

Public Safety Committee Regular Meeting

August 19, 2025 @ 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: Dan Kortvelesy, Chairman; Committee members Leslie Baylis, Virginia “Lark” Asbelle, and John Kinne.

Town Staff Present: Joe Cronin (Town Administrator) and Peter Wiggins (Clerk/Treasurer).

FOIA STATEMENT

The Clerk/Treasurer 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 July 15, 2025

Public Safety Committee Regular Meeting

Mr. Kortvelesy motioned to approve the minutes from the Public Safety Committee Regular meeting of July 15, 2025, seconded by Ms. Baylis. The vote was as follows:

Ms. Asbelle	abstain
Ms. Baylis	yea
Mr. Kinne	abstain
Chairman Kortvelesy	yea

The motion was APPROVED with two yays, no nays, and two abstentions.

OLD BUSINESS ITEMS

Low-Speed Vehicles (LSV's)

Chairman Kortvelesy stated he would like to continue the discussion on LSV safety. He stated there had been a discussion at the July Town Council meeting related to prohibiting LSV's on the public section of Seabrook Island Road.

Chairman Kortvelesy asked Mr. Cronin if he had spoken to the town attorney on the town's ability to prohibit LSV's on the road.

Mr. Cronin stated he had not sought a formal opinion due to there not being a policy decision made on prohibiting LSV's. However, he stated that from the informal conversations that have been had, it was his belief that LSV's could be regulated by the town on the public portion of Seabrook Island Road. He stated there are two ways of regulating LSV's on the road. One would be for the committee and council to adopt a ban of LSV's on the road, but there would be enforcement issues due to the Charleston County Sheriff's Office being unable to enforce local ordinances. The other option would be to raise the speed limit above 35 miles per hour, thus prohibiting LSV's due to state statute prohibiting them on any road with a speed limit greater than 35 miles per hour. He stated the second option could be enforced by the sheriff's office due to the speed limit prohibition existing in state statute, rather than an outright prohibition passed as a local ordinance.

Ms. Asbelle asked if the current council raised the speed limit, would that prohibit a future council from lowering the speed limit back to its original.

Mr. Cronin stated that a future council could lower it back to its current limit.

Mr. Kinne stated there might be a third option. He stated that option could be for the Seabrook Island Property Owners Association (SIPOA) to prohibit LSV's from exiting through the security gate.

Mr. Cronin stated there are some LSV's that are originating from outside the security gate, such as the Bohicket Marina Villa's and eventually, Seafields. He stated that Mr. Kinne was correct in that most are originating behind the gate.

Chairman Kortvelesy stated that he would like to understand from the sheriff's office what the rate of enforcement is on that portion of Seabrook Island Road. He stated this data would give the committee an idea of the ability of the sheriff's office to patrol that portion of the road.

Ms. Baylis stated she remembered Sargeant Junkin stating there is a need for deputies in other parts of the county that leads to minimal traffic enforcement on that portion of Seabrook Island Road.

Mr. Kinne asked if cameras could be used as another method of traffic enforcement.

Mr. Cronin stated he was pretty sure that state statute prohibited cameras being used in traffic enforcement.

Mr. Cronin stated another option to increase enforcement is to contract with off duty officers to patrol Seabrook Island Road.

Chairman Kortvelesy stated that had been discussed at a budget workshop for next year. He asked rhetorically if those officers could be on patrol in the busy season, on weekends, and how much this might cost the town.

Chairman Kortvelesy asked the committee what the origin of the LSV issue is. He asked if it is a safety issue related to occupants in the LSV not following safety rules or is it an inconvenience issue.

Mr. Cronin reminded the committee that the safety rules that are not being followed are already codified in state statute. He stated that the committee wouldn't be recommending anything that already exists in state law, because a local ordinance wouldn't remedy these safety issues.

Mr. Cronin stated to the committee if their expectation was for the council to act before the end of the year, the committee needs to have a recommendation within the next thirty days.

Chairman Kortvelesy stated if the new council wanted to take up the committee's recommendation, that would be fine, but he did not want to be rushed into a decision without data.

Mr. Cronin stated that his recommendation would be to defer a recommendation until after the first of the year.

Mr. Kinne asked if the committee sent a recommendation to the council in December, would that recommendation be carried over to the new council in 2026.

Mr. Cronin stated it would be carried over to the new council, provided they wanted to take up the recommendation.

Chairman Kortvelesy stated he would like to invite random property owners to discuss the LSV issue, similar to a focus group. He stated he would like these discussions to take place over the next two months.

Mr. Cronin stated the committee could consider lowering the speed limit on Seabrook Island Road, thus reducing the speed difference between LSV's and regular traffic.

Maryanne Connelly stated that SIPOA began on August 1st with a safety campaign where safety enforcement was increased. She stated that since the campaign just started, she did not have any enforcement data. She said she was aware of two stops of LSV's where the driver was found to be underage. She further stated she was aware of three stops made for occupants not wearing seatbelts, two LSV's were being operated by a property owner and one operated by a renter. She further stated LSV's have also been stopped for an expired registration, parking violations, and not being in possession of an LSV pass.

Chairman Kortvelesy thanked Ms. Connelly for everything that she and the SIPOA Safety & Security Committee are doing to keep traveling via an LSV safe.

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

Atlantic Hurricane Season Update

Ms. Asbelle reminded the committee that the federal government has money set aside for local governments to increase their disaster readiness. Ms. Asbelle asked if the town has an audible alert system in the event power is out on the island.

Mr. Cronin stated the town uses CodeRed that uses notifications pushed to resident's cellular phones.

Chairman Kortvelesy urged Mr. Cronin to look into grants to increase disaster readiness.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Comprehensive Emergency Plan (CEP)

Mr. Kinne asked for an update on the drafting of the new CEP.

Chairman Kortvelesy stated that the town's plan is to "piggyback" off Charleston County's emergency plan. He stated the county is still in the process of drafting their new emergency plan.

Coyotes

Chairman Kortvelesy stated the town had received a public comment related to coyotes on Seabrook Island. He stated he had never heard of coyotes from a public safety perspective, but that he understands the concerns. He said traditionally, coyotes are discussed by the Environment & Wildlife Committee, but if there is something that the Public Safety Committee can do to support the work of other committees, they would be glad to assist.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Chairman Kortvelesy declared the meeting adjourned at 11:22 am.

Peter D. Wiggins II, MPA
Clerk/Treasurer