

Public Safety Committee

May 21, 2024 @ 10:00 AM

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



MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kortvelesy called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

ROLL CALL

Committee Members Present: Dan Kortvelesy, Chairman; Committee Members Ed Maher, John Kinne, and Virginia "Lark" Asbelle

Town Staff Present: Joe Cronin (Town Administrator), Abigail Grooms (Communication & Events Manager)

FOIA STATEMENT

Mr. Cronin confirmed that the meeting was advertised in compliance with the requirements of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. The following press was notified of the meeting by email: Post & Courier, Island Connection, WCBD (News 2), WCIV (ABC News 4), and WCSC (Live 5 News). A copy of the meeting agenda was also posted on the town website and on the bulletin board at the entrance to Town Hall.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Maher motioned to approve the minutes of April 16 seconded by Mr. Kinne. The motion was approved unanimously.

The motion passed UNANIMOUSLY.

NEW BUSINESS

Resignation of Frank Farfonne

Mr. Kortvelesy stated to the committee that Frank Farfonne resigned from the Public Safety Committee. Committee members thanked Mr. Farfonne for his years of service to the committee as well as Seabrook Island.

Ms. Grooms stated that the opening on the committee was posted to the Town's website and will be open through the end of May. Committee members encouraged everyone who feels that they could be of service to the committee to apply. Mr. Kortvelesy hoped that Town Council could appoint a new member to the committee by the end of June. There was a brief discussion on how many members make up the Public Safety Committee. Mr. Cronin stated that there is one place reserved for a member of Town Council and four appointments.

Disaster Recovery Council (DRC)

Mr. Kortvelesy confirmed the DRC will meet on June 18, 2024. Various agencies will be participating, including Berkeley Electric Cooperative, Charleston County Emergency Management, the Charleston County Sheriff's Office, and St. John's Fire. Ms. Asbelle commented on what a valuable asset the DRC has been.

Comprehensive
Emergency Plan

Mr. Kortvelesy stated once the Debris Management contract is signed, the committee can turn its attention to the comprehensive plan. There was a discussion related to the realities of debris removal after a major hurricane. Mr. Kortvelesy stated he was in contact with Charleston County Public Works about where debris might go in the event that the Bees Ferry Landfill was unable to accept debris. Public Works is working to identify other sites for debris removal.

Ms. Asbelle asked if the comprehensive plan was posted on the Town's website. Mr. Cronin stated it was. There are other versions with logins and usernames that staff and committee members can access if needed. Mr. Cronin stated the current plan is fifteen years old. He stated there will be a need to rewrite the plan in the near future to update risk assessments and delete outdated information.

Disaster Awareness
Day

Communications and Events Manager, Abigail Grooms reminded the committee that Disaster Awareness Day will be May 31, beginning at 9:30 am. The event is being held on Kiawah Island. Mr. Kortvelesy thanked Ms. Grooms for her efforts and encouraged residents to attend.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Kortvelesy stated there was a need for an Executive Session to discuss contractual matters related to the Debris Management Services contract.

Mr. Maher motioned to approve the Executive Session seconded by Ms. Asbelle. The motion was approved.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

The Public Safety committee entered into Executive Session at 10:34 am.

The committee came out of the Executive Session at 11:14 am. No motions were made and no votes were taken during the closed session.

AWARD OF
CONTRACT
RECOMMENDATION

Mr. Maher made a motion to recommend the awarding of the Debris Management Services contract to Phillips and Jordan for a period of three years with the ability to renew for two, one-year periods. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kinne. The motion was approved.

The recommendation was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mr. Kortvelesy said he has received comments related to the purchase of a high-water rescue vehicle.

Mr. Cronin explained to the committee that the Special Committee on ARPA Expenditures recommended that the Town budget \$400,000 to be used by the St. John's Fire District to purchase a high-water vehicle that would be housed on Seabrook Island.

Mr. Kortvelesy stated the comments were opposed to the Town using funds for equipment that may be used in other jurisdictions (Wadmalaw Island, John's Island, Kiawah Island, etc.).

Ms. Asbelle asked if there was any data showing how often St. John's Fire District responded to emergencies with similar vehicles. Mr. Cronin stated that while they didn't have comprehensive data, the use of those vehicles is not an everyday occurrence.

Mr. Maher commented that the idea of rejecting this recommendation without an alternative proposal is being disingenuous.

Mr. Kortvelesy said that if this is what it takes to acquire or upgrade life saving equipment for use on Seabrook Island, the committee should be in support.

Mr. Kinne voiced his concerns that because St. John's Fire District could use the rescue vehicle in whatever manner they choose, the vehicle may or may not be available if needed on Seabrook Island.

Mr. Kortvelesy reminded the committee that Town Council was not looking for a recommendation from the committee. He was only sharing these comments for informational purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, Mr. Kortvelesy adjourned the meeting at 11:36 am.

Peter D. Wiggins II
Town Clerk