

Town Council Regular Meeting

June 24, 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 2:42 pm.

ROLL CALL

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

Town Staff Present: Joe Cronin (Town Administrator), Abby Grooms (Communications & Events Manager), and Tyler Newman (Zoning Administrator)

FOIA STATEMENT

The Town Administrator 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 other persons requesting notification.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes for approval.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

There were no public hearing items.

PRESENTATIONS

Charles Cheves/St. John's Fire District (SJFD)

Chief Ryan Kunitzer of SJFD briefed the council on a medical emergency responded to by Beach Patrol and SJFD. He stated both agencies responded to an adult male on Hidden Oak Drive in cardiac arrest.

The individual needing emergency care stated his experience was hard to put into words. He stated he was grateful to SJFD and Mr. Cheves for the care they provided.

Mayor Kleinman stated this presentation was a lesson in how lucky residents are to be surrounded by professionals like the ones staffing the Beach Patrol and SJFD.

Mr. Kortvelesy stated SJFD is looking to constantly improve. He stated SJFD is working to staff every engine with a certified paramedic.

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 Seabrook Island Photography Club in the amount of \$1,200.00.

Bill Breunsbach gave a brief presentation of the Photography Club's mission.

Mr. Weis made a motion to approve the awarding of a Community Promotion Grant to the Seabrook Island Photography Club in the amount of \$1,200.00, seconded by Mr. Kortvelesy.

Mr. Weis' motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Recommendation to approve the awarding of a Community Promotion Grant to the Seabrook Island Artist's Guild in the amount of \$1,100.00.

Michael Younginer of the Seabrook Island Artist's Guild gave a brief presentation of the group's mission.

Mr. Hamilton asked if anyone was open to submitting works to the guild.

Mr. Younginer stated only members would be eligible to submit works to the group.

Mr. Hamilton stated he watched the Community Promotions & Engagement Committee meeting of June 23. He encouraged the group to better define what an artist is.

Mr. Younginer stated the website has been updated and was very clear on the types of artists the guild can support.

Mr. Weis made a motion to approve the awarding of a Community Promotion Grant to the Seabrook Island Artists Guild in the amount of \$1,100.00, seconded by Mr. Kortvelesy.

Mr. May stated he received a letter requesting the grant be denied based on photographers not being eligible to submit works to the guild.

Mr. Kortvelesy stated it was his opinion that the grant and whether the guild accepts photographers as members of their group are two separate issues.

Mayor Kleinman asked if the organization qualifies under the town's grant guidelines and whether the organization plans to spend the money in accordance with the grant guidelines. He stated he has yet to hear anyone say that they do not qualify.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Environment & Wildlife Committee

Mr. Weis provided a report of the Environment & Wildlife Committee's most recent meeting. He stated the committee was discussing the town's beach rules.

Public Safety Committee

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

He stated the Disaster Recovery Council (DRC) convened last week. He continued by saying the committee will meet next month to debrief the DRC exercise.

Utility Commission

Jim Ferland, SIUC Chair, provided an update on the commission's May finances.

Mr. Ferland stated they have hired three of the four open positions. He stated he was hopeful SIUC would be fully staffed in the coming weeks.

Mr. Ferland stated the water tower painting is complete. He stated the cellular service providers were notified the painting is complete.

Mr. Ferland stated the Pond Expansion Project remains on schedule and on budget.

Mr. Kortvelesy asked if SIUC, or other public utilities measure water level of local aquifers.

Mr. Ferland stated that SIUC does not, mostly because their well is 2,000' deep.

Mr. Ferland closed by saying that SIUC, the town, and outside counsel is working on a small land transfer between the Seabrook Island Club and SIUC to accommodate the expansion of SIUC's administration building.

REPORTS OF TOWN OFFICERS

Mayor

Mayor Kleinman thanked staff for their work in completing the processing of STR permit applications.

Mayor Kleinman informed the council that the town's attorneys have been working to draft an annexation ordinance.

Mayor Kleinman stated he had toured the new building at Seafields. He stated Seafields representatives have offered to give councilmembers tours of their facility.

Mayor Kleinman encouraged residents to attend the Mayor's Town Hall on June 26.

Mayor Kleinman stated that the letters that were submitted by the town opposing offshore gas and oil exploration were received. He stated that the offices of elected officials were supportive of the comments submitted by the town.

Town Administrator

Mr. Cronin stated that Seafields would be installing permanent site drainage in mid-July. He stated he requested that they keep at least 5' of the path passable.

Mr. Cronin stated he has posted an opening for a Finance Director.

Mr. Cronin provided a report on the processing of STR permit applications. He thanked staff for working hard to get all applications processed as quickly as possible.

Mr. Hamilton asked what the deadline was for the town to receive payment from STR applicants.

Mr. Cronin stated that staff would email applicants that have not paid their permit fee. He said it is not something on which he wants to continue to wait, given there are other applicants in line to have cap space open.

Mr. May asked if "new applications" in the summary provided to council were already existing homes that had not been previously rented.

Mr. Cronin stated that most of them were previously unrented homes.

Mr. May asked if the town would provide incentives to apply for STR permits online beginning in 2026.

Mr. Cronin stated that STR permits, provided the permit remains in good standing, will not expire beginning in 2026. He further stated that it is more likely than not, all business licenses, which an STR permit holder will need, will only be accepted online beginning in 2026.

Mr. Cronin stated that a pre-budget workshop is scheduled for 9:00 am on August 6. He asked the council to come with budgetary priorities for the upcoming fiscal year.

Mr. Cronin gave an update on the town's financials through March.

Zoning Administrator

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

Beach Patrol Summary: Mr. Newman provided an update of beach patrol activities since the May meeting.

Communication & Events Manager

Ms. Grooms reminded members of the council that the next Chowtown is scheduled for Wednesday, July 2, from 5:00 – 8:00 pm.

Ms. Grooms also reminded that the Independence Day fireworks is scheduled for July 3.

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING

There were no Ordinances for Second Reading.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

There were no Ordinances for First Reading.

OTHER ACTION ITEMS

Resolution 2025-31: A resolution to appoint and commission David Hutson as a Code Enforcement Officer for the proper security and general welfare for the Town of Seabrook Island (Beach Patrol)

Mr. Weis made a motion to approve Resolution 2025-31, seconded by Mr. May.

Mr. Weis' motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

SATAX Program Guidelines

Mr. Cronin gave a brief presentation on the allocation of state accommodations tax funds.

Mr. Cronin stated that groups applying for accommodations tax funds will need to be registered as charitable organizations, similar to the requirements found in the Environment and Conservation and Community Promotions Grant guidelines.

Mr. Weis made a motion to approve the grant guidelines, seconded by Mr. Hamilton.

Mr. Weis' motion was approved with the following vote:

Mr. Hamilton	yea
Mr. Kleinman	abstain
Mr. Kortvelesy	yea
Mr. May	yea
Mr. Weis	yea

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

There were no Items for Information/Discussion.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no Citizen Comments.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Hamilton asked if the town should be approving grant applications for entities whose applications are still being reviewed by the South Carolina Secretary of State's office.

The town's legal counsel stated the town could approve the funds contingent on the group's charitable status not being revoked.

Mr. May stated he wanted the council to consider raising the speed limit on Seabrook Island Road, in effect, prohibiting low-speed vehicles (LSV) on Seabrook Island Road outside the Seabrook Island Property Owner's Association (SIPOA) gate. He stated if the speed limit were raised to at least 36 miles per hour, LSV's would be prohibited on the road per state statute.

He stated that he is aware that LSV's are here to stay on Seabrook Island, but he said their proliferation shouldn't extend to a roadway where the speed limit is 35 miles per hour.

Mr. May stated that most of the time, LSV's are travelling at 15 miles per hour. He further stated he is frequently in a line of cars behind an LSV, and the train of vehicles is usually going around 15 miles per hour. He stated there is a safety issue when impatient drivers pull out to pass several cars and the LSV.

Mr. May stated he did not want to make the trip from the gate to Freshfields going only 15 miles per hour.

He closed by stating he does not want to take away resident's LSV's, but would like this issue on a future agenda so the council could have the opportunity to debate the matter and hear public comments.

Mr. Weis commented that he had an LSV with several people on board and was able to travel 23 miles per hour.

Mr. Kortvelesy stated he has rarely been stuck behind an LSV, but that this might be due to the times he travels outside the SIPOA gate. He stated he has had conversations with the Charleston County Sheriff's Office (CCSO), and they have told him it is unlawful to impede traffic. He stated that LSV's have been viewed as an enforcement issue by the Public Safety Committee.

Mayor Kleinman stated he agreed that there is an enforcement issue, but that he was not convinced that LSV enforcement is a priority issue with CCSO.

Mayor Kleinman announced to the council that SIPOA had agreed to afford the amenities of the Lakehouse to full-time, Town of Seabrook Island staff.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Mayor Kleinman declared the meeting adjourned at 4:33 pm.