

Town of Seabrook Island
Ways and Means Committee Meeting
April 17, 2018
2:30 P.M.

After the pledge of allegiance, Mayor Ciancio called the meeting to order. Council members Gregg, Finke and Wells, Town Clerk Allbritton and Town Administrator Cronin attended the meeting. Mayor Ciancio confirmed that the requirements of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act had been met.

Mayor Ciancio expressed concern that there are properties on Seabrook Island that are being offered for rental, the owners of which have not obtained a required business license. He circulated a draft of an ordinance which provides in part that all owners or agents placing advertisements offering a residential unit for rent are required to display his or her business license number and indicated that it was similar in part to an ordinance the Town of Kiawah Island had recently adopted. He asked council for comment on both the value of an ordinance of the nature suggested and whether council members agreed with him that the more substantive regulation of rental property should more appropriately be within the purview of the Property Owners Association.

A general discussion of the questions presented by the Mayor followed. Councilwoman Finke asked about enforcement of the ordinance. Councilman Gregg suggested language changes to the ordinance. Town Administrator Cronin suggested that the effective date of the ordinance be delayed to allow sufficient time to inform property owners of the requirements of the ordinance. The Mayor said the ordinance would be presented for first reading at the regular April meeting.

The Mayor noted that the POA sponsors a resident “garage sale” annually. This is an event where residents can set up stands and sell furniture and household goods. The POA doesn’t have the space for this event, so it asks for use of the town hall parking lot. The Mayor said that the Town currently does not have either a policy or ordinance to cover this situation and asked the Town Administrator to review the parade and public assembly ordinance he had prepared. The Town Administrator said that the draft was based in part on an ordinance adopted by Mount Pleasant and would require a town permit for any parade or public assembly (each as defined in the ordinance) which is anticipated to take place on any property owned or leased by the Town or over which the Town has an easement – essentially town hall, the parking lot and Seabrook Island Road from the gate to the circle. The Town Administrator will issue the permit if the conditions set forth in the ordinance are met, including no interruption of vehicular or pedestrian traffic. The ordinance also anticipates that council will adopt by resolution a policy governing the use of town hall. He noted that the POA event was scheduled for early May and it might not be possible to adopt the ordinance prior to the event.

The Mayor reported that he, Councilman Gregg and Town Administrator Cronin, together with representatives of the Seabrook Island Property Owners Association met with representatives of Berkeley Electric Cooperative (BEC) on April 12 to discuss measures BEC has taken and propose to take in light of experiences of Seabrook Island with Hurricanes Matthew and Irma. The discussions covered BEC’s routine maintenance which included change out of underground cable and a number of transformers. The Mayor noted that when BEC changes out transformers, it also replaces 5 inch height mounting pads with 15 inch height mounting pads. While the primary purpose of the higher pad is to allow more efficient and safe repair of the equipment, it does have a collateral effect of raising the equipment slightly higher off the ground.

BEC indicated that most of its planned work over the next ten (10) years will focus on the underground cable which apparently is nearing the end of its expected life. This work will be prioritized based on repairs made and the number of member service locations that would be affected if a cable were to fail and an outage were to occur.

As far as preventive measures – those designed to reduce the potential for future power outages under normal circumstances and during major storms with flooding – the effort was divided into four classifications based on various metrics which include the number of member service locations impacted, cost and long-term utility. The first priority will include the installation of two video cameras at Haulover Creek and near the Pelican's Nest which will provide Berkeley the capability to see when flooding occurs at those locations. The second priority will be to replace a dozen switchgears – each located in critical areas, subject to flooding - with splice cabinets where the contained components are "submersible." The third will be to install SCADA cell or radio communication equipment in two critical locations which will enable BEC to assess the condition of its equipment.

The Mayor said that following Irma, BEC equipment which had been under water had to be cleaned out before being energized. BEC used St. Johns Fire District equipment for that purpose. During the recovery from Irma, one of SJFD's fire trucks had mechanical problems and a second was called to service elsewhere. In each case, BEC was required to use alternate, but less effective, methods to clean its equipment which delayed restoration of power to a number of homes. To address this issue, BEC has purchased four (4) skid mounted pumps to be used instead of the STJF equipment.

The Mayor reported that a meeting with members of Charleston County's Planning Department regarding their assistance in the preparation of the 2019 update of the Town's Comprehensive Plan took place on April 13. He stated that the Town is required by statute to adopt a Comprehensive Plan and the Planning Commission must re-evaluate the plan every five years and update the plan with a more thorough review every ten years. The Town's plan was first adopted in 1999 and the first ten year update was completed in 2009. The Mayor said that he had stressed to the county's representatives that he wanted to have significant public input on the plan and specifically input from the major stakeholders on the island. He indicated that he would like to take a more substantive approach to the plan and address issues relating to both our aging and younger population, our aging housing, sea level rise and the implications of our revised FEMA flood maps. The Mayor said he had scheduled a "kick-off meeting" with the members of the Planning Commission for April 19 to give council members the opportunity to provide the commission with subjects they would like to see covered in the plan.

Councilman Gregg said that a Disaster Recovery Council planning session for the June exercise is scheduled for May 7th. He suggested that, because we are doing an earthquake exercise, council members should review that section of the Comprehensive Emergency Plan which in turn directs readers to the general emergency plan. Councilman Gregg also noted that pursuant to the sense of council, he had ordered 1500 refrigerator magnets. He reported that the members of the Public Safety Committee were disappointed that more magnets were not ordered. Council woman Finke asked if it would be possible to develop an "app" that would automatically bring up relevant emergency numbers on your telephone or tablet. Concerns were expressed about implementation for the various mobile device operating systems such as Apple IOS and Android. Councilman Gregg reported that this year's Disaster Awareness Day will be held at the Kiawah Island town hall on June 13th from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. and will be followed by a wine reception.

Councilman Wells said that bids for work on the Seabrook Island Road improvements will be opened on April 26th. He expressed concern that the bids might be higher than what we had budgeted for work for this year. The Mayor suggested that he had anticipated that the monies that had been budgeted for 2017 but remained unspent would be carried over to the 2018 budget year. He asked the Town Clerk and Town Administrator to try to resolve that issue.

Councilman Wells provided an update on the Lowcountry Marine Mammal Network project. He reported that representatives of LMMN were on Seabrook Island last week and met with over twenty potential volunteers for the dolphin education program. Councilman Wells suggested that council examine ways to amend our beach ordinance to protect dolphins while strand feeding. The Mayor said that he agreed in concept but would like to see what other communities had done in this regard before taking any action.

Town Administrator Cronin indicated that he had verified that the scheduled for delivery of the new conference room furniture would be about eight weeks. He asked to meet with the Mayor regarding colors and types of fixtures. He reported having met with the contractor and having asked for a budget for the work to be done. He also reported that the Town had received three or four bids for the electrical equipment but wanted to obtain several additional bids. His priority will be to do the conference room first, power wash the exterior and, if there is money remaining, to proceed with exterior painting. He expects to have bids for the exterior painting sometime in the July time frame.

The Town Administrator reported that, at the Mayor's request, he had met with a company that has the capability to digitize all of the town's records. He said that they agreed on a priority list of records which were to be copied first and expects a bid for that work shortly. He noted that the company had copy equipment which would allow the town to select where the document should be stored digitally at the same time copies were being made.

Town Administrator Cronin said that there were two temporary events at Bohicket Marina that were being presented to the Town for approval. The first is the 5th Annual Dolphin Slam fishing tournament for local fishermen which serves as a "kick-off" to the second event, the Annual Billfish Tournament. He noted that, because the Dolphin Slam is a one day event, he would have the authority to authorize that event. However, the Marina would like to set the "weigh-in" stage up on April 23rd and leave it up until the conclusion of the Billfish Tournament on May 12th. Accordingly the Town Administrator asked that council consider the two matters in tandem. Both of these matters will be considered at the next regularly scheduled council meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Date: April 24, 2018

Faye Allbritton, Town Clerk