

TOWN OF SEABROOK ISLAND, SC
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
July 28, 2020 at 2:25 PM at Town Hall

The July 28, 2020 Public Hearing 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.

Mayor Gregg called the meeting to order and explained that the meeting was being held to hear comments on Ordinance 2020-06, an ordinance to amend the Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning January 1, 2020 and ending December 31, 2020

The Mayor explained that the 2020 budget is being amended due to reductions in projected revenue due to financial impacts resulting from the coronavirus pandemic. In addition to elimination of a distribution of Charleston County Accommodations Taxes, reduced revenue from State Accommodations Taxes and Alcohol Taxes are also anticipated. The proposed amendment will reduce budgeted expenditures in the General Fund, State Accommodations Tax Fund and County Accommodation Tax Fund to bring them in line with anticipated revenue reductions. Amendments were also recommended to the Road and Drainage Fund and Town Facilities Fund. The ordinance to adopt the revised budget received first reading approval at the June Town Council meeting. Public comments were solicited in advance of the meeting on the Town's website, by email to the Town Clerk and by mail or dropping them off at the Town Hall. The Town Administrator added that he had not received any comments through the website and the Town Clerk verified that she had not gotten any comments by email or in person.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Date: August 26, 2020



Town Clerk

TOWN OF SEABROOK ISLAND
Town Council Meeting
July 28, 2020, at 2:30 p.m.

MINUTES

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Minutes:

The following minutes were unanimously approved as written:

- Town Council Minutes of June 23, 2020
- Public Hearing Minutes of June 23, 2020
- Emergency Town Council Minutes of June 30, 2020
- Ways & Means Committee Minutes of July 14, 2020
- Special Town Council Minutes of July 17, 2020
- Emergency Town Council Minutes of July 21, 2020

Financials:

Mayor Gregg reported that the total fund balance for the period ending June 30, 2020 was \$5,327,901, about \$442,053 more than the balance for the same period in 2019. Unrestricted revenue for June totaled \$211,220. Unrestricted revenue for the year as of June 30 totaled \$704,348 representing about 53% of the 2020 annual budget and about \$80,185 less than the same period in 2019. Expenditures for June totaled \$83,196 and expenditures for the year, as of June 30, totaled \$413,580, representing about 30% of the 2020 annual budget. Expenditures for the year were about \$274,002 less than the same period in 2019 due primarily to there being no expenditures for the roadway project or capital expenditures during the period this year, compared to \$67,465 in the same period in 2019. Excess of revenues over expenditures was \$128,024 for the month of June and about \$290,768 for the year as of June 30 compared to about \$96,950 for the same period in 2019.

Citizens/Guests Presentations, Comments: None

Reports of Standing Committees, Commissions, Boards:

Public Safety Committee – Skip Crane

Councilman Crane, Chairman of the Committee, reported that the Public Safety Committee met July 13 by teleconference. Committee members are concerned that pandemic protocols are not being followed and feel that the pandemic needs to be taken seriously. Councilman Crane agreed to discuss the issue at the scheduled conference call between entity leaders that would be held on July 14. Chairman Crane reported that it was confirmed on that call that the Seabrook Island Property Owners Association (SIPOA) is still handing out notices about proper protocol and are reviewing protocols with Norred & Associates, who furnishes their security officers. The Seabrook Island Club also continues to review protocols regularly with their employees. Councilman Crane reviewed, with the Public Safety Committee members, the proposal from Reveer Group regarding pathway safety concerns. The Committee continues to review the Pandemic section of the Comprehensive Emergency Plan. The Committee reviewed the status of the proposal from eGroup regarding continued consulting services from Scott Cave. The next Public Safety meeting will be on August 10, 2020.

Public Relations/Communications – Pat Fox

Councilwoman Fox reported that the HAM radio antenna located at the Town Hall has been repaired and should be working properly at the next radio check. She also reported that the Mayor had asked her to

monitor a SIPOA meeting and she had learned that SIPOA will be phasing out their support of *The Seabrooker*. They will continue to buy a full page in the publication through September 2020 but will buy ½ page from October 2020 through March 2021. From April 2021 through June 2021, they will only buy ¼ page. SIPOA is pleased with the success of their Currents Magazine but their Communications Committee might investigate other ways they might utilize *The Seabrooker*. Mayor Gregg commented that *The Seabrooker* started years ago as a Town newsletter and the Town continues to support *The Seabrooker* by buying space for a monthly column in which the Mayor, Councilmembers and the Town Administrator each take a turn writing an article for that space. He added that it is unfortunate that SIPOA is phasing out their support of the newspaper, and this might mean that the Town will have to increase its support to make up for revenue that will be lost as SIPOA downsizes.

Special Projects/Beach Administration – Barry Goldstein – No Report

Beach Administration/Community and Government Relations – Councilwoman Finke

Councilwoman Finke stated that she and Councilman Goldstein had gotten an email from Lauren Rust, who is in charge of the Town's Dolphin Education Program, about incidents that happened on the beach where people were kneeling and taunting the dolphins when no volunteers were present. There were volunteers on the Kiawah side who got pictures of the incidents. Councilwoman Finke said that she would investigate to see if something could be included in packets for rental guests and would also ask Ms. Rust to write an article for the *Seabrooker* about appropriate behavior around the dolphins. Councilman Goldstein said that he had talked to Ms. Rust and she would draft an article and get it to Councilwoman Fox.

Ways & Means – John Gregg

The Mayor reported that the following topics were discussed at the July Ways & Means Committee meeting:

- **COVID-19 Response** – The Mayor commented concerning the adoption of a face covering mandate by Charleston County Council for the unincorporated areas of Charleston County. He noted that the County mandate would not affect the Town's Emergency Ordinance 2020-03 that requires face coverings within the Town limits.
- **Gatherings within the Town** – The Mayor reported expressions of concern from residents about groups gathering on the beach who were not practicing social distancing. In both instances that were discussed, after being disbursed by the Beach Patrol, the groups re-assembled when Beach Patrol left the beach. One of the Town's part-time Code Enforcement Officers has agreed to make periodic tours of the beach after the last shift of the Beach Patrol. It was also suggested that SIPOA be asked to revoke bonfire permits when terms of the permit are violated.
- **Encouragement of Safe Practices** – Councilman Crane noted that members of the Public Safety Committee had expressed concern that some people are not taking the pandemic seriously and think the Town should enlist the cooperation of all community organizations to emphasize the need to consistently abide by guidance for safe practices. It was noted that the informal meeting with leaders of the Seabrook Island Club and SIPOA would be an opportunity to encourage those entities to continue to urge use of safe practices.
- **Unsolicited Correspondence Supporting Defunding of Charleston County Sheriff's Office (CCSO)** – The Mayor reported that he had shared unsolicited correspondence with Council that called for defunding of CCSO and he noted that, in view of the Town's reliance on CCSO for law enforcement within the Town, he would not be expressing support for defunding that agency.
- **Bicycle-Pedestrian Path (Reveer Group Proposal)** – Members of Council were provided a proposal from Reveer Group for evaluating and making recommendations pertaining to safety for users of the Town's bicycle-pedestrian path. Council concluded that this proposal should be deferred until discussion begins on the Town's 2021 budget.
- **Documentary Filming (Strand Feeding)** – The Town Administrator noted that he would present a resolution at the next Council meeting that would permit a film crew, who will be filming a documentary of dolphins strand feeding, to operate a vehicle on the beach beginning on September

8 for a two week period. The vehicle would be used to transport the film crew and equipment to and from the beach.

- **Johns Island Task Force** – Councilwoman Finke reported that, at the July meeting of the Johns Island Task Force, it was suggested that the Towns of Kiawah and Seabrook Island monitor proposed development at the intersection of Betsy Kerrison Parkway and River Road. She also commented that it was reported that 6,866 water taps had been approved for St. John’s Water Company (SJWC) and suggested that the information be brought to the attention of the Seabrook Island Utility Commission in view of their purchase of water from SJWC.
- **Offshore Drilling & Seismic Testing Litigation** – Councilwoman Finke reported that the litigation relating to offshore seismic testing has slowed because of the pandemic. Information requests to the Federal government remain pending.
- **Policy Inquiries (DSO Advisory Group)** – Councilman Crane reported that the DSO Advisory Group had requested that Council provide guidance regarding the installation of signs advertising properties for sale or lease outside the security gate. Council agreed that the signs should be permitted subject to certain limitations. The Town Administrator was asked to prepare guidance for the Advisory Group that would support limitations regarding the number, size, placement and construction of such signs. The DSO Advisory Group had also concluded that it should be a policy decision for Council as to whether internally illuminated signs should be permitted. Council confirmed support of permitting such signs subject to limitations that would prevent proliferation of these signs within the Town. The Mayor asked the Town Administrator to prepare a text amendment that would allow limited use of such signs.
- **Proposed Budget Amendment and Preparation for 2021 Budget** – Town Administrator Cronin stated that Ordinance 2020-06, which will amend the Town’s 2020 budget, would have second reading at the July Town Council meeting with a Public Hearing immediately preceding the Town Council meeting. He also has been working on predictions as to how the pandemic will affect revenue in 2021 before work begins on the Town’s 2021 budget.
- **Review Process for Amended Beach Ordinance** – Town Administrator Cronin commented that a provision in Ordinance 2019-09 (Beach Rules for Pets) requires that a review take place a year following adoption of the ordinance to assess results achieved. It was determined that reports from the Beach Patrol and public comments would be collected and shared with Council to facilitate discussion of the ordinance at the September Ways and Means Committee meeting.
- **Spring Shred Event** – The Town Administrator reported that Shred360 had cancelled the Town’s Spring Shred Event in response to concerns of its workers pertaining to the pandemic. The Fall Shred Event remains scheduled for October 23.
- **Strategic Planning Session** – The Town Administrator reported that a Strategic Planning Session for Council had been scheduled for July 21 and he noted that similar sessions for other municipalities had been cancelled. Council expressed their preference to cancel the July 21 session.
- **Short-Term Rental Regulation** – Councilwoman Finke reported that the ad hoc committee’s work dealing with short-term rental regulation had been interrupted by the pandemic. Following discussion with representatives of SIPOA, it is proposed that the Town enter a Memorandum of Understanding with SIPOA to address cooperation between the two entities regarding regulation of short-term rentals.
- **Temporary Use Permit Application (Billfish Tournament)** – The Town Administrator reported he had received an application for a Temporary Use Permit from Bohicket Marina for a Billfish Tournament. The application set forth proposed limitations on the event that would help prohibit spread of the virus. It was determined that the permit will be on the agenda of the July 21 Emergency Town Council meeting where Council will also consider Emergency Ordinance 2020-04.

Planning Commission – Town Administrator Cronin stated that the Planning Commission has not met since March but will meet in August.

Board of Zoning Appeals – Town Administrator Cronin stated that there are three pending variance requests and the Board of Zoning Appeal will have a Public Hearing for those on August 26, 2020.

Reports of Ad Hoc Committees:

Development Standards Ordinance Advisory Group – Councilman Crane, Chairman, reported that a virtual meeting of the DSO Advisory Group was held on July 6 and the group decided that policy decisions for two different types of signs would be required from Town Council. The next meeting of the DSO Advisory Group will be held on July 30.

Regulation of Short-Term Rentals Committee – Councilwoman Finke reported that she hopes to provide a draft to Council for the August Ways and Means Committee meeting that will help Council decide what they are willing to help regulate, in conjunction with SIPOA, as far as short-term rentals.

Reports of Town Officers:

Mayor – John Gregg

- **eGroup Holdings LLC** – The Town’s provider for emergency preparedness services, Scott Cave, has transferred his business to eGroup Holdings LLC. The Town has worked with Scott Cave since development of the Town’s Comprehensive Emergency Plan; and, to continue this working relationship, the Town has worked out terms with eGroup Holdings LLC. Mayor Gregg made a motion to approve the contract between the Town and eGroup Holdings LLC. Councilman Crane seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous.
- **Bobcat Population Protection** – The Town of Kiawah has recently begun a campaign to educate and enlist Kiawah residents in ending the use of certain pesticides, second generation anticoagulant (SGA) rodenticides, that have been implicated in the premature death of bobcats on Kiawah. In addition, Kiawah has a pending request with the State regulatory authority for a temporary suspension of use of SGA’s within the Town of Kiawah. Mayor Gregg stated that, in response to a resident’s request that the Town get involved in corresponding activity within the Town, he has asked Councilman Goldstein to work with SIPOA’s Environmental Committee to determine actions that the Town may pursue.
- **Bohicket Marina Billfish Tournament** – Town Council had agreed to consider Bohicket Marina’s Temporary Use Permit for the Billfish Tournament at their July 21 Emergency Town Council meeting. After the Ways and Means Committee meeting, a representative of the Marina asked if it would be possible to consider the application before that time and a Special Meeting of Council was scheduled for July 17. After questions and discussion with representatives of Bohicket Marina, Council voted unanimously to deny the permit.

Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator – Joe Cronin

- **Resolution 2020-17:** A resolution authorizing the granting of a permit to America Films of Wildstar Films Ltd. to operate a motor vehicle on the beach between September 8-22, 2020. Town Administrator Cronin stated that the film company will be filming a documentary for National Geographic and would like to film dolphins strand feeding. To get the film crew and equipment from Boardwalk 1 to the Inlet, they would like to use a vehicle on the beach for two weeks beginning on September 8. Currently, the Town’s ordinance prohibits vehicles on the beach, but the ordinance has limited exceptions. The Town can deem a vehicle essential and allow access to the beach. Councilman Crane moved to approve Resolution 2020-17, which would allow the film crew to use a vehicle on the beach for the filming project between the dates of September 8 and September 22. Councilwoman Finke seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous. The group will obtain access to Seabrook Island directly from SIPOA.
- **FY 2021 Budget Calendar** – Town Administrator Cronin had distributed a 2021 Budget Calendar to Council prior to the meeting. He suggests in the Budget Calendar that Council hold a Pre-Budget Workshop on August 18, at 1 p.m. The State Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee’s recommendations for 2021 funds should be received prior to September 8. The Town Administrator plans to have a draft of the 2021 budget to the Mayor for his review by September 16. Modifications will be made by September 30 and Council would receive the draft by October

1. Dates for three budget workshops were suggested and first reading of the Budget Ordinance would be held on November 17, 2020. The Public Hearing and second reading would be held on December 15, 2020. Councilman Crane made a motion to adopt the budget calendar as presented to Council. Councilwoman Fine seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous. Councilwoman Finke recommended that Council have hard copies of the budget beforehand if the budget workshop meetings are held virtually.

- **Solicitation of Public Comments on Ordinance 2019-09 (Beach Rules for Pets)** – Town Administrator Cronin stated that Ordinance 2019-09, Beach Rules for Pets, was adopted in September 2019. The ordinance has a provision that requires Council, no later than one year from the effective date of the ordinance, to review the terms of the ordinance and determine if it has worked effectively and achieved the objective of balancing the interests of all users of the beach. Town Administrator Cronin stated that he will advertise for public comments, probably by the second week of August, by means of social media, the home page on the Town website and on Tidelines. He will close the comments so that he can get them compiled and distributed to Council before the September Ways & Means Committee meeting.
- **Beach Patrol Update** – The Town Administrator reported that Beach Patrol had issued about 450 warnings, most of which would have been verbal warnings. They have issued 1 citation and had 1 call for assistance to the Sheriff's Department. There have been 206 pet violations, 45 dune violations, 169 glass violations and there have been 53 stings within the last 3 weeks.
- **2020 Municipal Achievement Award** – The Town Administrator remarked that the Town has won the Municipal Association's 2020 Municipal Achievement Award, for the second consecutive year, in the 1,001 to 5,000 resident category, and will get to keep the trophy another year. The submission was for the Town's website redesign which includes a public comment portal as well as recordings of Town meetings.
- **2019 Audit** – Mauldin & Jenkins has completed the Town's 2019 audit. A representative of the company will give an overview of the audit at the Town's August Town Council meeting.

Town Council Members – See Above

Utility Commission: Chairperson Annie Smith-Jones reported that the Utility Commission met on July 15, 2020. Their 2019 audit has been completed by Mauldin and Jenkins and was presented at their July meeting. The auditor indicated that the Utility Commission's Net Current Assets indicated a good, liquid financial position. She reported that SIUC had a net income for June of \$25,428. Year to date surplus is \$95,283 over budget. The Balance Sheet shows a current balance of \$2,600,000. Water distribution was 27,000,000 gallons for June. The remainder of the meeting centered around SIUC's budget and capital expenditures.

Petitions Received, Referred or Disposed of: None

Ordinances for First Reading: None

Ordinances for Second Reading:

- **Ordinance 2020-06** – An ordinance amending the Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning January 1, 2020 and ending December 31, 2020. Town Administer Cronin stated that there have been no changes to the ordinance since first reading. As a result of the ongoing pandemic and its economic impact, the Town is expecting to be financially impacted. The original adopted budgeted anticipated revenue of \$1,530,180 but the updated projection estimates total revenue of \$1,288,430. Total expenditures in the original budget were \$2,084,000 and have been reduced to \$1,538,650. The original budget for 2020 had used \$553,820 in reserve funds. The amended budget will require using \$250,220 from various fund balances and will allow the Town to preserve \$303,600 in reserve funds for future years. Councilman Crane made a motion to approve Ordinance 2020-06 on second reading. Councilwoman Finke seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous.

Miscellaneous Business: None

Citizens Comments: Mayor Gregg stated that the Town Clerk had received a negative comment about the trash cans the Town had placed on the beach. Councilwoman Finke stated that she had not received anything but positive comments about the four trash cans. She commented that the trash cans had been put on the beach because residents came to Town Council meetings and requested them. She also remarked that most people walking on the beach like to pick up trash as they walk and it is much more convenient to be able to use these trash cans rather than hold it until they are leaving the beach to use the trash cans at the boardwalks. The Town Administrator remarked that, when the trash cans were installed, the Town did not know if they would be used or if people would continue using the ones at the boardwalks, but they have been well used. Normally, the only overflow has been on high usage weekends.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

Date: August 25, 2020



Town Clerk