

TOWN OF SEABROOK ISLAND
Town Council Special Meeting
July 17, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.

MINUTES

The July 17, 2020, Town Council special meeting was conducted as a video conference using Zoom and was simultaneously made available to the public via YouTube live stream and by conference call, all in keeping with practices adopted to address the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Mayor Gregg, Councilmembers Crane, Finke, Fox and Goldstein, Town Administrator Cronin and Town Clerk Allbritton participated in the meeting. The Town Clerk confirmed that the meeting was properly posted, and the requirements of the SC Freedom of Information Act were met.

Mayor Gregg stated that there was only one item on the agenda for this meeting – A Temporary Use Permit Request: 2020 Bohicket Invitational Billfish Tournament (July 29-August1). At the July 14, 2020 Ways & Means Committee meeting, Council had decided to include the Temporary Use Permit on the agenda for the Emergency Town Council meeting to be held on Tuesday, July 21, but a request was received from Bohicket Marina to take this up earlier so that they could find out earlier whether the event would be able to proceed.

Town Administrator Cronin stated that this event had been scheduled for earlier in the year but is now scheduled for July 29 – August 1. Our current Emergency Ordinance 2020-01 included language that would cancel or prohibit Temporary Use Permits for the duration of that Emergency Ordinance. That Ordinance was subsequently replaced by Emergency Ordinance 2020-02, which contains a similar provision prohibiting or cancelling any Temporary Use Permits, but it does have a provision that a Temporary Use Permit could be considered if the event organizer was able to practice or maintain social distancing procedures. The Marina did submit a revised application for the new dates, along with a listing of precautions they plan to implement if the event moves forward, and the packet was forwarded to Council.

The Town Administrator commented that Beau Anderson and Kaitlyn Harriss, representatives of Bohicket Marina, are on the conference call. Mr. Anderson stated that currently, there are only 17 boats that will be fishing in the tournament and the cap is set at 20 boats. He went over the precautions that would be taken if the event were held. Some of the precautions include:

- The tournament will be a private event closed to the public.
- Participants will be given wristbands, a total of 10 for each boat, and anyone trying to access that dock will be turned away by the Sheriff's Department.
- Boardwalks will be blocked off from outside spectators. Only participants and wristband holders will be allowed on boardwalks.
- Vendor booths will be properly distanced and only 4 people will be allowed at a booth, including the vendor(s) operating the booth.
- Since there will not be a dinner for the participants each night, Salty Dog will be providing food delivered to the boats. An online ordering system will be used to reduce interaction with participants.

Mayor Gregg asked Council for questions/comments.

- In answer to Councilman Crane's comments about vendor booths and crowd management, Mr. Anderson replied that only a total of 4 people can be at the vendor booths, including the people operating the booth. If a group of people congregate at a booth, the booth operators should ask others to step back and social distance. Ten people are allowed on a boat, which does not give them a lot of space, but the Marina cannot monitor the boats when participants are fishing.
- In answer to Councilwoman Finke's comments/questions about wristbands and music at the Marina, Mr. Anderson stated that a maximum of 10 wristbands were given out for a participating

boat. Some participants are family-owned boats, and some are not. He added that the Marina was not hiring a band to play but Salty Dog usually has a band play several days during the week. The Marina had planned to have someone play music on the dock but that had been cancelled.

- In answer to Councilwoman Fox's comments, Mr. Anderson stated that A Dock, which is where 95% of the participating boats will be located, will be closed and participants will be required to have a wristband to enter. There will be a sign indicating that the docks are for tenants and Tournament participants only.
- Councilman Goldstein asked questions about how visitors would know this was a private event. Mr. Anderson stated that there would be signs along the boardwalk saying that the tournament is closed to the public. Councilman Goldstein commented that the Marina would be in charge of managing up to 170 people that are participating in the Tournament but, if large numbers of people come to the Marina that are not involved in the event, he questioned who would be responsible for the people that are not involved in the event. Mr. Anderson stated that restaurants would be responsible for limiting their capacity and the only thing the Marina can do if they see large groups of people is to ask them to disperse. Councilman Goldstein stated that he thought the weak link is the crowd that might gather since the Marina is open to the public, not the Tournament participants. Mr. Anderson stated that the Marina could get the Sheriff's Department to help with that.

Mayor Gregg asked if Council had any suggestions for conditions that might need to be added to the Temporary Use Permit if it were allowed. Councilwoman Finke stated that, with the number of cases of the virus spiking, she has a problem with the Town encouraging groups like this gathering and possibly making the spread worse, even if the participants would be on boats part of the day. Mayor Gregg did add that, since the Marina would still be open to the public, restaurants and bars have their own guidance as far as their operations and it would be up to the Sheriff's Department to issue citations if groups of 3 or more posed a threat to the public health. Councilman Goldstein stated that he thought a gathering such as this was risky, and he thought there should be signs stating that the Tournament was a private event. Mayor Gregg stated that he acknowledged the concern that had been expressed, that encouraging a large gathering would be contrary to what the Town should be doing; but, with the participants being out on boats for the bulk of the time and the public being roped off from access to booths, he did not see this as the Town supporting a large gathering. Town Administrator Cronin asked whether the Tournament would qualify as a so-called "Governor's Cup" event, to which Mr. Anderson replied it would not in consequence of cancellation of a billfish tournament at Georgetown, SC. Mr. Anderson volunteered that a billfish tournament at Edisto, SC, had been cancelled earlier in the year.

Councilman Crane made a motion to approve the Temporary Use Permit for the 2020 Bohicket Invitational Billfish Tournament, with the list of precautions and the requirement to place signs at all entrances to the docks indicating that the Billfish Tournament is a private event, being incorporated as part of the application. Councilman Goldstein seconded the motion. Councilman Crane commented that he is concerned about the message it sends to the community to hold such an event. Councilwoman Finke agrees that the Town could be sending the wrong message when we are trying to promote safety. When the Mayor called for the vote on the motion, the vote to deny the Temporary Use Permit for the 2020 Bohicket Invitational Tournament was unanimous.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

Date: July 28, 2020



Town Clerk