

Public Safety Committee Regular Meeting

September 17, 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

Chairman Kortvelesy called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

ROLL CALL

Committee Members Present: Chairman Dan Kortvelesy; Committee members John Kinne, Virginia "Lark" Asbelle, and Leslie Baylis.

Town Staff Present: Joe Cronin (Town Administrator), Katharine Watkins (Assistant Town Administrator), Abigail Grooms (Communications Manager), and Peter Wiggins (Town Clerk).

FOIA STATEMENT

Ms. Watkins 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 persons requesting notification.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Kinne made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2024, meeting, seconded by Ms. Baylis.

The prior meeting minutes were approved with two ayes and two abstentions.

Ms. Baylis and Ms. Asbelle abstained from voting due to their absence from the August meeting.

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

Beach Patrol Presentation
Review

The committee discussed the Beach Patrol presentation from the August 20th meeting. Mr. Kortvelesy discussed the difficulty of patrol staff policing the beach northwest of the Seabrook Island Club.

Mr. Kortvelesy asked the committee about their feelings related to the Beach Patrol providing a year-round safety patrol. He stated that most safety violations issued by patrol staff are issues that are present every month of the year.

Mr. Kinne asked what the current patrol schedule is. Mr. Cronin stated that April 1 through September 30 is the start and end of the beach

patrol season. Ms. Asbelle, based on the off-season activity described by Mr. Cronin, stated she didn't see the need for a year-round patrol.

Mr. Kortvelesy stated he was in support of a reduced patrol in the off-season, but wanted a safety presence on the beach for all twelve months of the year.

Mr. Kinne voiced a concern that the current provider of the beach patrol may not be able to hire and retain enough qualified staff to provide a year-round service. There was continued discussion related to employers on Seabrook Island hiring and retaining qualified staff.

Ms. Baylis asked Mr. Cronin about the budget implications of providing a year-round beach patrol. He said at present, the Town has not budgeted for a year-round patrol. To accommodate a request for a year-long patrol, funds would have to be taken from other priorities.

SJFD Presentation Review

The committee had a brief discussion related to the Strategic Plan update provided by Chief Kunitzer at the meeting of August 20th.

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS 2025 Budget Needs

Mr. Cronin discussed the FY 2025 proposed budget as it relates to the Public Safety Committee.

Mr. Kinne asked if there was a specific portion of the FY 2025 budget that was dedicated to capital expenditures. Mr. Cronin stated that capital projects and any associated expenditures are spread across several different funds. Mr. Kinne asked about capital projects related to the beach patrol. Mr. Cronin stated that there is a vehicles line item in the FY 2025 budget, but that the Town was not proposing any capital expenditures related to vehicles.

Mr. Kortvelesy asked about the feasibility of installing LSV passing lanes as part of the paving of Seabrook Island Road. Mr. Cronin stated that traffic engineers would need to look at the idea from the viewpoint of safety. Mr. Cronin further stated that the idea may seem simple, but that utility relocation may be required as well as a redesign of the plans. The committee further discussed the inherent danger of allowing LSV's along Seabrook Island Road.

Ms. Baylis asked Mr. Cronin if there was a stormwater drainage plan associated with the new MUSC facility. She stated that she was concerned that persistent runoff of stormwater may affect the Town's plans to pave Seabrook Island Road. Mr. Cronin stated there was a drainage plan.

Mr. Kinne asked how high the road needs to be elevated to reduce flooding. Mr. Cronin stated that the elevation needed varies. He stated some parts of the road would need to be raised by eighteen inches.

Comprehensive Emergency
Plan Update

Mr. Kortvelesy stated to the committee that it had been several years since the Comprehensive Emergency Plan had been updated. He stated it was his wish to shorten the plan.

Mr. Cronin stated that the Town had grown since the last update. He stated that the largest need was to redefine the roles as written in the current plan.

Mr. Kortvelesy asked each member of the committee to look through the previous plan, find items that need updating, and bring those items back to the committee. He also stated that it was not his wish for the committee to rewrite the prior plan.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Ms. Asbelle asked the committee if they had received any phishing emails. Mr. Kortvelesy and Ms. Baylis said they had received suspicious emails.

Mr. Kinne addressed the issue of political signs on the beach. He asked Mr. Cronin if there were any ordinances the Town could enforce to have those signs removed. Mr. Kinne stated there was a banner on the beach he brought to the attention of Mr. Kortvelesy.

Mr. Cronin stated if the sign or banner was unattended, it could be removed. Mr. Cronin stated that each flag/sign/banner would have to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the committee, Mr. Kortvelesy declared the meeting adjourned at 11:26 am.

Peter D. Wiggins II, MPA
Town Clerk