

Town Council Regular Meeting

March 25, 2025 @ 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 2:32 PM.

ROLL CALL

Town Council Members Present: Mayor Kleinman; Councilmembers Darryl May, Gordon Weis (Virtual), Raymond Hamilton and Dan Kortvelesy.

Town Staff Present: Joe Cronin (Town Administrator), Tyler Newman (Zoning Administrator), Abigail Grooms (Communication & Events Manager), Mac McQuillin (Town Attorney), and Peter Wiggins (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 persons requesting notification.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

February 18, 2025

Strategic Priorities Workshop

Mr. Kortvelesy made a motion to approve the minutes from the Strategic Priorities Workshop of February 18, 2025, seconded by Mr. May.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

There were no Public Hearing Items.

PRESENTATIONS

There were no Presentations.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no Citizen Comments.

REPORTS OF TOWN BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

Community Promotions & Engagement Committee

Mayor Kleinman provided a report of the Community Promotion & Engagement Committee's most recent meeting.

Recommendation to approve the awarding of a Community Promotion Grant to the Exchange Club of Kiawah-Seabrook in the amount of \$1,500.00

Mr. Hamilton made a motion to approve the awarding of a Community Promotion Grant to the Exchange Club of Kiawah-Seabrook in the amount of \$2,500.00, seconded by Mr. Kortvelesy.

Mr. May asked staff to ensure grant applicants are made available at future meetings of town council to answer any grant related questions.

Mayor Kleinman stated that representatives did attend the previous CPEC meeting.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Recommendation to approve the awarding of a Community Promotion Grant to the Seabrook Island Birders in the amount of \$770.00

Mr. May made a motion to approve the awarding of a Community Promotion Grant to the Seabrook Island Birders in the amount of \$770.00, seconded by Mr. Hamilton

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Environment & Wildlife Committee

Mr. Weis provided a report of the Environment & Wildlife Committee's most recent meeting.

Recommendation to approve the awarding of an Environment & Wildlife Conservation Grant to Keeper of the Wild Wildlife Rescue and Sanctuary in the amount of \$2,500.00

Mr. Hamilton made a motion to approve the awarding of an Environment & Wildlife Conservation Grant to the Keeper of the Wild Wildlife Rescue and Sanctuary in the amount of \$2,500.00, seconded by Mr. Kortvelesy

Representatives from the requesting entity gave a brief presentation of the group's activities.

Mr. May asked if the group received a call for an injured deer on Seabrook Island, if the group would respond. Representatives ensured the council they would respond.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Recommendation to approve the awarding of an Environment & Wildlife Conservation Grant to the Seabrook Island Birders in the amount of \$2,200.00

Mr. Hamilton made a motion to approve the awarding of an Environment & Wildlife Conservation Grant to the Seabrook Island Birders in the amount of \$2,200.00, seconded by Mr. Kortvelesy.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Public Safety Committee

Mr. Kortvelesy provided a report of the Public Safety Committee's most recent meeting.

He stated that a representative from Charleston County Emergency Management will be in attendance at the April meeting.

Mr. Kortvelesy reminded the committee that May 29th will be Disaster Awareness Day. He stated the event will be held at the Seabrook Island Club.

Mr. Kortvelesy also stated that June 17th is a tentatively scheduled meeting of the Disaster Recovery Council.

REPORTS OF TOWN OFFICERS

Mayor

Mayor Kleinman gave an update on the pending updating of the town's Comprehensive Emergency Plan.

He stated that in the current plan, elected and appointed officials are tasked with administrative roles when responding to an emergency. He stated that it was his wish in the next iteration of the plan that those roles be transferred to town staff.

Mayor Kleinman also stated that it was his wish to shorten the town's emergency plan so that it is more reader friendly. Mr. May and Mr. Hamilton both stated they were in agreement with the concept.

Mr. May asked who would be taking the lead on the rewrite of the plan. Mayor Kleinman stated that Mr. Cronin and Scott Cave would be leading the rewrite, and they would both be supported by staff.

Mayor Kleinman reminded the council there is a Marshfront Management Plan workshop scheduled for Friday, April 4th, at 10:30 am.

Town Administrator

Mr. Cronin reminded the council that renewals of town business licenses begin on March 31st. He stated businesses can renew their business license without penalty until April 30th.

Mr. Cronin also stated that the town will begin accepting short-term rental permit applications under the new ordinances beginning on March 31st.

Mr. Cronin stated that the town has implemented a new online portal for permit applications and business license renewals that will go live on March 31st as well.

In accordance with the new employee compensation policy, Mr. Cronin said the mayor approved merit increases for some staff. Mr. Cronin stated those increases have been implemented and came in \$2,500 under the total amount budgeted for merit increases.

Zoning Administrator

Code Enforcement Summary: Mr. Newman provided an update of code enforcement and construction activities since the February meeting.

Short-Term Rental Summary: Mr. Newman provided an update on the number of short-term rental permits currently active within the town.

Mayor Kleinman stated he received a letter from a representative of a property owner. He stated the letter was related to a potential zoning change of a certain parcel of land on Seabrook Island. He asked Mr. Newman if the town had received any such application for zoning change. Mr. Newman replied that the town had not received any such application.

Mr. Newman gave a brief summary of the process involved in a zoning change per the Development Standards Ordinance.

Mr. May asked Mr. Cronin how the new short-term rental permit process would be administered. Mr. Cronin stated the applicant will need a valid short-term rental permit and a valid business license to legally operate a rental. He stated that the piece that will change is that the permit will not expire, provided the permit remains in good standing.

Mr. Cronin stated the permit application has added items. He stated that there are added items related to parking, and new items ensuring the rental is consistent with SIPOA and regime rules.

Mr. Hamilton asked if there was an added benefit for new short-term rental applicants applying early for 2025. Mr. Cronin stated that it doesn't matter when an owner applies. He stated that the only way you are guaranteed a permit is if the applicant is already in possession of a valid short-term rental permit.

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING

There were no Ordinances for Second Reading.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

2025-02: An ordinance amending the Town Code for the Town of Seabrook Island, South Carolina; Chapter 2, Administration; Article II, Mayor and Council; Section 2-202, Election and terms of office; so as to amend the term of office for the Mayor and members of Town Council from two-year non-staggered terms to four-year staggered terms

Mr. May made a motion to pass the ordinance on first reading, seconded by Mr. Hamilton.

Mr. Kortvelesy stated there may be unintended consequences of passing the ordinance. However, he stated the reason many entities have changed to four-year terms was the benefit of added continuity. He stated that the reason voters have rejected similar efforts was that in cases where voters don't like the job their elected officials are doing, they must put up with them for only two years.

Mr. Kortvelesy suggested that council review the town's form of government if the council was committed to reviewing increasing the term of office. He asked Mr. Cronin to summarize prior conversations related to changing the town's form of government.

Mayor Kleinman reminded the council that Mr. Kortvelesy's question was unrelated to the proposed ordinance. He stated that changing the form of government will require a referendum, while the proposed ordinance can be implemented through an ordinance only.

Mr. Weis stated he agreed with Mr. Kortvelesy's remarks but added that if the ordinance were to pass second reading, everyone currently on the council would need to run, rather than inherit a four-year term.

Mr. Cronin stated that as the ordinance is currently written, candidates would have the choice of filing for a four-year or a two-year term. He went on to state that of the identified strategic priorities, this issue was the most time sensitive.

Mr. Kortvelesy asked a question of the council related to what perceived problem has the town had in the past that this ordinance will potentially correct.

Mr. May discussed the possibility of a larger than expected reaction to the potential passing of this ordinance by Seabrookers. He stated, to Mr. Kortvelesy's point, that there should be a public hearing before second reading so that the council can absorb public comments.

Mr. May asked a question related to the legality of a candidate filing for both a four-year and a two-year term. Mac McQuillin, the town's attorney, stated his opinion that filing for both offices simultaneously was not legal.

Mr. Hamilton stated that he was prepared to vote for this, but it was his preference that all candidates file for one office with the top two

candidates filling four-year terms and the next two filling two-year terms.

Mayor Kleinman stated that some councilmembers ran on the practice of having public hearings separate from first or second readings of potential ordinances. He stated that this was as good a time as any to put that idea into practice.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

OTHER ACTION ITEMS

Dolphin Education Program Contract

Mr. Cronin reported to council there was a need for the mayor to sign a new agreement with the Lowcountry Marine Mammal Network for 2025.

Mr. Hamilton asked if there is language in the agreement requiring staff from the Lowcountry Marine Mammal Network to appear on the Seabrook Island beach a minimum number of times per year. Mr. Cronin stated there is a requirement that staff appear on the beach each weekday during peak season and a lesser requirement at other times during the year.

Mr. Hamilton made a motion authorizing the mayor to enter into an agreement with the Lowcountry Marine Mammal Network, seconded by Mr. Kortvelesy.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Beach Patrol Contract

Mr. Kortvelesy made a motion authorizing the mayor to enter into an agreement with Island Beach Services, LLC, seconded by Mr. May.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Resolution 2025-03 through 2025-26

Mr. Kortvelesy made a motion to appoint and commission certain individuals as code enforcement officers for the security and general welfare of the Town of Seabrook Island, seconded by Mr. Hamilton.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Kiawah Development Partners, LLC Conveyance of Title

Mr. Kortvelesy made a motion authorizing the mayor to accept conveyance of title and grant of easements from Kiawah Development Partners, LLC, seconded by Mr. May.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

There were no Items for Information/Discussion.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Jeff Davis

Mr. Davis spoke on erecting signage at boardwalks along the beach related to dog rules.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. May stated he attended the "Topping Off" ceremony at the new MUSC facility at Seafields.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Mayor Kleinman declared the meeting adjourned at 4:46 pm.

Peter D. Wiggins II, MPA
Clerk/Treasurer