

Town Council Budget Workshop

October 20, 2025 @ 9:00 AM

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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 9:02 am.

ROLL CALL

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

Town Staff Present: Joe Cronin (Town Administrator), Robert Meyer (Buildings & Grounds Manager), Tyler Newman (Zoning Administrator), and Peter Wiggins (Town Clerk).

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 news media and all others requesting notification.

PRESENTATIONS

Classification and Compensation Study

Rachel King of MGT gave a brief presentation of their recently completed Classification & Compensation Study for the Town of Seabrook Island.

Ms. King covered the scope of work for the project, job evaluation for all positions within the town, market survey, proposed compensation plan, implementation of the plan, and future administration of the plan.

Councilman Hamilton asked if Seabrook Island's population was taken into consideration when identifying peer communities for the study.

Ms. King stated that communities that mirrored the population and geography of Seabrook Island such as beach communities were scored higher when identifying peer communities.

Councilman Hamilton asked if the existence of a property owner's associations within the town that are primarily responsible for service delivery was considered.

Ms. King stated she had worked with communities that were sharing responsibility with private homeowner's associations.

Councilman May asked if there was a weighting system used when identifying peer communities.

Ms. King stated that there was not a weighting system used. She stated that if an identified community fell within 20% of Seabrook Island's data point, that community would get one point; essentially, an up or down vote.

Councilman Kortvelesy asked if commute times were considered when completing the report and recommendations.

Ms. King stated commute times are not considered as part of the recommendations.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman Kortvelesy motioned to enter into executive session for the purposes of discussing the town's classification and compensation study and to receive legal advice related to State Accommodations Tax expenditures, seconded by Councilman Weis.

Councilman Kortvelesy's motion was APPROVED unanimously.

The town council entered into executive session at 9:31 am.

Councilman Kortvelesy motioned to return to open session, seconded by Councilman Hamilton.

Councilman Kortvelesy's motion was APPROVED unanimously.

The town council returned to open session at 10:33 am.

Mayor Kleinman stated that while in executive session no motions were made and no action was taken.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

FY 2026 Budget

Mr. Cronin stated that forecasted revenues and expenditures for FY 2026 is \$4,367,809.

Councilman Hamilton asked if the budget includes the possibility of a drawdown of local government investment pool funds for the funding of the Seabrook Island Road project.

Mr. Cronin stated the draft budget does not contemplate beginning the Seabrook Island Road project in FY 2026.

Public Safety Director

Councilman May asked if the workshop was the right place to discuss the merits of the addition of a Public Safety Director.

Mr. Cronin stated if there was something that was unanimous amongst council, it could be added or removed; but absent that, the appropriate place for a debate would be at first reading of the budget.

Councilman Hamilton stated he was skeptical of adding a Public Safety Director, especially when he considers yearly cost of living increases and/or merit increases on top of a base salary. He stated he would rather put those funds toward the road project or a new town hall considering those projects are items the town must have.

Councilman May shared with the council some of the items for which the Public Safety Director would be responsible. He stated that even considering all these duties, he did not see this as a full-time position.

Mayor Kleinman stated the council needs to be cognizant of the fact that Seabrook Island is in a vulnerable location. He stated that Charleston County EMD is requiring one person from each municipality to take up residence at the Charleston County EOC in the event of an EOC opening. He stated that ideally, the Public Safety Director would be sent to the EOC during activations. Mayor Kleinman also stated that the town needs to rewrite its Comprehensive Emergency Plan. He stated that if the position is not approved, the plan will still be completed in FY 2026, but perhaps not as well, and perhaps done at the cost of other existing staff.

Councilman Kortvelesy stated that more and more duties for emergency management are being delegated to the local municipalities. He further stated that emergency management duties are becoming a continuous responsibility and there needs to be better communications with area partners such as St. Johns Fire District, SIPOA, and the Charleston County Sheriff's Office. He closed by saying that there have been items that have fallen through the cracks over the past year that could've been taken care of by a public safety official.

Councilman Hamilton stated that he would be in support of contracting with an off duty sheriff's deputy before hiring a public safety director.

Councilman May added that he understands that Seabrook Island is in a vulnerable location. However, he added that the biggest threat to public safety on a regular basis is the traffic and the potential for traffic accidents, particularly in the summer months. But this position is an office job and does not have a patrol function.

Classification & Compensation Study

After moving onto to a discussion of wages included in the draft budget, Councilman Hamilton asked if staff get a 2.1% COLA adjustment, potentially a merit increase, and a 1.0% tenure bonus, once staff are moved up to the market salary per the MGT recommendation, would some staff be paid above the market salary.

Mr. Cronin stated that the raise some staff would be getting as part of the MGT study was only to bring their salary up to the minimum market pay. The additions for COLA, tenure, and merit would only be in addition to the market minimum.

Beach Preservation Fee

After a short break for lunch, Councilman Hamilton recalled a discussion amongst council about instituting a beach preservation fee. He asked if this fee was included in the draft budget.

Mr. Cronin stated this fee is not in the draft budget. He stated in order to start collecting a beach preservation fee, council would need to pass an ordinance expressing support for the fee, followed by a referendum. Mr. Cronin stated if council was serious about instituting the fee, the best date for a referendum would be the November 2026 election.

Councilman Hamilton stated he would be in support of the beach preservation fee.

Beach Patrol

Moving on to a discussion of restricted funds, Councilman Hamilton noted that the contract with Island Beach Services for the town's beach patrol is ending. Councilman Hamilton asked if the town has issued an RFP for the beach patrol contract.

Mr. Cronin stated the town would be issuing an RFP later in the year.

Emergency Fund

Mr. Cronin went over the Emergency Fund. There was a brief discussion related to the possibility of FEMA not responding to local communities who are affected by natural disasters.

Councilman Hamilton discussed the possibility of a policy requiring the town transfer a certain percentage of funds into the town's emergency fund.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Mayor Kleinman declared the meeting adjourned at 1: 53 pm.

Peter D. Wiggins II, MPA
Town Clerk