$1,400/ea	5,600

\*if additional staffing approved

A first step toward accreditation was an increase in staffing; therefore, Chief Graham was seeking to add one (1) firefighter per shift and a full-time inspector.

On the subject of the inspector, Councilman Bettelli stated his understanding that personnel were being pulled to perform fire inspections. Chief Graham confirmed and stated that a full-time, dedicated fire inspector would give consistency and continuity of service to the task; it would also give residents and business-owners a singular point of contact.

Councilman Bettelli asked that Chief Graham explain the request for an additional firefighter per shift. Administrator Tucker intervened saying that it was important to understand the goal being sought by the Fire Department's accreditation; she added that Chief Graham could explain the name of the accreditation, the requirements and why those requirements are in place. Chief Graham distributed two (2) additional handouts for the Committee members to read that covered the details of the accreditation program and where the Isle of Palms Fire Department currently stood with those requirements.

Councilman Loftus commented that the people of the island believe that the Fire and Police Departments do an excellent job; he, therefore, thought the need for additional personnel could be a hard sell to the residents.

Chief Graham explained the circumstances that had prompted the Fire Department to consider accreditation; they included the following:

- According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the Department is understaffed; and
- The Department received criticism last year during the safety audit for not being accredited or working toward accreditation.

After Chief Graham briefly reviewed the roles of personnel at an active fire and the impact of asking for mutual assistance from neighboring communities, Councilman Loftus asked if the staffing goal of accreditation was an additional twelve (12) firefighters. In response, Chief Graham stated that she did not know if accreditation was a reachable goal for the Isle of Palms, but that she was interested in working toward that number with or without accreditation. Councilman Loftus asked how the staffing numbers were determined; Chief Graham answered that the determining factor for the Isle of Palms was the size and height of the structures.

Councilman Loftus requested a summary of the anticipated maintenance between the new Public Safety Building and Fire Stations 1 and 2. Chief Graham noted that certain maintenance items for Fire Station 2 were listed in the Operating Budget.

Police Department Capital Budget, FY 209-2010

Chief Buckhannon explained the items in the Police Department's budget as follows:

Replace patrol cars purchased 2004	3 @ \$23,000	\$69,000
Replace Beach Services ATV	1 @ 11,000	11,000
Replace VHS in-car camera system with digital	3 @ 3,300	9,900
Replace mobile data terminals (patrol laptops) (2/year)	2 @ 2,250	4,500
Replace body armor (4-5 per year)	5 @ 625	3,125
Replace Computer for SLED/FBI communication system		<u>1,200</u>
<b>TOTAL POLICE CAPITAL BUDGET</b>		<b>\$98,725</b>

Councilman Loftus asked if there were plans to increase the number of cameras for Front Beach surveillance in FY2011; Chief Buckhannon answered that there plan was to replace the four (4) cameras that were in use now. Chief Buckhannon added that he was going to look into the possibility of operating the Front Beach system from the new Public Safety Building when he pursued bids for the surveillance for the new building.

**B. Discussion of Reallocation of Budgeted Resources for Repeater –**  
Discussed earlier in the meeting

**C. Ben Sawyer Bridge Restoration – Discussion of EMS Resources**

Administrator Tucker related that she had met earlier with the group involved in the bridge restoration that will present to City Council on Tuesday, February 17. She reported that some of her concerns have been lessened when she learned that during the construction they will maintain two (2) lanes of traffic until such time as the bridge is closed to all traffic; she reported that by all traffic, SCDOT means both vehicle, as well as boats. The Administrator stated that the bridge would be open to traffic through the first weekend in October, the weekend of the Connector Run. As a result of discussions at this meeting, a commitment was made to contact agencies that had not been fully briefed, such as EMS and school buses. Administrator Tucker commented that she believed that the island would experience the greatest impact during the seven (7) days that the bridge was to be completely closed.

Councilman Loftus asked if cooperation had been requested from Mount Pleasant on traffic control, especially at the light at Rifle Range Road. She recounted that the intersection had been discussed, and the contractor and SCDOT were to contact Mount Pleasant, the state highway patrol and Charleston County, as well.

**D. Award of Contracts in Excess of \$10,000 - None**

**6. Highlights of Departmental Reports**

**A. Fire Department**

Chief Graham informed the Committee that Scot Braun had retired in January and that Jason Smith had been promoted to Lieutenant.

Although she did not have a written quote, Chief Graham asked if the purchase of the repeater could be on the Ways and Means agenda for February; she stated that the repeater would be purchased from Motorola and the installation would be performed by MobileCom. Administrator Tucker said that the vendors would be added to the motion for presentation to Ways and Means.

Chief Graham reported also that the Fire Department had exceeded its FY 2008-2009 annual budget in two (2) areas, Part-time Salaries and Maintenance. She explained that part-time salaries were offsetting the overtime that would be paid to full-time personnel; she added that the Department has three (3) firefighters on active duty, whose shifts must be covered. The maintenance figures were the result of unanticipated repairs to Truck 1 for it to pass its annual inspection. Chief Graham explained that the Department did not replace one (1) tire, but always replaced two (2),

and they run approximately six hundred dollars (\$600). The Chief added that, in her opinion, there have been additional maintenance costs for the trucks that have been exposed to the elements at Station 1. In conclusion, Chief Graham stated, with five (5) months remaining in the year, that the overage was approximately four thousand dollars (\$4,000), and she had purchase orders out for tires for twenty-four hundred dollars (\$2,500) and fourteen hundred dollars (\$1,400).

## **B. Police Department**

Chief Buckhannon reported that there have been nine (9) burglaries since November and that two (2) arrests had been made in the cases; the persons charged were employees of a local cleaning company. He related that the case involving the armed robbery at The Pantry in December 2006 would be going to trial in less than thirty (30) days.

Councilman Loftus asked if it were possible to require cleaning companies to perform criminal background checks on their employees before being issued an Isle of Palms business license. Both Chief Buckhannon and Administrator Tucker agreed that the City could not require such a check, but the Administrator agreed to pose the question to the City Attorney and to the Building Department. She did point out that there were companies operating on the island without business licenses, despite the best efforts of the Police Department.

## **7. Miscellaneous**

### **Discussion of Roll-out Carts**

Chairman Buckhannon commented that the Committee members had likely received emails or phone calls due to the number of roll-out cart warnings issued last month. He stated that there were violations, and the Police were doing their duty by reminding residents of the proper procedure.

Next Meeting Date: 5 p.m., Thursday, March 12, 2009

## **8. Adjourn**

**MOTION: Councilman Bettelli moved to adjourn at 6:49 p.m.; Councilman Loftus seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland  
City Clerk