

# Public Safety Committee Regular Meeting

March 18, 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:** Chairman Dan Kortvelesy; Committee members Virginia "Lark" Asbelle, John Kinne, and Dr. Carl Bergren

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

### 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 local news media and all person's requesting notification.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 21, 2025

#### **Town Council Regular Meeting**

Mr. Kinne made a motion to approve the minutes from the prior committee meeting of January 21, 2025, seconded by Mr. Kortvelesy.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

### OLD BUSINESS ITEMS

Mr. Kortvelesy stated that the committee had been attempting to hear from Phillips and Jordan and TetraTech at prior committee meetings. He stated that due to the numerous disasters to which the two entities are responding, he understands it may be difficult for them to be in attendance at meetings of the Public Safety committee.

### NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

#### **Disaster Recovery Council (DRC)**

There was a brief discussion related to updating the DRC roster for 2025.

The committee discussed potential scenarios and scheduling the annual DRC emergency drill. Mr. Kortvelesy announced the DRC emergency drill would be set for June 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Comprehensive Emergency Plan (CEP)**

Mr. Kortvelesy stated that one of Town Council's 2025 Strategic Priorities was to update the CEP.

Mr. Kortvelesy asked the members of the committee what their priorities are for the CEP update. Mr. Kortvelesy stated his priorities are for the plan to be condensed and made available electronically.

Ms. Asbelle asked that the plan emphasize evacuation information.

Mr. Kinne asked that two versions of the plan exist. He stated it was his opinion that the plan should not lose the detail that is included in the current plan. He stated that there should be a condensed version for public consumption and one more detailed version for staff and/or other users of the plan.

Dr. Bergren asked that the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) be included in the CEP update.

Mr. Kortvelesy asked Mayor Kleinman what his priorities are for the CEP update.

Mayor Kleinman stated it was his wish that the rewrite of the plan incorporate input from several different groups.

Mayor Kleinman stated at the time the last plan was created, elected officials filled most of the duties required in the plan. He stated that now, the town has more staff, and it is important that the plan turn those duties over to professionals (e.g., town staff).

Mayor Kleinman also stated that it was his wish that the plan should build on the South Carolina and Charleston County plans. He stated the plan should not be longer than either the state or county plan.

Mr. Kortvelesy asked the town's Planning and Zoning Director, Tyler Newman his thoughts on the recovery portion of the new CEP. Mr. Newman stated that currently, after a storm where structures may need to be rebuilt, there is no mechanism through which the town can issue emergency permits. He stated that it is possible that contractors would need to go back and forth between Seabrook Island and the Charleston County Public Services Building in North Charleston to obtain the proper permits.

Mr. Newman further stated that of all the permitting entities, Charleston County is the most critical.

The town's emergency preparedness consultant, Scott Cave, said there are two main changes to the plan being proposed. He stated the first is

that the plan be condensed and streamlined. He also stated that there is a need to switch emergency roles from elected officials and volunteers, to staff. Mr. Cave also stated he agreed with the idea of creating two different versions of a new CEP.

Ms. Asbelle asked if volunteers and elected officials were not filling roles under the new CEP, who would be carrying out those duties. Mr. Cave stated those roles would be transferred to staff. He stated under the current plan, Chairman Kortvelesy, in part, creates and distributes communications on behalf of the town during emergencies. He stated that since the town has hired a communications director with experience in that field, there was no longer a need for elected officials to create and distribute town communications.

Ms. Asbelle stated that the federal government writes their emergency plans around finance, logistics, operations, and planning (FLOP). She stated that the committee and staff need to keep that in mind as the new plan is created. Mr. Cave stated that now that the town has employed more staff, it is possible that professional staff can fill all those roles in the FLOP framework.

Mr. Cave suggested that an ad hoc committee be created so that he can consult with those individuals as the plan is created. He stated that as the plan progresses, both he and the members of the ad hoc committee can report back to the Public Safety Committee, Mayor Kleinman, and if necessary, Town Council.

Ms. Asbelle asked if there was a mechanism through which residents can be alerted of pending emergencies. Mr. Cave stated the town has contracted with CodeRed to communicate emergency information with Seabrook Island. Ms. Asbelle asked if there could be emergency information posted to the town's website. Mr. Cave stated he was concerned that individuals could use information posted to the website to do harm to the town during emergency events.

Mr. Cave asked the committee to consider potentially outdated Memorandum's of Understanding between the town and other entities related to debris removal.

Mr. Kortvelesy stated the point of contention between entities was the potential reimbursement of public funds used for recovery efforts behind the property owner's association security gate. Mr. Cave and Mr. Kinne suggested the committee and town engage the debris removal contractor to gauge the sentiment of FEMA related to reimbursing public funds used for disaster recovery in private communities.

Mr. Cave suggested the town consider adding the raising of Seabrook Island Road to their hazard mitigation plan so the project can make itself available to federal funds disbursed for the purposes of flood and storm preparation. Mr. Cronin stated the town has included elevating Seabrook Island Road in their hazard mitigation plan.

Mr. Cave stated a priority for the updating and/or rewrite of the CEP should be to solidify how the town continues normal business functions during a potential emergency. He stated the plan should include how the town continues to issue business licenses and permits during an emergency.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

There were no Citizen Comments.

**COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

Mr. Kortvelesy asked the committee to review an article included in the agenda packet related to traffic calming.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further discussion, Chairman Kortvelesy declared the meeting adjourned at 11:38 am.