

Town Council Special Called Meeting Strategic Priorities Workshop

March 10, 2026 – 10:00 AM

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Seabrook Island Town Hall, Council Chambers
2001 Seabrook Island Road
Seabrook Island, SC 29455



AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, AND FOIA STATEMENT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 24, 2026

Town Council Regular Meeting

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION

- 2025 Strategic Priorities Update
- 2026 Strategic Priorities Discussion, Facilitated by Desiree Fragoso (Municipal Association of South Carolina)

OTHER ACTION ITEMS

**Discretionary Grant
Program Guidelines**

- Request to approve Program Guidelines for the Discretionary Grants Program

Legal Services Agreement

- Request to authorize the Mayor to execute a Legal Services Agreement with Rosen Hagood, LLC

EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS

Legal Services Agreement

Pursuant to SC Code § 30-4-70 (a)(2), Town Council may enter into an Executive Session for the purposes of discussing proposed contractual arrangements for legal services.

Please note – Upon returning to open session, the Town Council may take action on items discussed in Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Town Council Regular Meeting

February 24, 2026 – 2:30 PM

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Seabrook Island Town Hall, Council Chambers
2001 Seabrook Island Road
Seabrook Island, SC 29455



MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kleinman called the meeting to order at 2:33 pm.

ROLL CALL

Council Members Present: Bruce Kleinman, Mayor; Darryl May, Raymond Hamilton, Patrick Faulkner, and Thomas Hund

Town Staff Present: Joe Cronin (Town Administrator), Amber Howard (Finance Director), Abby Grooms (Communications Director), Tyler Newman (Planning Director), and Peter Wiggins (Town Clerk).

FOIA STATEMENT

The Town Clerk confirmed that the meeting was advertised in compliance with the requirements of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. Agendas were posted and furnished to news media and all others requesting notification.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 27, 2026

Mr. Hund motioned to approve the minutes of January 27, 2026, seconded by Mr. Faulkner.

Mr. Hund's motion was APPROVED unanimously.

REPORTS OF TOWN BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES

Environment & Wildlife Committee

Mr. Hamilton stated the committee went through prior agenda items that were unfinished from prior years. Mr. Hamilton highlighted the Beach Rules Ordinance, Beachfront and Marshfront Management Plans, and Bobcat Guardian Program that need addressed. He continued by stating the inlet relocation is also a priority for the committee. He stated the committee wanted to work with SIPOA on education programs, as the inlet relocation is vital for the beach on Seabrook Island. He continued by stating the committee discussed the conservancy fund. He stated the committee wanted to start researching grant programs and the feasibility of using funds for projects behind the SIPOA security gate.

Public Safety Committee

Mr. May stated the committee met on February 17. He stated the committee discussed past agenda items and potential agenda items

**Discretionary Grants
Committee**

for 2026. Mr. May highlighted the Beach Rules Ordinance and awarding a contract for Beach Patrol Services.

Mr. Faulkner stated his committee met on February 18. He stated the committee recommended combing the two prior grant programs into one. He stated that there was an action item on the agenda which was to adopt the updated grant program guidelines.

Mr. Faulkner motioned to adopt the updated Discretionary Grants Program Guidelines.

Mr. Hund stated the guidelines were simple and easy to understand for potential applicants. He stated he was pleased to see this in the guidelines.

Mr. Hamilton asked why the committee is recommending raising the maximum allowed award to \$5,000.00 from \$2,500.00.

Mr. Faulkner stated some applicants were applying to both the Promotions Grant Program and the Conservation Program, and further, the committee did not want to penalize applicants who had legitimate projects that were eligible for funding under both programs.

Mr. Hamilton asked if the guidelines should reinstitute a minimum allowable award.

Mr. Faulkner stated there was some conversation about removing the minimum award. He stated there was an applicant in 2025 that was awarded a small, Promotions Grant amount in order to close out the Promotions Grant Program for FY 2025. He stated that considering this small amount was allowed to be awarded, the committee chose to remove the minimum allowable amount.

Mr. Hamilton stated it was his opinion that if an applicant chose not to attend the committee meeting at which the application is discussed, it should be an automatic denial.

Mr. Faulkner stated the committee wanted to be a little softer with potential applicants. He stated this was why the language found in the guidelines doesn't guarantee a denial.

Mr. Hamilton motioned to insert language in the guidelines guaranteeing denial of a grant application if a representative from the applying entity is not present at both the committee and council meeting at which their application is heard, seconded by Mayor Kleinman.

Mr. May asked if Mr. Hamilton would entertain an amendment to his motion that would allow an application to be heard if there is an extraordinary circumstance that didn't allow an applicant to appear at either the committee or council meeting.

Mr. Hamilton stated that he would allow his amendment to be modified, however he stated that he was concerned about what reasons might be defined as extraordinary circumstance.

Mr. May stated that ultimately it would be up to Mr. Faulkner and his committee to apply this issue appropriately, but that the council could exert pressure on applicants if attendance becomes a problem again.

Mr. Hamilton's motion was APPROVED unanimously.

Mayor Kleinman stated he couldn't figure out what the intent was of the added Evaluation Criteria.

Mayor Kleinman motioned to delete the Evaluation Criteria from the guidelines, seconded by Mr. May.

Mr. Faulkner stated the criteria was added in good faith. He stated there was additional language defining each criteria that was recommended deleted by the committee. He continued by stating that he didn't think deleting the section would be detrimental to the purpose of the overall guidelines. He stated it was the overall decision of the committee to leave the criteria as is, minus the added definitions.

Mr. Hund stated his wish was to leave the criteria in the guidelines as it helps the applicant with their post-grant presentation.

Mr. May asked from where the redline additions came.

Mr. Faulkner stated the additions are added language that was not in the FY 2025 guidelines. He further stated the additional, proposed language was removed for the sake of simplicity.

Mr. Kleinman stated his understanding of what was being proposed featured some staff additions that the committee ultimately decided needed to be removed. He continued by stating the application form, which is already a two-page document, will not continue to be a two-page document if the grant guidelines become too cumbersome. Mayor Kleinman continued that several sections of the current guidelines are reactions to experiences from prior years, but the evaluation criteria didn't seem to be one of them.

Mayor Kleinman's motion was APPROVED with four yeas and one nay, as follows:

<i>Mr. Faulkner</i>	<i>nay</i>
<i>Mr. Hamilton</i>	<i>yea</i>
<i>Mr. Hund</i>	<i>yea</i>
<i>Mr. May</i>	<i>yea</i>
<i>Mayor Kleinman</i>	<i>yea</i>

Mayor Kleinman stated he wished to discuss the town providing grants to organizations whose beneficiaries are not residents of Seabrook Island. He stated there are several examples of these groups that have applied. He stated the guidelines seem to tighten the Town's ability to award grants to the groups. He stated his opinion was that the Town needs to be a good neighbor and if the Town chooses not to award grants to these types of groups, it doesn't feel like we are good neighbors.

Mr. May stated he recalled two organizations that are similar to the situation being discussed. He stated he was not in favor of a bird conservation group that applied for funding last year, and even though they were a good organization, they had nothing to do with Seabrook Island. He stated he also remembered the organization that Mayor Kleinman referred to. He recalled he was in favor of their grant application due to residents from Seabrook Island volunteering for that group, as well as individuals who work on Seabrook Island availing themselves of the group's services. He stated he wasn't sure what the current guidelines do to refine that nexus. He stated it was his opinion that there needed to be a nexus, but that the guidelines should not require funds to be spent on Seabrook Island.

Mayor Kleinman stated the language to which he is concerned was under "Project Eligibility" that gives preference to projects that occur within the Town's corporate limits, and further, that projects may be considered if they provide a clear and demonstrable benefit to the Town, its residents, visitors, or businesses. He stated the guidelines have never had that language before, and thinking about the organizations that have been discussed, he stated he wasn't sure how it could be argued that a clear a demonstrable benefit has been achieved by some prior applicants. He stated that he would rather see the language amended to say that a clear and demonstrable benefit be provided to the community.

Mr. Hamilton asked what was meant by the word "community".

Mayor Kleinman stated that was a fair question. He stated that the Town had not had an applicant that was so remote that they weren't from at least Johns Island, and further, that those groups who were

from Johns Island employed Seabrook Island volunteers. He stated it was not his opinion that the Town should support every charity on Johns Island, but he did want to support charities that employ Seabrook Island volunteers.

Mr. Cronin stated that the first sentence of the language to which Mayor Kleinman is objecting, is pulled from the existing Conservation and Promotions Grant Guidelines that require projects have a benefit to, and within the Town. He stated both program guidelines already establish a preference to award funding to projects that are affecting the Town.

Mayor Kleinman stated this language was added in 2025 once this issue came up in 2024. He stated the guidelines also have language that allow projects that promote community wellness, cultural and historical awareness, economic development, citizen participation, satisfaction, and sense of place to be considered. He stated his concern is that the next time a similar organization applies for grant funding, the Town is effectively tying their hands.

Mr. Cronin asked Mayor Kleinman if his concerns are addressed in the eligibility language that states grant funding may be awarded for projects that “enhance citizen participation, satisfaction, or sense of place”.

Mr. May stated this language does not help the situation that much, considering the final sentence deals with what the locale restrictions are. Mr. May continued by stating the medical clinic that applied for funding in 2025 provided a benefit to the town and businesses through their services that are used by employees of Seabrook Island businesses. He stated it was his opinion that the preference given to projects occurring within the Town’s corporate limits is not the be all and end all, and the council should include language making it clear that projects can occur outside the corporate limits of Seabrook Island.

Mayor Kleinman asked the council if the paragraph being discussed needed to stay in the guidelines.

Mr. May stated that the guidelines should establish the council’s preference that groups or projects have a connection to Seabrook Island.

Mr. Hamilton stated that he liked the language giving preference to projects within Seabrook Island, but stated he was fine with the last sentence reading, “Projects outside the Town limits may be considered”.

Mr. Faulkner stated that he preferred to leave the language as is. He stated that if the sentence is amended as suggested by Mr. Hamilton, it could open the grant program to any organization in the world.

Mr. May stated the proposed language was a little too open ended for his tastes. He stated he could propose an amendment to have the last sentence read, "Projects outside the Town may be considered provided they are a benefit to the Town, its residents, visitors, or business and their employees".

Mr. McQuillin stated there still must be a public benefit anytime an organization is spending public funds. He reminded the council that public funds cannot be used to benefit a private business.

Mayor Kleinman stated that the guidelines already establish that eligible projects must promote community and cultural awareness. He continued by stating that he didn't think amending these guidelines opens the door to misusing public funds.

Mr. McQuillin stated that as the council debates this topic, they should keep in the back of their minds the requirement that public funds be used to promote a public benefit.

Mr. Hund stated this is only a pathway for an organization to get public funding. Regardless of some parts of the guidelines saying a group is eligible and some parts of the guidelines saying a group is not eligible, the group should still fill out an application.

Mayor Kleinman asked the council if they were running Backpack Buddies, after reading the guidelines, would you think the group is eligible. He stated the group has been rejected in the past and it was his opinion that that was a bad decision.

Mr. Hund stated it was his opinion that the current guidelines would not exclude a group like Backpack Buddies. Further, he asked if applications are denied immediately because of a group not being eligible.

Mr. Wiggins stated that if the Town receives an application, it will be heard by the committee. He stated it was not the practice of staff to reject an application.

Mayor Kleinman stated that an application would not be denied until it is heard by the committee and voted upon. He stated an application from Backpack Buddies, based on prior guidelines requiring beneficiaries to be Seabrookers, was denied. He continued by stating the language of the guidelines wasn't broad enough to convince the council it was an eligible organization, despite Backpack Buddies being

a meaningful and charitable organization that many Seabrookers volunteer many hours working.

Mr. May asked if this group did its work within the Town.

Mayor Kleinman stated the work is done at Oyster Catcher.

Mr. May asked the council to assume the group was working jointly with another group on Kiawah for a similar purpose. He stated it was his belief that the group would still be eligible because it provides a psychological benefit to Seabrookers who volunteer for the organization. He stated that the language should still be made clear that the Town will not entertain applications from groups as far away as Kansas, due to Seabrookers having no connection to Kansas.

Mayor Kleinman stated he didn't think he was hearing anyone say they didn't think a charitable organization whose beneficiaries happen to be on Johns Island, but whose volunteers and/or funders are Seabrookers, shouldn't be eligible.

Mr. Cronin stated in the first sentence of the paragraph being discussed, "shall" could be replaced with "may", and then upon consideration of an application, the council and committee can make their own judgements related to if an organization is eligible.

Mr. May stated he wasn't sure it was the greatest solution, and council should just proceed to a vote. He stated that if in the future, someone creates better language, the guidelines could be revisited. He stated he thought the groups at issue could already be deemed eligible due to the language allowing groups that enhance the citizen participation and satisfaction of Seabrookers.

Mayor Kleinman motion to defer consideration of the Discretionary Grant Program Guidelines to the March 10, Special Called Town Council meeting, seconded by Mr. May.

Mr. Faulkner stated that, as part of Mayor Kleinman's motion, he would like to see the grant application to ensure the language is to the council and committee's satisfaction.

Mr. Cronin stated the application will be drafted after the guidelines are approved. He stated he would draft an application based on the current guidelines.

Mayor Kleinman stated he could direct staff to draft the final application and present it at the March meeting of the Discretionary Grants Committee.

Mr. Faulkner stated he wanted to ensure that the application presented at the March meeting is consistent with the approved grant guidelines, and is not an expanded language application that creates similar issues to the issues currently being discussed.

Mr. Cronin stated that review could be done at the March meeting of the Discretionary Grants Committee, but that staff creations like applications are not something that is reviewed by committees. However, Mr. Cronin stated that if the committee would like to review the application at their March meeting, he had no objections.

Mayor Kleinman stated that historically, applications are drafted by staff in reliance on already approved guidelines. He stated if the process is going to change as has been discussed, we might be building in another step that is not necessary.

Mr. May stated that the committee could still review the application, but that they would not formally approve the form in keeping consistent with prior processes.

Mayor Kleinman's motion was APPROVED unanimously.

Community Facilities & Infrastructure Committee

Mr. Hund stated the committee met on February 19. He stated the committee discussed the Seabrook Island Road Project and was also updated on permits the Town is already in possession of and permits that are still to come. He stated the committee also discussed what is an immediate need for a new Town Hall. He stated the committee discussed different ways the project could be moved forward. He stated the committee discussed space needs and site requirements. He continued by stating the committee discussed bringing in a design professional to assist the Town with compiling requirements, needs, and space uses. He informed council the committee chose to move forward with an informal solicitation process to consider who might be the right consultant for the Town. He stated that once the needs assessment is completed and a site identified, the Town could move forward with conceptual designs.

REPORTS OF TOWN OFFICERS AND STAFF

Mayor

Mayor Kleinman stated the preliminary list of projects for the proposed sales tax referendum did not include Seabrook Island Road. He stated that Seabrookers pay sales tax at a greater per capita share than other municipalities, and even though the project list contains \$300 million for projects along the Battery and \$400 million for Mt. Pleasant projects, the Town has received \$0 for projects on Seabrook Island. He informed the council that another public comment period is coming and the Town will be working with other entities on Seabrook Island to create a plan to gather public support for Seabrook Island Road.

Mayor Kleinman stated that an original version of the agenda for the current meeting included first reading of Ordinance 2026-01, an ordinance amending the Development Standards Ordinance (DSO). He stated he removed this item from the agenda in order to ensure transparency and afford a chance for Seabrookers to participate in this process. He stated the Planning Commission has already met, revised the ordinance, and made their recommendation to the council. He stated a public hearing will be held on March 24, with first reading on March 31, and second reading on April 28. Mayor Kleinman closed by stating that these amendments establish a Planned Development Zoning District.

Mr. May encouraged the Town to communicate a summary of the proposed ordinance to Seabrookers via the Town's usual communications methods.

Town Administrator

Mr. Cronin reminded the council that their Strategic Priorities Workshop is scheduled for March 10, at 10:00 am.

Finance Director

Ms. Howard stated she distributed the December 2025 financials on February 17. She stated she is still doing some work to update the new budget codes. She stated as soon as that is complete, she will complete the financials from January 2026.

Planning Director

Mr. Newman provided a report on the Town's zoning and code enforcement activities since the January council meeting.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Bill Reeside

Mr. Reeside of Edisto Beach informed the council that he intends to be a candidate for the United States House of Representatives, representing the 1st District of South Carolina. He thanked the Mayor and Town Clerk for affording him the opportunity to speak.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Beach Patrol Services RFP

Mr. May motioned to enter into an Executive Session for the purposes of discussing contractual arrangements related to the Town's Beach Patrol Services contract, seconded by Mr. Hund.

Mr. May's motion was APPROVED unanimously.

Town Council entered into an Executive Session at 4:12 pm.

Mr. Faulkner motioned to exit Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Hund.

Mr. Faulkner's motion was APPROVED unanimously.

Town Council exited Executive Session at 4:43 pm.

Mr. May motioned to authorize the Mayor to enter into a contract with Barrier Island Ocean Rescue as recommended by the Public Safety Committee for Beach Patrol Services from April through September, seconded by Mr. Hund.

Mr. May's motion was APPROVED unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the council, Mayor Kleinman declared the meeting adjourned at 4:43 pm.

Peter D. Wiggins II, MPA
Town Clerk

TOWN OF SEABROOK ISLAND

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-02

ADOPTED FEBRUARY 25, 2025

**A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE TOWN OF SEABROOK ISLAND'S
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2025**

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Town of Seabrook Island recognize the value of prioritizing its strategic goals and objectives in order to articulate a shared vision for future actions and to ensure the most efficient and effective use of limited public resources; and

WHEREAS, on February 18, 2025, the Mayor and Council of the Town of Seabrook Island held a strategic planning workshop to identify and rank the town's strategic priorities for 2025; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the Town of Seabrook Island believe it is fitting and proper to formalize the results of this workshop by adopting and publishing its Strategic Priorities for 2025;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council for the Town of Seabrook Island hereby adopts the "Strategic Priorities for 2025," a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A and incorporated by reference as if set forth fully herein;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the items contained within the attached "Strategic Priorities for 2025" shall be considered as a guide for future actions which may be undertaken by the Mayor and Council in the furtherance of the town's strategic goals and objectives;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Administrator is hereby directed to post the "Strategic Priorities for 2025" on the town's website, to otherwise disseminate the Strategic Priorities as he deems appropriate, and to make copies of the same available to the public upon request.

SIGNED AND SEALED this 3RD day of MARCH, 2025, having been duly adopted by the Town Council for the Town of Seabrook Island on the 25TH day of FEBRUARY.

Signed:



Bruce Kleinman, Mayor

Witness:



Peter Wiggins II, Town Clerk

EXHIBIT A

Town of Seabrook Island Strategic Priorities for 2025

CRITICAL PRIORITIES ("MUST DO")

- (1) **Seabrook Island Road:** Address drainage, elevation, flooding, and pavement conditions along the town-maintained portion of Seabrook Island Road; identify and pursue funding source(s) for planned road and drainage improvements; coordinate planned improvements with neighboring property owners such as Bohicket Marina, MUSC, Seafields, SIPOA, and the Seabrook Island Club; address drainage issues along the inbound and outbound pathways adjacent to Seabrook Island Road; continue efforts to maintain and beautify Seabrook Island Road and the adjacent right-of-way.

Assigned To: Town Administrator, Buildings & Grounds Manager

- (2) **Zoning & Code Enforcement:** Complete a review of the town's Development Standards Ordinance (DSO); consider amendments to simplify zoning requirements and review procedures; coordinate with SIPOA to better align development requirements, review procedures and code enforcement activities; develop and adopt a formal annexation policy.

Assigned To: Planning Commission, Town Administrator, Zoning Administrator/Chief Code Enforcement Officer, License & Permit Official, Short-Term Rental Compliance Manager, Code Enforcement Officer(s), Town Attorney

- (3) **Town Hall:** Assess current and future town staffing needs; determine long-term capital needs for additional office space, storage capacity, and other public facilities; evaluate and pursue options for the future expansion or replacement of town hall; identify and pursue funding source(s) for future expansion or replacement of town hall.

Assigned To: Town Administrator, Buildings & Grounds Manager, Zoning Administrator/Chief Code Enforcement Officer

SIGNIFICANT PRIORITIES ("SHOULD DO")

- (4) **Regional Cooperation:** Improve relationships with the Town of Kiawah Island and Charleston County; coordinate with neighboring jurisdictions on opportunities for regional planning, enhanced coordination of zoning and development regulations, and recognition of the county's urban growth boundary.

Assigned To: Town Administrator, Zoning Administrator/Chief Code Enforcement Officer, Communications & Events Manager

- (5) **Comprehensive Emergency Plan (CEP):** Complete a comprehensive review and re-write of the town's CEP; ensure the town's CEP is consistent with the National Incident Management

System (NIMS) and FEMA Comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Guide (CPG); simplify planning documents for ease-of-use in emergency situations; update the town's incident command structure.

Assigned To: Public Safety Committee, Town Administrator, all staff members assigned a role under the town's Incident Command System (ICS)

- (6) **Council Terms:** Consider adoption of an ordinance to transition Town Council from two-year terms to four-year staggered terms.

Assigned To: Town Administrator, Town Attorney

- (7) **Marshfront Management Plan (MMP):** Complete and adopt a MMP; update the town's zoning and development regulations to implement the recommendations of the MMP; coordinate with community stakeholders to implement the recommendations of the MMP.

Assigned To: Environment & Wildlife Committee, Planning Commission, Town Administrator, Zoning Administrator/Chief Code Enforcement Officer, Communication & Events Manager

MODERATE PRIORITIES ("COULD DO")

- (8) **Beach Maintenance:** Consider funding source(s) to facilitate town participation in future beach maintenance projects; coordinate with SIPOA on permitting activities related to the planned relocation of Captain Sams Inlet.

Assigned To: Environment & Wildlife Committee, Town Administrator, Town Attorney

- (9) **Beach Rules & Signage:** Complete a comprehensive review of the town's existing beach rules (Chapter 32); consider possible amendments to the town's existing beach rules, as needed; design and install new signage at beach access points and other targeted areas along the beach to inform beachgoers of the town's beach rules.

Assigned To: Environment & Wildlife Committee, Town Administrator, Buildings & Grounds Manager, Zoning Administrator/Chief Code Enforcement Officer, Code Enforcement Officer(s), Beach Patrol

- (10) **Communications:** Continue to diversify and enhance the town's communication capabilities; develop and implement additional tools to communicate news, emergency alerts, and other information with the public; ensure that communication tools and strategies are accessible to all demographics; improve coordination with public safety agencies.

Assigned To: Community Promotions & Engagement Committee, Public Safety Committee, Town Administrator, Communication & Events Manager

- (11) **Property Maintenance:** Assess aging residential and commercial structures; consider

adoption of a property maintenance ordinance.

Assigned To: Town Administrator, Zoning Administrator/Chief Code Enforcement Officer, Code Enforcement Officer(s)



DISCRETIONARY GRANTS PROGRAM

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Adopted February 24, 2026 [Anticipated]

Note: ~~Additions~~ ~~Deletions~~

PURPOSE

The Discretionary Grants Program is intended to support eligible organizations in carrying out Projects that advance a legitimate public purpose and provide a direct and demonstrable benefit to the Town of Seabrook Island (the "Town"), including, but not limited to, its residents, property owners, visitors, and/or businesses. Grant funds shall be used to promote community wellness, civic engagement, cultural and historical awareness, economic vitality, environmental stewardship, and wildlife conservation in a manner consistent with applicable law, Town policy, and sound fiscal accountability.

As used herein, the term "Project" means any program, ~~project,~~ activity, initiative, or undertaking for which funding from the Discretionary Grants Program is requested or awarded.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Discretionary Grants may be awarded by the Town to organizations that:

- ~~Are recognized as tax-exempt under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code; including:~~
- ~~Section 501(c)(3) = Charitable, religious, educational, and scientific organizations;~~
- ~~Section 501(c)(4) = Social welfare organizations;~~
- ~~Section 501(c)(6) = Business leagues and chambers of commerce;~~
- ~~Section 501(c)(7) = Social and recreational clubs;~~
- ~~Section 501(c)(8) and (10) = Fraternal beneficiary societies, and~~
- ~~Section 501(c)(19) = Veterans' organizations;~~
- Are established for benevolent, social welfare, scientific, educational, environmental, philanthropic, humane, patriotic, public health, civic, or other eleemosynary purposes, or for the benefit of public safety personnel;
- Employ a charitable purpose or appeal as the basis for solicitation; or
- Are units of local government created or authorized by the State of South Carolina, including counties, municipalities, school districts, and special purpose districts.

Religious organizations MAY be eligible for grant funding, provided the proposed Project serves a secular (non-religious) public purpose.

Individuals and organizations affiliated with a national, state, or local political party or candidate are NOT eligible for grant funding.

Eligible organizations must allow open membership to all interested persons.

Pursuant to the South Carolina Solicitation of Charitable Funds Act (S.C. Code Ann. Title 33, Chapter 56), charitable organizations that solicit contributions or have contributions solicited on their behalf must register annually with the South Carolina Secretary of State unless exempt. Applicants must provide documentation of their current registration or exemption status with their grant application. This requirement shall not apply when the applicant is a unit of local government.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Discretionary Grants may be awarded to eligible organizations to support any lawful Project that:

- Promotes community wellness, cultural or historical awareness, or economic development;
- Enhances citizen participation, satisfaction, or sense of place;
- Preserves or protects wildlife and wildlife habitat;
- Supports environmental or wildlife conservation efforts; or
- Increases public knowledge of environmental, wildlife, or community issues affecting the Town.

Preference shall be given to Projects occurring within the Town's corporate limits. Projects outside the Town limits may be considered if they provide a clear and demonstrable benefit to the Town or its residents, visitors, and/or businesses.

All grant funds must advance a legitimate public purpose.

Unless expressly authorized by Town Council, grant funds shall NOT be used for:

- **Cash, gift cards, and other items of monetary value**~~Prizes, awards, trophies, gift cards, raffles, or giveaways~~, including cash or items of monetary value distributed to participants or attendees, provided, non-cash awards, trophies, and other giveaways of nominal value may be permitted;
- **Sub-grants or pass-through funding**, including redistribution of grant funds to other organizations, individuals, or entities not directly approved by the Town;
- **Activities that violate federal, state, or local laws**, regulations, ordinances, or other Town policies;
- **Political activities**, including support of political parties, candidates, campaigns, or ballot initiatives;

- **Religious instruction, worship services, or proselytizing**, ~~provided~~, however, faith-based organizations may receive funding for Projects serving a secular public purpose;
- **Operating deficits or debt repayment**, including payment of past-due bills, loans, or financial obligations;
- ~~**Fundraising activities or events**, including costs associated with soliciting donations or hosting fundraising campaigns;~~
- **Alcoholic beverages**, except as expressly approved as part of a permitted community event in compliance with applicable law;
- **Personal expenses**, including stipends, honoraria, or compensation not directly related to the approved Project or not supported by appropriate documentation;
- ~~**Capital improvements or property acquisition**, including land purchases or permanent structural improvements;~~
- **Travel expenses** not directly related to Project implementation within, or providing a direct benefit to, the Town;
- **Expenses incurred prior to grant approval;**
- **Administrative overhead** not reasonably allocable to the approved Project, including general office expenses unrelated to the Project; or
- **Any other use inconsistent with the approved grant application or the terms and conditions of the award.**

Town Council reserves the right to amend or limit eligibility criteria at any time.

GRANT AWARDS

~~Grant awards shall range from **\$250.00 (minimum)** to The maximum grant award shall be **\$5,000.00 (maximum)** per organization per calendar year.~~

The total funding available each calendar year shall not exceed the amount appropriated by Town Council in the annual budget ordinance. The Town is not obligated to award all available funds.

Organizations may submit multiple applications; however, the total amount awarded to any organization shall not exceed \$5,000.00 in a calendar year.

APPLICATION

Applications must be submitted to the Town Finance Director during the calendar year in which funds are proposed to be expended. Unless otherwise authorized, applicants shall use the standard application form prescribed by the Town Administrator.

Application acceptance periods, review schedules, and submission deadlines shall be established annually by the Town Administrator and publicly announced by the Town. Applications shall be accepted until the earlier of October 1st or until all available funds for the calendar year have been committed.

Completed applications shall be submitted to: Town of Seabrook Island
Attn: Finance Director
2001 Seabrook Island Road
Seabrook Island, SC 29455

REVIEW PROCEDURES

The Town Finance Director shall review all grant applications for completeness. Complete applications shall be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Town’s Discretionary Grants Committee (the “Committee”).

The Committee shall review each application and provide a recommendation to Town Council. In performing these functions, the Committee shall have the authority to:

- Establish procedures for reviewing applications;
- Request additional information from applicants; and
- Recommend modifications necessary to ensure applications conform to grant criteria.

The Committee shall provide a recommendation to approve (in whole or in part) or deny each request.

Once the Committee has provided a recommendation, the application shall be placed on the agenda for the next Town Council meeting, at which time Town Council shall review the request and render a final decision. Town Council retains final authority to approve or deny all grant applications.

A representative of the applicant must attend both the Committee meeting and Town Council meeting (either in person or virtually) at which the application will be considered. Failure to attend may result in deferral or denial.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

In reviewing grant applications, the Committee and Town Council shall consider the following criteria:

- ~~Public Benefit: The extent to which the Project provides a direct and demonstrable benefit to the Town, its residents, visitors, and/or businesses:~~
- ~~Alignment with Program Purpose: The degree to which the proposal advances one or more of the program’s stated purposes, including community wellness, cultural and historical awareness, economic development, citizen engagement, environmental stewardship, and wildlife conservation:~~
-

- ~~Organizational Capacity: The applicant's demonstrated ability to successfully implement the Project, including relevant experience, staffing, partnerships, and financial stability.~~
-
- ~~Project Feasibility and Work Plan: The clarity, completeness, and reasonableness of the proposed scope of work, timeline, activities, and methods for achieving stated objectives.~~
-
- ~~Budget and Cost Effectiveness: The reasonableness of the proposed budget and the extent to which grant funds will be used efficiently, including leveraging other funding sources or in-kind contributions when applicable.~~
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- ~~Measurable Outcomes: The extent to which the application identifies clear goals, performance measures, or outcomes that can be used to evaluate Project success.~~
-
- ~~Community Impact and Engagement: The anticipated level of participation, collaboration, or engagement with the Seabrook Island community.~~
-
- ~~Project Sustainability/Long-Term Impact: The potential for the Project to achieve long-term impact or continue beyond the grant period.; and~~
-
- ~~Compliance and Accountability: The applicant's history of compliance with prior Town grant requirements, if applicable, including timely reporting and proper use of funds.~~

GRANT AGREEMENT

Upon approval of a grant award by Town Council, each recipient must execute a written grant agreement with the Town prior to the disbursement of any grant funds.

The grant agreement shall set forth the terms and conditions governing the use of grant funds and shall include, at a minimum, the following:

- **Grant Award Amount:** The total amount of funds awarded to the recipient organization.
- **Project Description and Scope of Work:** A summary of the approved Project, including key objectives, deliverables, and timelines.
- **Authorized Use of Funds:** The specific costs and budget categories for which grant funds may be expended, consistent with the approved application and applicable Town policies.
- **Disbursement Procedures:** The process for requesting disbursement of grant funds, including required documentation and applicable deadlines.
- **Reporting Requirements:** Required financial documentation, performance measures, and final reporting obligations.
- **Compliance Requirements:** An obligation to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, Town ordinances, and program guidelines.
- **Audit and Recordkeeping Provisions:** Requirements for maintaining financial records and making such records available to the Town for review or audit upon request.

- **Indemnification and Liability Provisions:** Terms addressing responsibility for claims, damages, or losses arising from the Project.
- **Termination and Repayment Provisions:** Conditions under which the Town may suspend or terminate the agreement and require repayment of grant funds, including misuse of funds or failure to comply with agreement terms.
- **General Terms and Conditions:** Standard contractual provisions as determined by the Town, which may include insurance requirements, non-discrimination provisions, assignment restrictions, and governing law.

No grant funds shall be disbursed by the Town unless the grant agreement has been fully executed by the Mayor and the authorized representative(s) of the recipient.

Failure to execute a grant agreement within 30 days of the award date shall result in forfeiture of the grant funds, unless an extension is approved by vote of Town Council.

DELIVERY OF GRANT FUNDS

Grant recipients shall submit a written request for disbursement to the Town Finance Director. Disbursement requests shall be accompanied by all required documentation, including invoices and/or paid receipts demonstrating the commitment or expenditure of awarded grant funds.

Disbursement requests must be received no later than December 15th of the calendar year in which the grant funds were awarded. Failure to submit a disbursement request by this date may result in forfeiture of any unpaid grant funds.

All disbursement requests shall be reviewed and approved by the Town Administrator prior to payment. Upon approval, the Town Finance Director shall issue payment to the grant recipient.

Any grant funds that remain uncommitted or unexpended at the end of the calendar year shall revert to the Town's General Fund.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Grant recipients shall submit a ~~detailed~~ written report describing the purpose(s) for which Town funds were expended and the overall impact of the Project.

The report shall be submitted to the Town Administrator on or before December 31st of the applicable calendar year, on a form provided by the Town Administrator.

At a minimum, the report shall include:

- A brief summary of the Project;
- A detailed accounting of the expenditure of Town funds; and
- A description of the outcomes achieved and the public benefits provided.

~~Failure to submit the required report in a timely manner may result in enforcement actions, including, but not limited to, the withholding of future funding, the requirement to repay funds, or disqualification from future Town grant programs. The Town Administrator shall distribute copies of all reports to members of the Committee and Town Council as soon as practicable after the conclusion of the calendar year.~~