

Town Council Regular Meeting

December 17, 2024 @ 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), Katharine Watkins (Assistant Town Administrator), Tyler Newman (Zoning Administrator), and Peter Wiggins (Clerk/Treasurer).

FOIA STATEMENT

The Clerk/Treasurer 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 persons requesting notification.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. May motioned to enter into Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter related to the Associate Municipal Judge and Town Treasurer, seconded by Mr. Hamilton.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Town Council entered into Executive Session at 2:34 pm.

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

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Town Council returned to open session at 3:02 pm.

Mr. Kleinman stated that no motions were made and no action was taken while in Executive Session.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

November 19, 2024
November 20, 2024

Town Council Regular Meeting
Town Council Special Called Meeting

Mr. May made a motion to approve the minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting and Special Called Meeting of November 19 and November 20, seconded by Mr. Weis.

The motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Kleinman noted a scrivener's error in the minutes of November 19.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

Ordinance 2024-11

Mr. Kleinman opened a public hearing to receive comments on the updating of the Town's comprehensive beach management plan. Seeing there were no individuals wishing to speak at the public hearing, Mr. Kleinman closed the public hearing.

Ordinance 2024-12

Mr. Kleinman opened a public hearing to receive comments on the Town's budget for FY 2025. Mr. Wiggins stated the Town received one comment related to the budget. The commenter thanked leaders for "keeping a tight spending ship in these trying times." Seeing no other individuals wishing to speak at the public hearing, Mr. Kleinman closed the public hearing.

PRESENTATIONS

There were no Presentations.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mr. Wiggins stated that the Town had received comments and those comments were shared with council and were also available for review.

REPORTS OF TOWN BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES

Community Promotions & Engagement Committee No report.

Environment & Wildlife Committee No report.

Public Safety Committee No report.

Special Committee on Finance No report.

Board of Zoning Appeals No report.

Planning Commission No report.

ATAX Advisory Committee No report.

Utility Commission No report.

REPORTS OF TOWN OFFICERS

Mayor

Mr. Kleinman provided an update on the proposed Island Park Place Health and Wellness Village. He stated he submitted a public comment to the Charleston County Planning Commission who unanimously recommended the proposed development be denied.

He stated that both he and the mayor of Kiawah Island sponsored a community meeting to discuss the proposed development that was well attended.

Mr. Kleinman announced that Assistant Town Administrator Katharine Watkins would be leaving Seabrook Island to become the Town Administrator in Awendaw. He stated that Seabrook Island would miss her and she has been a tremendous resource for both he and the Town.

Town Administrator

Mr. Cronin stated that asphalt repairs to the multi-use path were completed last week.

Mr. Cronin also stated that installation of a new fence along the multi-use path began on Monday.

Mr. Cronin provided an update on the holiday schedule for town hall. He stated staff would be working until 12:00 pm on Christmas Eve, but would be off on Friday, December 27.

Assistant Town Administrator

Ms. Watkins noted that she had not received the financials from the Town's accountant due to the Thanksgiving holiday and other scheduled leave.

Mr. Hamilton asked a question related to money spent and received in FY 2025 that would need to be accounted for in FY 2024.

Ms. Watkins said that she keeps a spreadsheet to track expenditures that must be accounted for in FY 2024.

Zoning Administrator

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

Planning & Zoning Summary: Mr. Newman provided an update on planning and zoning activities since the November meeting.

ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING

Ordinance 2024-06

An ordinance amending the Development Standards Ordinance for the Town of Seabrook Island, South Carolina; Article 2, General Provisions; Section 2.1, General Compliance; so as to repeal subsection (e) pertaining to the placement and storage of trash, litter, and junk on premises within the town; Article 8; Seabrook Island Road Overlay District; so as to rename the title of the article to "Overlay

Districts” and to incorporate provisions related to the establishment of a Short-Term Rental Overlay District; Article 9, Conditional Use Requirements; Section 9.4, Specific Use Requirements; Subsection O, Short-Term Rental; so as to amend the conditional use requirements for short-term rental units operating within the Town; Article 12; Parking and Loading; Section 12.4, Design Requirements; Subsection B, Parking Construction and Development; Paragraph 7, Lighting; so as to amend the reference to the correct subsection; and Appendix E, Fee Schedule; so as to update the schedule of fees to reflect changes relating to permitting requirements and procedures for short-term rental units within the town

Mr. Cronin provided historical context to the council on the four ordinances, commonly referred to as the “Short Term Rental (STR) Ordinances.”

Mr. Cronin provided an update on the latest changes to Ordinance 2024-06. He stated the latest changes were the removal of an uncapped legal residence permit, or “Class B” permit. He also stated there were some violations that would have applied a two point penalty to an individual’s STR permit, that will now be a three point violation.

Mr. May motioned to approve Ordinance 2024-06 as amended, seconded by Mr. Hamilton.

Mr. Kortvelesy motioned to amend the ordinance such that references to the “Class B” permit be reinserted, and to allow for the following additions:

- 1.) No property owner can apply for a Class B permit if they have held an active STR permit in the last calendar year, and
- 2.) No property owner can apply for a Class B permit for more than two consecutive years.

The amendment died due to the lack of a second.

Mr. May thanked the STR committee for their tremendous amount of work. He also stated that the current ordinance reflected that hard work. He also thanked Seabrook Island residents for their participation in this process.

The council then proceeded to vote on the ordinance, with the following vote:

Mr. Hamilton	aye
Mr. Kleinman	aye
Mr. Kortvelesy	nay
Mr. May	aye

Mr. Weis

aye

Ordinance 2024-06 PASSED second reading with four aye's and one nay.

Ordinance 2024-07

An ordinance amending the Official Zoning District Map of the Town of Seabrook Island to reflect the location of the Short-Term Rental Overlay District

Mr. Weis motioned to approve Ordinance 2024-07, seconded by Mr. Kortvelesy.

Without further discussion, Ordinance 2024-07 passed second reading UNANIMOUSLY.

Ordinance 2024-08

An ordinance amending the Town Code for the Town of Seabrook Island; Chapter 8, Businesses and Business Regulations; Article I, Business License; Section 8-21, Classification and Rates; so as to amend the rates for class 9.2 businesses (Short-Term Rental Units) for the License Year beginning May 1, 2025

Mr. Cronin stated that there were small changes made to Ordinance 2024-08 to remove references to the "Class B" permit.

Mr. Weis motioned to approve Ordinance 2024-08, seconded by Mr. May.

Without further discussion, Ordinance 2024-08 passed second reading UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Kleinman thanked residents, council, and staff for their hard work on the STR Ordinances.

Ordinance 2024-10

An ordinance amending the Town Code for the Town of Seabrook Island, South Carolina; Chapter 20, Planning and Development; Article IV, Comprehensive Plan; Section 20-70, Adopted; so as to adopt a five-year review and update to the Town's Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Hamilton motioned to approve Ordinance 2024-10, seconded by Mr. Weis.

Mr. Kleinman motioned to amend the Town's Comprehensive Plan so as to remove references to the Special Committee on Finance, seconded by Mr. May.

Mr. Kleinman's amendment to Ordinance 2024-10 passed UNANIMOUSLY.

Ordinance 2024-10 as amended, passed second reading
UNANIMOUSLY.

Ordinance 2024-11

An Ordinance Amending the Town Code for the Town of Seabrook Island, South Carolina; Chapter 32, Waterways and Beaches; Article II, Beachfront Management; Division I, Generally; Section 32-20, Plan Adopted; so as to Adopt an Updated Comprehensive Beach Management Plan for the Town of Seabrook Island

Mr. Weis moved to approve 2024-11, seconded by Mr. May.

Mr. Cronin stated there were minor typos and grammatical corrections to the document since first reading.

Ordinance 2024-11 passed second reading UNANIMOUSLY.

Ordinance 2024-12

An Ordinance to Adopt a Budget for the Town of Seabrook Island, South Carolina for the Fiscal Year Beginning January 1, 2025, and Ending December 31, 2025

Mr. Hamilton motioned to approve Ordinance 2024-12, seconded by Mr. May.

Mr. Cronin stated there was a minor change to the FY 2025 budget to allow for grant funds to be carried over from FY 2024. He stated these funds were related to a beach signage project that still needed state permits.

Ordinance 2024-12 passed second reading UNANIMOUSLY.

OTHER ACTION ITEMS

Resolution 2024-38

A Resolution Authorizing the Temporary Discharge of Firearms by the Seabrook Island Property Owners Association (SIPOA) Within the Town of Seabrook Island for the Purpose of Thinning the Deer Herd

Heather Paton of SIPOA provided context and background to council on the pending resolution.

Mr. Hamilton asked Ms. Paton where the discharge of firearms would take place. Ms. Paton stated this would all take place behind the security gate.

Mr. May asked Ms. Paton if she knew the number of deer on the island. Ms. Paton said she did not know the number but she could get it and provide it to council.

Mr. Weis motioned to approve Resolution 2024-38, seconded by Mr. Kortvelesy.

Mr. May stated he did not have enough information to justify the resolution stating that council believes that it is in the best interest of the public to thin the deer herd.

Mr. Kleinman made a motion to amend the resolution, so as to insert in the final *WHEREAS* clause, “based on the determination and representation made by SIPOA”, seconded by Mr. May.

Mr. Kleinman’s amendment passed UNANIMOUSLY.

Without further discussion, Resolution 2024-38 as amended, passed UNANIMOUSLY.

Resolution 2024-39

A Resolution Adopting a Supplemental Compensation Policy for the Town of Seabrook Island

Mr. Cronin provided a summary of Resolution 2024-39.

Mr. Hamilton asked a hypothetical question related to potential pay increases of a newly hired employee. Mr. Hamilton stated that a newly hired employee could get pay increases as high as 11.3%. He asked if this scenario is included in the resolution, and if newly hired employees are given this information before beginning employment.

Mr. Cronin stated this scenario assumes the employee gets an outstanding evaluation. He stated that in this case, the 11.3% raise is warranted. He further stated that the likelier scenario is an employee receives “meets” or “exceeds” expectations on a performance evaluation, in which the employee would not receive an 11.3% increase.

Mr. Hamilton stated he did not see anything measurable in the performance matrix. He further stated that there were areas of the proposal he would like to see improved.

Mr. Cronin stated he would work with employees as part of the evaluation process to establish goals for each individual employee.

Ms. Watkins stated to the council that this resolution closely mirrors what other local municipalities offer their employees.

Mr. Kortvelesy stated he was glad this proposal has been put on paper. He stated that prior council’s have been asking for something like this for the past two years. He went on to state that there is much more in this resolution than past councils have ever asked for, so it was his wish to thank Mr. Cronin for finally presenting this plan.

Mr. Hamilton stated he had pulled data from the Bureau of Labor statistics, and that 1% of local governments offer a hiring bonus, 2% of local governments offer an end-of-year bonus, and 8% of local governments offer a longevity bonus.

Mr. May asked if bonuses were subject to council approval.

Mr. Cronin stated that it was at his discretion to recommend bonuses, but it is at the mayor's discretion to approve due to the mayor having broad authority on how the budget is implemented.

There was a discussion that followed amongst the council, Mr. Cronin, and the Town's attorney related to the ability of council setting an employee bonus threshold.

Mr. Kleinman stated as much as he wanted to pass the resolution today, perhaps consideration should be postponed until the January meeting. In the meantime, he stated, the Town should consult with the Town attorney on establishing the council's powers to approve or deny bonus-type payments to employees.

Mr. Kleinman motioned to continue consideration of Resolution 2024-39 until the January meeting of the council, with the understanding that the cost of living adjustment would still be paid to staff as passed in the FY 2025 budget, seconded by Mr. Hamilton.

Mr. Kleinman's motion passed UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Kortvelesy commented that council frequently recognizes the hard work of town staff. He further stated that one of the ways that council rewards staff is through added compensation.

Appointments

Mr. Kleinman stated that there were two applications for appointments to the Planning Commission, one from Jim Newton and another from Jennifer Miller.

Mr. Hamilton motioned to appoint both Mr. Newton and Ms. Miller to the Planning Commission for a term of two years, beginning on January 1, 2025, seconded by Mr. May.

Mr. Hamilton's motion passed UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Kleinman motioned to appoint John Robinson as Associate Municipal Judge for the Town of Seabrook Island, subject to both he and Mr. Cronin negotiating a salary for the position, seconded by Mr. May.

Mr. Kleinman's motion was passed UNANIMOUSLY.

2025 Meeting and Holiday Calendar

Mr. Kortvelesy motioned to approve both the 2025 Meeting and Holiday Calendar, seconded by Mr. Hamilton.

Mr. Kleinman wished to move the September council meeting to September 30, 2025, so as not to conflict with Rosh Hashanah.

Mr. Kortvelesy's motion was approved UNANIMOUSLY.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

There were no Items for Information/Discussion.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no Citizen Comments.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

There were no Council Comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Mayor Kleinman declared the meeting adjourned at 4:53 pm.

Peter D. Wiggins II, MPA
Clerk/Treasurer

** - Mr. Weis left the meeting at approximately 4:02 pm.*