

**TOWN OF SEABROOK ISLAND**  
**Town Council Meeting of May 27, 2014**

**MINUTES**

After the pledge of allegiance, Mayor Ahearn called the May 27, 2014, Town Council meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. Councilmen Ciancio, Gregg and Romano, Town Administrator Pierce, Town Clerk Allbritton and several guests attended the meeting. The meeting was properly posted and the requirements of the SC Freedom of Information Act were met.

**Minutes** – Mayor Ahearn commended Mayor Pro Tem Ciancio on the outstanding job he had done during March and April while Mayor Ahearn was out recuperating from surgery. The minutes of the Town Council meeting of April 22, 2014, were unanimously approved. Mayor Ahearn recused himself from the vote since he was not present at the meeting.

**Financials** – Mayor Ahearn reported that the total of the Town's fund balances for the year to date is \$2,959,598. Revenue for the month of April was \$65,075.50 and the revenue for the year to date is \$287,833.21. For the year to date, revenue for the Town is \$61,593 over budget and about \$48,000 more than the same period in 2013. Expenditures for April were \$67,014 and were over budget by about \$12,500, but expenditures for the year to date are about \$59,500 under budget. The excess of revenue over expenditures for the year is about \$43,000.

**Citizens/Guests Presentations, Comments:**

- Sue Holloman, Seabrook Island's representative on the St. Johns Fire Commission – Ms. Holloman reported that the St. Johns Fire Commission has hired a consulting firm as a result of the Fire Department's Strategic Planning Committee's decision to take a long term look at the Fire Department's effectiveness on the islands in the area. The consulting firm will be interviewing key people from the Town, Property Owners Association and the Club at Seabrook Island and will be seeking information in order to determine future needs of the Fire Department.
- Calista Woodbridge, a Johns Island resident, reported to Council that Berkeley Electric Cooperative will be switching the analog electric meters to digital meters on Seabrook Island, Kiawah, Wadmalaw and Johns Island in August. Ms. Woodbridge is concerned that the digital meters will be a danger to resident's property, privacy, security and health and sited several sources backing up her concerns. A copy of Ms. Woodbridge report and a list of sources and resources for research were left for Town Council. In response to Ms. Woodbridge's concern toward getting this information out to residents, Mayor Ahearn suggested that she prepare a newspaper article for *The Seabrooker* or *The Island Connection*.
- Ken Gross, a Seabrook Island resident, voiced concern about poor cell phone service in certain areas on Seabrook Island and Mayor Ahearn responded that the Property Owners Association is currently conducting a study on how to improve communication on Seabrook Island. Mr. Gross also expressed an interest in having a place to walk dogs, in addition to the beach, and wanted direction on how to proceed. Councilman Romano responded that he had been asked by Mayor Ahearn to look into the issue. Councilman Romano stated that he thought the best place for such a facility would be the Equestrian Center since this is probably one of the largest areas of open land. Councilman Romano had met with Richard Marion, who is chairman of the Equestrian Committee, but Mr. Marion doubted there would be any interest in using a portion of the Equestrian Center as a dog park. Councilman Romano also stated that everyone he has spoken with seems to be pleased with bringing their dogs to the beach and no one seems to be interested in having a dog park. Mr. Gross indicated that, if property could be found, he would like to know the parameters that would have to be met in order to have a dog park. Councilman Romano stated that he would like to see how much support there would be for such a facility, and Mayor Ahearn responded that we should not only know how many people are interested but how much they would be willing to pay for such a facility. Mayor Ahearn indicated that Council will continue to look into the matter.

**Reports of Standing Committees, Commissions, Boards:**

**Governments Relations** – No Report

**Community Relations** – Councilman Romano reported that he had attended a Gateway Committee meeting recently. The Gateway Committee is a committee made up of Club, Property Owners Association and Town representatives that are investigating the possibility of building a new entrance/gatehouse and also the possibility of building a new Real Estate/Welcome Center on Seabrook Island Real Estate’s existing property. Councilman Romano reported that it seems that any change to the Seabrook Island Real Estate building will be put off for now since the Club would like to concentrate on paying down the Horizon Plan debt. A preliminary design has been done for a new entrance to Seabrook Island that would place the gatehouse farther toward the Equestrian Center. Also, a civil engineer has designed a traffic circle that is being considered for the intersection of Landfall Way and Seabrook Island Parkway. If the new gatehouse is built, the plan for the traffic circle will be given to a traffic engineer for further study. John Wells, chairman of the Planning Commission, stated that a traffic circle was proposed to the Property Owner’s Association about 8 years ago and it would help solve the problems of the left turn from Landfall Way onto Seabrook Island Parkway and the left turn when coming off Seabrook Island and turning onto Landfall Way. Seabrook Island Utility Commission Chairman, Jeff Bostock, commented that it would be very expensive to move the gatehouse because of the underground utilities that are located in that area. Mr. Bostock stated that he has a set of the Horizon Plan prints that show the location of the underground utilities if anyone would like to look at them.

Councilman Romano reported that a meeting of the Property Owners Association Long Range Planning Committee was held recently and the committee has come up with a 2 to 25 year plan. The major items in the plan include:

- (1) Natural Environmental Preservation
- (2) Natural Disaster Preparedness and Response and Recovery Planning
- (3) Build Out Preparedness
- (4) Develop a Plan to Encourage Residents to Upgrade and/or Renew Aging and Deteriorating Homes and Villas
- (5) Finance and Operational Excellence
- (6) Neighboring Community Development
- (7) Changing Governmental Regulations – Local, State & Federal

The plan is being sent to the Property Owners Association’s Board for approval. Councilman Romano stated that the number one item for concern for the majority of the members of the committee is beach restoration.

**Community Relations** – Councilman Gregg reported that the Long Range Planning Committee for the Club met on May 8, and the committee reviewed the statistical analysis of the joint Property Owners Association/Club survey. The results will be presented to the Club’s Communication Committee on June 16 and to the Club Board on June 23.

**Communications/Planning Commission** – John Wells, Chairman of the Planning Commission, reported that, at the last Commission’s last meeting, Dr. Tim Kana gave a brief history of the Beach Management Plan that preceded the Town and what remains in effect up to the present time. Chairman Wells noted that Seabrook Island has lost about 80 to 90 feet of dry beach in the last couple of years as Captain Sams inlet continues to migrate to the west. Dr. Kana indicated that there are no favorable alternatives if the Town cannot relocate the inlet. Structures such as jetties, revetment walls, etc., have been considered but they do not meet the requirements as far as the transportation of sand to the beach at Pelican Watch and Camp St. Christopher. The Planning Commission hopes to have an updated Beach Management Plan to Town Council in September or October for review. The Planning Commission’s summer meetings will be used to bring this plan to fruition.

**Planning & Development** – Councilman Ciancio reported that the contract with East Coast Pyrotechnics for the 2014 fireworks, which will be sponsored by the Town, was included in council packets. The contract is essentially the same as in previous years except that the price has increased at the Town’s request from \$10,000 to \$15,000 . The duration of the fireworks will be the same as last year, but the increase in price will result in a more substantive display. The fireworks display will take place on July 3 with a rain date of July 5. Councilman Ciancio stated that the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee met on May 12 and voted in favor of the Town paying for the fireworks with Accommodations Tax funds if Council chooses to do so. Councilman Ciancio moved that the Town

enter into an agreement with East Coast Pyrotechnics for the 2014 July fireworks in the form as presented to Council with changes thereto as had been suggested by Mayor Ahearn. Councilman Gregg seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous.

Councilman Ciancio reported the following advertising activity took place during the last month:

- Gate passes were arranged for the *City Paper* and *themanual.com*.
- *The Island Connection* ran an article pertaining to the write up that appeared in the *Charlotte Magazine* about Seabrook Island.
- The Town's online ad in *Garden & Gun* resulted in 65 additional visitors to the Town website.

Councilman Ciancio also reported that he had approved invoices to pay the following:

- A 1/2 page ad in the Georgia edition of *Southern Living*
- April display ads on ExploreCharleston.com
- The balance of the Town's Travel Council membership for 2014-15
- A 1/3 page ad in the June/July issue of *Garden & Gun*.

Councilman Ciancio reported that the Town, the Club and the Property Owners Association are currently in the process of updating their websites. The Club and the Property Owners Association have contracted with Club Essentials, which is a software firm that specializes in providing software for private clubs, to aid in updating their sites. Councilman Ciancio stated that Club Essentials agrees that Obviouslee Marketing should do the design specifications for all three entities. The concept is that there will be a single landing page where visitors will land and then go from there to separate pages for the Club, the Town and the Property Owners Association. All three websites will have separate functions and purposes but the style and tone of the sites will be consistent. Changes have been made to the Town's contract with Obviouslee Marketing and the contract has been returned for their attorneys to review.

The Kick It at Bohicket contract has been signed and the check for \$12,500 for the Town's sponsorship has been given to the Merchant's Association.

**Public Safety** – Councilman Gregg moved that the Town approve the Memorandum of Understanding with Camp St. Christopher so that Mayor Ahearn can sign on behalf of the Town. Councilman Romano seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous.

Councilman Gregg stated that the Town has received correspondence from James R. Neal, who is the Director of Charleston County Public Works, stating that the Town should advise him in writing within two weeks of the date of the letter if the Town wishes to opt out of the countywide debris management contract. The Town did not decline to participate and should be receiving a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from Charleston County. The Town and Charleston County will then have an opportunity to iron out whatever differences they may have. The Town will be asked to identify a temporary site of 10-50 acres to deal with debris reduction. The Club offered a temporary storage and reduction site for collection and initial processing of debris generated by a disaster event in the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town and the Club; but, at this point, potential locations for the site has not been identified by the Club and it is uncertain how large the site would be. Councilman Gregg suggested that the Town could possibly approach the owner of the property, with whom Kiawah has a contract for a secondary storage/burn site, about the possibility of leasing from them. Councilman Ciancio asked if anything had been done about establishing a standby debris monitoring contract for the Town and stated that he was under the impression that the Town Attorney had indicated that, since the Town did not receive any bids when they issued an RFP for this service, the Town could approach a company about providing the service. Councilman Gregg stated that the Town could approach the same company, with whom Kiawah has a contract, to see if they are interested.

Disaster Awareness Day, which is an event held jointly between Seabrook Island and Kiawah, will be held on June 12, from 10 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at the Kiawah River Course. There will be panel discussions on topics pertaining to emergency preparedness, along with vendors showing their products and services, raffles and a free buffet lunch. The Disaster Recovery Council will meet for an exercise, which will be held in coordination with the Charleston County Emergency Operations Center's exercise, on June 19.

**Ways & Means** – No Report

**Planning Commission** – No Report

**Board of Zoning Appeals** – No Report

**Reports of Ad Hoc Committees:**

**Accommodations Tax Advisory** –No Report

**Reports of Town Officers:**

**Mayor** – No Report

**Town Administrator** – Town Administrator Pierce reported that if anyone would like to attend the Municipal Association's Annual meeting, he would need to hear from them by Thursday.

**Town Council Members** – See Above

**Utility Commission** – Chairman Jeff Bostock reported that the Seabrook Island Utility Commission (SIUC) has not met yet this month but will meet on May 28<sup>th</sup>. Operations and maintenance for the month of April were normal and the wastewater treatment averages were relatively normal. The five year maintenance contract on the elevated water tank has been signed. The inside of the elevated tank will be sandblasted and coated and the outside of the tank will be painted in the fall since the tank will be out of operation for about three weeks. There was a net loss in April primarily due to low water revenues but year to date financials are in good shape.

**Petitions Received, Referred or Disposed of:** None

**Ordinances for First Reading:** None

**Ordinances for Second Reading:** None

**Miscellaneous Business:** Councilman Ciancio stated that he received an email from a former councilmember, Sam Reed, who had attended a meeting held by the South Carolina Department of Transportation earlier this month. Keith Riddle, Safety Project Engineer, stated in the meeting that the Department of Transportation expects to enter into the right-of-way acquisition phase for the superstreet configuration that will be implemented at Main Road and Highway 17 in another month or so, and the project is scheduled to start construction in the summer of 2015.

**Citizens Comments:** None

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Approved: June 24, 2014

Faye Allbritton, Town Clerk