

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
Isle of Palms, South Carolina

The regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was held at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, February 11, 2008, in City Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Present were Chairman Bettelli, Councilman Buckhannon, Mayor Sottile, Fire Chief Graham, Police Chief Buckhannon, City Administrator Tucker, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland.

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bettelli who acknowledged that the press and the public had been duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

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

MOTION: Mayor Sottile moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 7, 2008 as submitted; Councilman Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **Citizens' Comments**

Nancy Mackey of 8 Sand Dollar Drive recounted to the Committee a situation involving her neighbors who were new residents of the Isle of Palms. They experienced some very serious problems with their neighbor who was renting the home; Ms. Mackey described the difficulties they had experienced and the difficulties they had in reaching the Livability Officer. She stated that residents generally do not know how to reach the Livability Officer and the protocol involved; she suggested that the City provide something in writing for the residents. Chief Buckhannon announced that the City has a brochure dedicated to the Livability Court, Livability Officer and other pertinent date; there is also a section of the website focusing on Livability Court and Officer O'Donnell. Chief Buckhannon explained to Ms. Mackey that, when a call is placed and the Livability Officer is not on duty, a police officer responds; the officer will file a report that is sent to the Livability Officer for follow-up. Chief Buckhannon informed Ms. Mackey that Officer O'Donnell was going to be in training in Columbia for the next two (2) weeks, but he encouraged her to contact Officer O'Donnell upon his return for an appointment with him to ensure that all of her questions were answered.

Bev Ballow, 3009 Waterway, stated that, in addition to be an observer representing the Isle of Palms Neighborhood Association, she wanted to alert the Committee to what she and her husband see as wreckless driving in golf carts. There are young people who could not possibly have driver's licenses and drivers with infants sitting in their laps as they drive with a cart loaded with children. She does not believe that the police are paying enough attention to this problem.

Chief Buckhannon informed Ms. Ballow that golf carts are exempt from the child restraint laws, but that South Carolina law does state that drivers of golf carts should be licensed drivers.

Councilman Buckhannon express his opinion that there needs to be more public education on the subject.

Jim Mueller of 3204 Hartnett Boulevard was the third citizen to come before the Committee; he recounted problems he and his family had experienced from loud noises from the short-term rental property behind his home located at 7 Thirty-third Avenue and the unlawful entry of his home by a drunken man this past New Years. He has reported the incidents to the police and they have been quick to respond; his problem is that he never hears what happens after the calls. He quoted from Ordinance 2007-4 that amends Section 7-1-15E and states that the following is cause for revoking a business license:

AE. A licensee has engaged in or allowed an unlawful activity or nuisance relating to the business; or licensee has demonstrated an inability or unwillingness to prevent licensee=s tenants from engaging in unlawful activities or creating nuisances related to the business.@

Chief Buckhannon told him that the man who entered his home was arrested and charged and will be tried in March 2008. He assured Mr. Mueller that he will be notified of the court date and will be allowed to testify.

As for the noise offenses, the officers write reports, which are forwarded to the Livability Officer. When asked how many times a complaint had to be filed for a situation to be a nuisance, Chief Buckhannon replied that the second time is enough to be a nuisance. The Chief ensured Mr. Mueller that he would follow up on the calls that had been made related to 7 Thirty-third Avenue and let Mr. Mueller know the results of his inquiry.

4. Old Business

A. Status of Public Safety Building

Administrator Tucker reported that the architects had been in town last week and met with Chief Buckhannon and Chief Graham; she referred the Committee members to the Status Report that had been placed in their boxes. She stated, that if everything continues on schedule, the project will be advertised on March 4 with bid openings on March 25; in the interim there will be a pre-bid conference. The Administrator suggested that there be a Special Meeting of the Public Safety Committee with representatives of Cole+Russell to review the plans before the project goes to bid;

Cole+Russell has stated they can be available February 25 through 27. The Committee agreed that the Cole+Russell staff should meet with the full Council, but they preferred not to have the time constraints that would occur if this meeting were to be before the City Council meeting on February 26. The Committee asked Administrator Tucker to arrange the meeting for Monday, February 25 and to let Cole+Russell determine the best time of day.

B. Continued Discussion of 25th Avenue and Waterway Boulevard

The Administrator reported that Chief Buckhannon had had a conversation with Robert Clark of SC DOT earlier today in response to his letter of January 17. Chief Buckhannon stated that the DOT is satisfied with the barricade as it exists because it prevents people from wandering too far and stepping into the glass or rocks that are there and being injured – the barricade is a safe alternative for the DOT. Administrator Tucker commented that she has not had any additional complaints, so the Committee decided to leave the situation as it is and remove the subject from its agenda.

C. Follow-up on Sea Oats Club Parking Issues

Chief Buckhannon reported that he and Director Pitts had visited the site and determined that the road is sub-standard in size measuring on nineteen (19) feet wide and that on the opposite side of the road there are impediments in the right-of-way, i.e. cut off pilings and bushes. With these circumstances, the only recommendation they could make would be for parallel parking; parallel parking reducing the number of parking spaces from nineteen (19) to eleven (11). Mayor Sottile noted that Sea Oats has impediments in the right-of-way as well; therefore, the recommendation was to leave the parking as is.

D. Update on Triathlon

Administrator Tucker reported that the Triathlon is back on the schedule for April 20, 2008. Last week there was a meeting attended by representatives from Mount Pleasant, Mr. King, Lt. Wright, Chief Buckhannon and Assistant Dziuban; at this meeting, a Mount Pleasant representative stated that Mount Pleasant had made a commitment to this event through 2009. The Isle of Palms made it known that the City did not feel there had been a fair and equitable distribution of proceeds based on the expense that the City of Isle of Palms incurred; the race representative did state that the City would receive a portion of the proceeds in 2008. The Administrator stated that it would be prudent for the City to send a letter to Mount Pleasant indicating that, once the commitment ends, the City of Isle of Palms would prefer for the Triathlon not to involve the City or to be involved in future planning. Two (2) concessions the City got were (1) there will be a cap of 185

participants and, (2) once a participant determines he/she can no longer continue, the number must be relinquished and the participant cannot continue.

E. Update on Consolidated Dispatch Board

The City has gotten the items it requested, i.e. representation on the Board for the island municipalities and for the Isle of Palms to hold the seat first of the three (3) island communities. Chief Buckhannon will represent the City and the first meeting is next week. He informed the Committee that the Board's first task is to hire a director for the facility; once that person is in place, policies and procedures will be developed.

This item will also be removed from the agenda and added only when Chief Buckhannon has a report to make.

F. Update on 41st Avenue Intersection

In Chief Buckhannon's conversation with Robert Clark, SC DOT, today, Mr. Clark informed the Chief that he has assigned an engineer to study the intersection. The Chief also discussed the suggestion that Councilman Loftus made at the last meeting, and DOT will review it to determine if the intersection meets the parameters for making the intersection an "all way stop area" or "three (3) way stop area." Once their reviews are complete, DOT will submit a report to the City.

Administrator Tucker stated that the City will have a reprieve this season because The Villages in Wild Dunes will not have one hundred percent (100%) occupancy; therefore, the City should be in a position to use additional officers at the intersection in peak traffic times like the City has in the past.

5. New Business

A. Capital Budget for FY 2008-2009

Fire Department:

The Fire Department Capital Budget for FY 2008-2009 was presented as follows:

Existing lease pymt on 03 pumper (8 yrs)	31,181
Existing lease pymt on 03 ladder truck (10 yrs)	82,113
Existing lease on ladder/pumper combo (10 yrs)	59,280
Replace 3 older 800 Mhz radios	16,500
Training video library	5,000
Contribution to SIFD training facility improves	2,500
Grant to offset contribution to SIFD training facility	(2,500)
2 nd Stair Chair to be located at Station 2	3,000

Replace rubber boat (1 located at each station)	6,000
Replace 2 Yamaha jet skis purchased 2005	18,000
Four (4) thermal imaging cameras (1 for each truck)	42,000
Replace fire hose and appliances	10,000
Replace bunker gear (full set cost approx \$1300)	13,000
Replace SCBA air packs and cylinders	20,000
RAD-57 medical monitor for carbon monoxide & oxygen	1,500
Replace one (1) laptop	2,000
Safety harness system (50 individual sets)	25,000
Jet dock for jet ski to be located at Breach Inlet	6,000
Two (2) portable hydrants to be mounted on ladder trucks	3,000
Two (2) portable deck guns to be mounted on pumper trucks	8,000
Four (4) K-12 lightweight rescue saws	8,000
Replace cutters, spreader and hose for "jaws of life" equip	11,984
Construction of Public Safety Building	<u>7,551,605</u>
TOTAL	7,923,163

Administrator Tucker noted that the first three (3) items represent existing lease payments on equipment; the fifth is a purchase that needs to be made. There is a possibility that this item will be moved from FY 2009-2010 to FY 2008-2009 to take advantage of price savings. The City has five (5) 800 Mhz analog radios; patches can be purchased at \$1,500 each to make them digital compatible, but municipalities that have taken that route have found that the patches do not work and have ended up buying new radios after buying the patches. For those reasons, Chief Graham suggests replacing the older radios with digital ones. The video library of CDs will provide training on a multitude of topics that are required for firefighters. The next two (2) line items are carried forward from the FY 2007-2008 budget. The stair chair, that moves injured persons who could not otherwise be moved, is needed for Fire Station #2. The Administrator pointed out that there is a request to purchase a rubber boat further down on tonight's agenda; if the Public Safety Committee approves that purchase, the request for a rubber boat will be removed from this budget. The plan is to replace the jet skis at the beginning of the 2009 tourist season when the existing ones will have seen four (4) years of service. Due to the changes in technology and ease of use, there is a request for four (4) thermal imaging cameras – one for each large truck. The primary reason to have one (1) on each truck is that there is no way of knowing which truck will arrive at the scene first. Chief Graham stated that she could get by with getting two (2) in FY 2008-2009 and two (2) in FY 2009-2010. The following three (3) items are on the budget every year for routine replacement. The RAD-57 medical monitor for carbon monoxide and oxygen is a new item; it is similar to the pulse-ox equipment that is placed on the fingertip. There is a need to replace the Lieutenant's laptop. Administrator Tucker asked Chief Graham to demonstrate the safety harness system that is on the next line. This system allows for a firefighter's quick escape from a dangerous situation or to quickly save a partner. Although it is not yet a required piece of equipment, Chief Graham reported that several of the City's firefighters feel so strongly about the harness system that they have offered to purchase their own.

The harness system would become a part of the firefighter's gear, and each will be fitted to the individual firefighter. The need for jet ski dock in the Breach Inlet area has been seen, but a secure location has not yet been acquired, and it is not yet known if the jet skis will be able to maneuver the sand bars at Breach Inlet. The two (2) portable hydrants and two (2) portable deck guns will provide the firefighters will more flexibility as they attack a fire. The portable hydrants can be placed wherever needed and still provide hydrant power, and the portable deck guns operate without manpower. The Fire Department needs four (4) lightweight rescue saws and to replace the cutters, spreader and hose for the "jaws of life" equipment that was purchased in 1991. The final entry on the FY 2008-2009 budget is the construction of the Public Safety Building for \$7,923,163. Administrator Tucker noted that the actual Fire Department FY 2008-2009 Capital Budget is \$177,984 when the lease payments and the Public Safety Building are removed and the number of thermal imaging cameras is reduced to two (2).

Police Department

The Police Department FY 2008-2009 Capital Budget was presented as follows:

Replace 2 patrol cars	46,000
Replace 4WD patrol vehicles	28,000
Enclosed panel trailer for emergency equipment, lighting, cones, etc	2,000
Replace mobile data terminals (2/year)	4,500
Replace body armor (4 or 5 sets/year)	2,500
Replace VHS in-car camera systems w/digital (2 in '09)	6,500
Replace computer servers	<u>5,000</u>
TOTAL	94,500

The Administrator stated that the first two (2) items are the typical planned-for replacement of vehicles, one (1) four (4) wheel drive vehicle and two (2) patrol cars. The enclosed panel trailer will allow the officers to store and protect the equipment, yet have it readily available for deployment. Chief Buckhannon added that the trailer has space for storage and transport of the two (2) generators, emergency lighting and a tent that is used at crime scenes. The mobile data terminals and body armor again represent normal replacement rotation. Administrator Tucker related that the replacement of VHS in-car camera systems to digital systems will be a gradual phase out; Chief Buckhannon commented that it is becoming more and more difficult to purchase the eight (8) hour VHS tapes used in the City's vehicles. The replacement of the computer servers is in preparation for segregating the two (2) networks, General Government and Police, smoothly and with as few interruptions as possible, when the Police Department moves into the Public Safety Building.

In response to Councilman Buckhannon's question on the type of vehicles the Police Department uses, Chief Buckhannon stated that the City is buying Chevrolet Impalas for patrol vehicles and Durango for the four (4) wheel drive vehicle. Mayor Sottile asked

the Chief if he were interested in purchasing all SUVs; Chief Buckhannon replied that SUVs would be good for the investigators, and he could use a couple more for the patrol squads. The problem he has found with the SUVs is that, with the way the side airbags are laid out, it is difficult to get the cages installed, so there is still a need for the patrol car as they are easier for transporting prisoners.

Mayor Sottile asked that all present understand the commitments the City has in the coming year – the beach renourishment project, the Public Safety Building and the possible replacement of the bulkhead. Based on the commitments, he asked Chief Buckhannon and Chief Graham if they thought they could get by one (1) year on a zero based budget, excluding personnel. The Mayor did not ask that either one give him an answer, but he asked that they think on the subject. He added that this is a question that he is going to ask of every department in the City, not just Fire and Police.

Recapping the budget discussions, Administrator Tucker stated that the only change she heard for the Police Department was change the vehicle configuration to one (1) patrol car and two (2) four (4) wheel drive vehicles. For the Fire Department Budget, the decision was to reduce from four (4) to two (2) the number of thermal imaging cameras for FY 2008-2009.

B. Employee Suggestion Referred from Personnel Committee

Councilman Bettelli expressed his feeling that any employee suggestion that affects laws, ordinances or how a department operates relative to laws and ordinances should come from the department head. With that he asked Administrator Tucker to discuss further the suggestion for establishing a curfew for juveniles age 15 and under. The Administrator related her conversation with Chief Buckhannon where they had agreed that the City has a policy already in place to handle this type of circumstance; therefore, they do not see the need to put an ordinance in place at this time. Councilman Bettelli asked that the employee be notified that his suggestion has not been accepted.

C. Discussion of Fencing Around Fire Station #1 Parking Lot

Administrator Tucker reminded the Committee that old fencing has been removed in order to get the trailers in place. The proposed fencing will separate the construction site from paid-for parking; Chief Graham stated that the length would be approximately 485 feet. The Administrator reported that chain link fencing would be the least expensive with a cost just under \$3,700.

MOTION: Mayor Sottile moved to approve an amount not to exceed \$4,000 for the purchase and installation of fencing to separate the paid-for parking

lot from the construction site of Fire Station #1; Councilman Buckhannon seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Administrator explained that there were funds available to cover the expense.

D. Fire Department Funding Requests

1. Model #8618308 Rib 5 Avon Boat for \$3339.75.

Administrator Tucker reminded the Committee that this is the boat that is on the Fire Department Capital Budget and will be removed if this request is approved. This request will go through the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee, and the acquisition will put a boat at each station. The boat purchased in 1991 leaks, but the motor will be re-used on the new one.

MOTION: Mayor Sottile moved to approve the purchase through ATAX for a Model #8618308 Rib 5 Avon Boat for \$3339.75; Councilman Buckhannon seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. Audio-Visual System for Station 2 for \$2,856.00.

The Administrator commented that this would be a permanent fixture for Station #2 and could be funded by the remaining bond proceeds for the fire station.

MOTION: Councilman Buckhannon moved to approve the purchase of an audio-visual system for Fire Station #2 for \$2,856.00; Mayor Sottile seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Additional Drainage Survey Work for Public Safety Complex for \$4,800

This drainage issue was one that was not contemplated when the planning began for the Public Safety Building. When Cole+Russell looked at the existing infrastructure, it was found that the system is at maximum capacity that flows through the outfall behind the "Red and White;" in addition they found that there are some problems with the system and to upgrade that system is a bigger project than diverting the water to another outfall. The better solution is to use the outfall at the end of 11th Avenue, which actually has very little going into it, but it will require some upgrading. This is the cost for additional drainage design work for civil engineers to do to accommodate the stormwater runoff from the new building; it was not included in the original estimates for the construction of the building. If this is not done and the building is constructed, the flooding problems at Front Beach will be exacerbated. The Administrator confirmed that this cost would be part of the project to be included in the bond.

MOTION: Mayor Sottile moved to approve the additional drainage design work for the Public Safety Building at a cost of \$4,800; Council Buckhannon seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

E. Discussion of Signal 30 Award

Administrator Tucker explained that Chief Graham is recommending that the Signal 30 Award be given to the two (2) young men, Dillon Campbell and Jeremy Argabright, who tried to put the fire out at the home of Mary Jean Brickley; they also alerted the resident and called 911. The Committee was in agreement that these young men warranted the recognition for what they have done.

MOTION: Councilman Bettelli moved to recommend that City Council give the Signal 30 Award to Dillon Campbell and Jeremy Argabright; Mayor Sottile seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Highlights of Department Reports

Fire Department – Chief Graham

The highlight of January had been the Brickley fire and the heroism shown by Dillon and Jeremy.

Police Department – Chief Buckhannon

Chief Buckhannon reported that there have been twenty (20) burglaries in the past forty-five (45) days. Earlier in the day yesterday, an officer made a traffic stop on an individual; upon checking into the young person's story, the information was not adding up. Upon being pressed, this person confessed to his involvement in burglaries on the island; in fact, he had been involved in burglaries that very evening. These persons were convinced to contact their accomplices and arrange to meet them. When the meeting took place, there were seven (7) people; three (3) are being charged with 15-18 counts of burglary stealing items like 50" flat panel televisions and a gun. The bulk of the stolen items were either traded for drugs or sold at flea markets. All total in the last three (3) months with forty-five (45) burglaries, nearly one hundred percent (100%) have been cleared.

Chief Buckhannon explained that, with the tourist season is close at hand, a training effort will be made with all personnel within the department to ensure that they understand the laws that were passed last year relative to short-term rentals.

Regarding Front Beach parking and kiosks, Chief Buckhannon confirmed that the covers will come off the parking meters around St. Patrick's Day (March 17), there will be the usual grace period of a couple of weeks and tickets will be issued after April 1.

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7. Miscellaneous

Next meeting date: 5:30 p.m., Monday, March 10, 2008.

8. Adjourn

MOTION: With no further business to come before the Public Safety Committee, Councilman Buckhannon moved to adjourn at 7:15 p.m., Councilman Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland, City Clerk