

**TOWN OF SEABROOK ISLAND  
WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING  
August 11, 2020, at 1:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

The August 11, 2020 Ways and Means Committee 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 Clerk Allbritton and Town Administrator Cronin participated in the meeting. Mayor Gregg confirmed with the Town Clerk that notice of the meeting was properly posted, and the requirements of the SC Freedom of Information Act were met.

**Mayor John Gregg:**

- Notice of Finalization of Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) – Mayor Gregg reported that the Town had received a letter dated July 29 from the Federal Emergency Management Administration saying that the Flood Insurance Rate Maps that had first been proposed in 2016 had been finalized. Final approval had been delayed due to the large amount of comments and appeals, including an appeal from Seabrook Island. The proposed FIRM will become effective on January 29, 2021. The Town will confirm with Charleston County Building Inspection Services, which issues building permits for the Town, that all regulations that are required for the Town to remain eligible for participation in the National Flood Insurance Program are in place.
- Town's Response to Tropical Storm Isaias – Beginning with the first Charleston County Emergency Management Department (CCEMD) conference call on July 31 concerning Tropical Storm Isaias, Town officials began following the Town's Comprehensive Emergency Response Plan for a hurricane, operating at increased readiness status. The Town participated in daily conference calls with CCEMD, reviewed information collected and issued six Public Information Statements reporting storm development, response and preparations by Charleston County and advising of projected likely impacts for Seabrook Island. In preparing to conduct damage assessment, the leader of the local CERT notified the Town that it would be contrary to pandemic guidance to have two member teams working together to do damage assessment. Mayor Gregg remarked to Councilman Crane, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, that this issue would need to be addressed.
- Seabrook Island Property Owners Association (SIPOA) Request for a Message Sign – Mayor Gregg stated that Council expressed their support for having the Town's Development Standards Ordinance (DSO) amended to address a request from SIPOA for a permit for an electronic message sign. The Town Administrator has prepared text amendments that will facilitate that request with limitations that are intended to prevent proliferation of such signs within the community.

## **Town Councilmembers:**

### **Skip Crane –**

- Public Safety Committee– Councilman Crane reported that the Public Safety Committee met on Monday, August 10. The Committee had a brief recap of the response to Tropical Storm Isaias. The Committee continues to organize input for updating the Town’s Comprehensive Emergency Plan and they also put in place an initial schedule for public safety related activity, such as emergency exercises.
- Development Standards Advisory Group – Councilman Crane reported that the DSO Advisory Group has two meetings scheduled – one on August 13 and the second on August 20. The remaining Articles to be covered are mainly administrative and they might be able to cover them quickly. Once the Advisory Group goes through the Articles, there will be a revised edition of the DSO that will be reviewed.

### **Jeri Finke –**

- Short-Term Rental Ad Hoc Committee – Councilwoman Finke and Councilwoman Fox provided Council with a memo to aid in the discussion of the role the Town might want to play in aiding SIPOA with regulation of short-terms rentals. Councilwoman Finke stated again that she is in no way suggesting that Council limit anyone’s ability to rent their property. Councilwoman Finke commented that, in meeting with SIPOA representatives, they have indicated they would like the Town to consider assisting them with parking and occupancy issues. She stated that the Short-Term Rental Ad Hoc Committee does not feel that the Town should get involved with parking issues as most of those issues need to be worked out between SIPOA and the regimes.

Councilwoman Finke reported that many jurisdictions have put occupancy limits on rentals and require that information to be advertised in any rental offering. Charleston County tax records could be used to determine the number of bedrooms and the Town could decide how to limit occupancy based on the number of bedrooms. She stated that there would need to be an appeal process for the owner, or their agent, if they felt there was any reason occupancy should be higher than the number of bedrooms suggests. Councilwoman Finke stated that, in her opinion, the issues the Committee would be trying to solve by regulating occupancy would apply to all rentals, not just for the short term. Since the Town’s DSO is currently being rewritten and the Town’s Business License Ordinance also needs to be rewritten, this would be a good time for the Town to address appropriate rental issues. Councilwoman Fox agrees that whatever the Town does to regulate occupancy should apply to all rentals, not just short term, and basing the number of bedrooms on Charleston County records, with an appeal process, would allow the Town to enforce occupancy levels.

Mayor Gregg commented that, if enforcement is needed beyond what is included in a rental ad, the Committee might think about how the Town would implement enforcement due to the Town’s limited number of Code Enforcement personnel. Beyond checking the rental ads, Councilwoman Finke stated that, when there were complaints, she thought the Town would have the ability to go in and inspect, if necessary.

After a lengthy discussion about whether rental provisions should be a part of the Development Standards Ordinance or a part of the Business License Ordinance, Councilwoman Finke stated that she would study the Municipal Association's Model Business License Ordinance and would talk to Town Administrator Cronin before moving forward with wording for ordinance changes.

**Patricia Fox – No Report**

**Barry Goldstein –**

- Educational efforts related to the impact of certain rodenticides on the local bobcat population – Councilman Goldstein reported that he had spoken with Jim Jordan, Wildlife Biologist at Kiawah, and had gotten the history of what Kiawah had done pertaining to the impact of second generation anticoagulant rodenticide (SGA's) on their bobcat population. Pesticide companies put SGA's outside a house to keep rats or mice away. Bobcats then feed on the dead mice or rats and they, in turn, die. Kiawah has sent a letter to the State regulatory agency asking them to ban SGA's for one year, but they have not heard back from the agency. They have also been educating their citizens and letting them know that the pesticides are hurting their environment and they have been appealing to the pesticide companies not to use SGA's.

It is Councilman Goldstein's opinion that, since Kiawah and Seabrook Island's bobcats may intermingle, Seabrook Island should take the same approach toward banning SGA's. Councilman Goldstein stated that Mr. Jordan has provided him with information that the Town could use to educate property owners as well as sending letters to pesticide companies and to the State regulatory agency. Mayor Gregg suggested that Tidelines, the Town's website and SIPOA's eblast could be used to raise the awareness of the community about what is happening to bobcats resulting from the use of SGA's. Councilwoman Fox also suggested putting an article in *The Seabrooker*. Mayor Gregg commented that he could sign a letter to be sent to pesticide companies, but he was not certain that a letter to the State regulatory agency would be of any help. Councilwoman Fox commented that the residents should also be informed that there is an alternative pesticide that can be used.

- Mask requirement on wooden boardwalks – Councilman Goldstein stated that he has received numerous comments wanting the Town to require masks on the wooden boardwalks rather than just encouraging their use. Mayor Gregg stated that the Town's ordinance encourages masks be worn on the boardwalks and beyond that he is not sure if we need to do anything more because of the enforcement issue. Councilwoman Finke stated that she had been getting a lot of comments about wearing masks on the boardwalks also. Mayor Gregg commented that Council would be taking up the expiration of Emergency Ordinance 2020-03, which will expire on August 30, and Council can revisit the question of requiring the use of face coverings on wooden boardwalks at that time.

**Town Administrator Cronin:**

**Items for Information/Discussion**

- Expiration of Emergency Ordinance 2020-03 – Since this is an emergency ordinance, it is valid for 60 days and will expire on August 30, 2020. The Town Administrator advised Council they could revisit this ordinance either at the regular Town Council meeting on

August 25 or schedule an emergency meeting. No additional action would be required if Council wished to allow the current ordinance to lapse. Mayor Gregg stated that he would prefer taking up the ordinance at the regular Town Council meeting.

- Notice of State Accommodation Tax Grant Applications for FY 2021 – The Town Administrator stated that the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee has set their meeting date as August 27 at 1:00 p.m. He explained that the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee must review and give their recommendations to Council on State Accommodations Tax Grants for the 2021 budget year. A copy of the application has been sent to any groups that have applied in the past as well as a few other potential applicants. The application is also posted on the Town’s website. The deadline for receiving the completed applications is 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 20.
- Reminder of Upcoming Budget Workshop – Town Administrator Cronin reminded Council that a Budget Workshop for 2021 Budget will be held August 18 at 1:00 p.m. Council should be prepared to discuss their priorities for the 2021 Budget at that meeting.
- Discussion of Procedure for Consideration of Street Name Change Requests – Town Administrator Cronin reported that the Town had received a request from a resident to change the name of a street within the Town limits. Under State law, the Planning Commission would be the authority to change a street name. Street names can be changed for the following reasons:
  - Duplication of names or other condition that may confuse the traveling public
  - A change may simplify marking or giving directions
  - Any other good and just reason that may appear to the Planning Commission

If a street name is changed, feedback would have to be solicited and there would be a public hearing. If it is decided that the street name should be changed, a certificate would be issued by the Planning Commission and recorded by Charleston County.

The Town Administrator added that the Town currently does not have anything in the Development Standards Ordinance that specifies how and when the Planning Commission may consider a request to change a street name. Many municipalities require a petition signed by a majority or super majority of individuals who live on the street. In this instance, the person, who has requested a street name change, does not appear to live or own property on that street. This item will be on the agenda for the next Planning Commission meeting so that they can begin considering the process by which a street name could be changed or if they would like Council to codify the process into the DSO.

- Audit Presentation – The Town Administration reminded Council that a representative of Mauldin & Jenkins would participate in the August Town Council meeting and would give an overview of the Town’s 2019 audit.

**Action Items for August 25, 2020 Meeting:**

- Ordinance 2020-07: An ordinance amending the Development Standards Ordinance of the Town of Seabrook Island, South Carolina; Article 12, Signs; so as to create new classifications of signs to be called “Community Message Board Signs; and “Electronic Variable Message Displays”; to permit Electronic Variable Message Displays to be affixed to Community Message Board signs under certain conditions; and other matters related thereto;

and Article 16; Design and Improvement Standards; Section 16.10, Subdivision Design Standards; Subsection 16.10.40, Arterial Streets; so as to modify the designation of arterial streets within the Town; and other matters related thereto.

The Town Administrator stated that the Town had received a request from the Seabrook Island Property Owners Association to install an electronic sign in the vicinity of the security gate but the Town's current ordinance would not allow the type signs that have been requested. After much discussion with the Planning Commission and Town Council, the Town Administrator has prepared a draft amendment to the DSO, which will go to the Planning Commission for their review at their next meeting, before it goes to Town Council for first reading.

Town Administrator Cronin reviewed the suggested changes in Article 12 and Article 16 of the Town's ordinance. Some of the changes include:

- In Section 12.10, a new category of sign/display – Electronic Variable Message Display – will be added.
- In Section 12.30.20, Municipal Signs will be changed to Government Signs.
- In Section 12.60.70, Community Signs will be divided into two types – Community Identifications Signs and Community Message Board Signs. The Community Message Board Signs can contain an electronic variable message display. If it does, the electronic message board can only be located on property next to an arterial street where the posted speed limit does not exceed 15 mph. There are numerous conditions the electronic variable message displays would be required to meet.
- In Section 12.80 – Permit Applications will be changed to require a site plan with certain specifications in instances where the proposed sign will be freestanding.
- In Section 16.10.40, the definition of “arterial street” is changed to specify that it runs from the traffic circle to Long Bend Drive.

The Town Administrator stated that this ordinance, as presented, will amend the Town's ordinance to allow electronic message board signs, prevent proliferations of these types of signs and ensure that any signs having any LED components will still remain consistent with the general character and quality of existing signage within the Town.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Date: August 25, 2020



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Town Clerk