

**TOWN OF SEABROOK ISLAND
WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING
September 8, 2020, at 1:00 p.m.**

MINUTES

The September 8, 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:

- Comments Received Concerning the Extended Mask Requirements (Emergency Ordinance 2020-05) – Mayor Gregg shared email that he had received expressing dissatisfaction with the extension of the Town’s mandate for wearing face coverings that would include wearing a face covering on the Seabrook Island Property Owners Association (SIPOA) boardwalks. The Town Administrator recently placed signs at the boardwalks to raise awareness of the new requirement, but several signs have been removed. Mayor Gregg stated that he had approved procurement of a solar powered camera so that the Town can assess compliance with the face covering mandate on the boardwalks. It is hoped that the camera can also be used to monitor construction traffic at the proposed senior living facility.
- Rezoning Request for Property at 4455 Betsy Kerrison Parkway – Mayor Gregg provided Council with an agenda for a Charleston County Planning Commission Workshop scheduled for September 14, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. He called Council’s attention to the zoning change that is being requested to permit development of the property, located to the north side of the Kiawah Municipal Center, for commercial use as a miniature (putt-putt) golf operation. The Mayor noted that he had been contacted by a resident who expressed concern that the proposed development would result in damage or destruction of the schoolhouse structure that had been moved to that property in connection with road construction in 1991.
- Kiawah Adoption of Revised Terms for Mayor and Members of Council– Mayor Gregg had provided Council with a copy of an adopted Kiawah Island ordinance that would change the terms of the Mayor and members of their Town Council from two years to four years. Mayor Gregg reported that the Seabrook Island Town Council had considered a similar change in 2019 but tabled the matter until after the 2019 election. The Mayor noted that, under the Town’s current ordinance, there could be a complete turnover of Town officials after an election. State law does not allow for staggering of terms of fewer than four years. The Mayor then asked for Council’s thoughts. Councilmembers recognized the benefit of staggering terms but felt it might be difficult to get residents to commit to four-year terms. Town Administrator Cronin noted that Seabrook Island and Kiawah Island were the only two municipalities, in a sample of 27 municipalities in South Carolina with a population between 1,000 and 2,500, that have two-year terms; and, with Kiawah adopting an ordinance to change term limits, only Seabrook Island will have two-year terms.

He suggested, at the least, if Council is not interested in changing to four-year terms, the date for the Mayor and Council to be sworn in should be changed so it would be possible to have some type of orientation before the new slate is sworn in. Currently, according to the Town's ordinance, the swearing in occurs on the third day after the election provided the results of the election have been verified. Councilwoman Finke agreed with the Town Administrator and said she thought it would be good to wait until the beginning of the year for officials to take office. Councilwoman Fox commented that she was beginning to think Council should consider four-year terms. She stated that she was in favor of moving the date for officials to take office. Councilman Crane added that, if the Town were to go to four-year terms, the terms should be staggered. Councilwoman Finke added that she was open to discussing term limits further but thinks the first change should be moving the date for Council to be sworn in to the first of the year. Mayor Gregg stated that a hurricane exercise is usually held in January and at least that gives new councilmembers a chance to get familiar with the Town's Comprehensive Emergency Plan before hurricane season begins. Councilman Goldstein agreed that there is a benefit of staggering terms, but it is uncertain if enough people will commit to four years. Mayor Gregg asked the Town Administrator to prepare text amendments to the appropriate section of Town Code to address both – the date councilmembers are sworn in and the length of the terms – for discussion at a subsequent meeting. Mayor Gregg stated that he is not pushing for Council to be paid as had been discussed by the previous Council and not asking that this be included in the text amendments to be prepared.

- 2020 Update of the Charleston County Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan – Mayor Gregg had indicated at the August Town Council meeting that the Town is obliged to confirm that members of Council had been notified of the 2020 update of the Charleston County Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan. Members of Council have been provided a copy of the acknowledgement of receipt of that confirmation from Charleston County Building Inspection Services.

Town Councilmembers:

Skip Crane –

- 2020 Update to the Comprehensive Emergency Plan (CEP) – Councilman Crane stated that Council should have received the updated pages for the CEP. He reviewed several sections that had changed but the major portion of the changes pertained to the Pandemic section. Councilman Crane noted that this is first time changes in the CEP have been brought forward for approval and adoption by Council and the Town Administrator will be bringing that up later in the meeting. If anyone has changes to the CEP, Councilman Crane should receive them by September 15.
- Development Standards Advisory Group – Councilman Crane reported that meetings of the DSO Advisory Group are scheduled for September 17 and 29.

Jeri Finke –

- Short-Term Rental Ad Hoc Committee – Councilwoman Finke reported that the Committee will meet with the Town Administrator on Thursday, September 10, and discuss amending the Town's ordinance pertaining to occupancy limits on short-term rentals.
- Miniature Golf Course – Councilwoman Finke stated that there is a conceptual plan of the miniature golf course that is being proposed for Johns Island in the current issue of *The*

Seabrooker and thinks that plan is what will be presented at the Charleston County Planning Commission Workshop on September 14. She encouraged anyone who is interested to submit comments to the Charleston County Planning Commission. Councilwoman Finke added that this item had been on the Johns Island Task Force's meeting agenda, but it was more of an alert that this was going before the Charleston County Planning Commission, rather than taking a position on the project.

- Charleston County Emergency Management Department (CCEMD) – Councilwoman Finke noted for the record that, in response to people who are saying that the Town should consult experts before coming up with some of their policies, there had been daily calls with the CCEMD for about two months and then they changed to every other day and now there are weekly calls. On these calls, there are reports from every imaginable agency – Federal partners, State partners, MUSC, DHEC, etc. Mayor Gregg added that all the information from these calls is not for the public but for local governments and other agencies. All information received on these calls help to keep Council informed so they can make policy decisions for the Town.
- Message Board Sign – Councilwoman Finke added that she had gotten a few comments from people who have mentioned that the message board sign on Seabrook Island Road, at the entrance to the island, is not very attractive. Town Administrator Cronin stated that he had planned to bring up terminating the use of the sign in his report.

Patricia Fox –

- Status of Ham Radio Repairs – Councilwoman Fox reported that the ham radio cable to the conference room appears to have been repaired and she and Max Willis will meet at the Town Hall on September 10 to do a radio check to confirm.
- Reply to 2020 Census – Councilwoman Fox reported that Tidelines ran a post recently about the deadline for responding to the 2020 census being extended until the end of September and it was also run in *The Seabrooker*.
- Comments on Beach Rules for Pets – Councilwoman Fox reported that, on September 3, Tidelines ran a post informing residents how they could make comments about the Beach Rules for Pets Ordinance and, on that day, the Town Hall received about 18-19 comments.

Barry Goldstein –

- Boardwalks/Face Coverings – Councilman Goldstein stated that it appears, once people were aware that face coverings were required on boardwalks, most people are complying whether they agree with it or not.

**Town Administrator Cronin:
Items for Information/Discussion**

- Message Board Sign – The Town Administrator asked for confirmation that Council would like to have Sunbelt pick up the message board sign that has been used to get messages out to residents and visitors through the peak beach season. Mayor Gregg stated that he had no objection to having the sign picked up.

Councilwoman Finke asked the Town Administrator if he could check with SIPOA to see if the Town would be allowed to put a sign, like the ones at the boardwalks, at the gatehouse.

- Concrete Pad – The Town Administrator received confirmation from Council that a concrete pad could be poured for a bench, that would be provided by a family member, in memory of the son of one of the Town’s part-time employees.
- Review of Public Comments on Ordinance 2019-09 (Beach Rules for Pets Ordinance) – Town Administrator Cronin had distributed a summary of the comments received from the public regarding the Beach Rules for Pets Ordinance to Council and he gave a brief overview of the results. There was a total of 107 comments received – 84 through our website, 23 through email. Approximately 60% recommended continuing the ordinance as adopted in 2019 and about 37% would like one or more changes made to the ordinance. About 95% of the comments supported the 2019-09 ordinance, either with or without changes. The largest number of individuals, who wanted changes to the ordinance (18), wanted to allow dogs off-leash in front of the Camp St. Christopher area. The consensus of Council was that there should be no changes to the ordinance at this time. The Mayor stated that he believes the ordinance has been effective and met the objectives for which it was passed. Councilwoman Finke wanted to clear up any misconception that making the area of the beach in the vicinity of the Camp as an on-leash area was not done strictly for Camp St. Christopher. It was also done in consideration of the group of people that wanted an area where they could take their dogs on a leash and all other dogs present would be on a leash. Mayor Gregg also pointed out that this was an unusual year because of the pandemic and the Camp has not been able to operate as it normally would where school age children could be on the beach pretty much year-round.
- Discussion of potential amendments to the Town’s Beach Restrictions Ordinance – Town Administrator Cronin noted that he and the Mayor met recently with the Mayor and Town Administrator from Kiawah and Spencer Wetmore, our newly elected State Representative who replaced Peter McCoy. One of the main reasons for the meeting was to discuss the problem of dips and potholes in the roadway of Betsy Kerrison Parkway in the vicinity of the Haulover Creek bridge. Representative Wetmore has notified the Town Administrator that the SC Department of Transportation thinks the problems are a settling issue and they would get a paving crew out to address the problems. After Representative Wetmore left the meeting, issues at Captain Sam’s Inlet were discussed. The Town Administrator stated that Kiawah has an ordinance that prohibits wading or swimming in Captain Sam’s Inlet. Seabrook Island currently does not prohibit swimming in the Inlet. Due to recent incidents at Captain Sam’s Inlet, the Town Administrator provided Council with a draft ordinance and noted that this would be a policy decision for Council but he would like Council to discuss strengthening some of the protections already in place in the Town’s ordinance. The draft ordinance included adding protection for marine mammals, such as bottlenose dolphins, as well as sea turtles and certain species of shore birds and restrictions on swimming in Captain Sam’s Inlet. The majority of Council seemed to agree they were in favor of prohibiting swimming in the Inlet during the times as stated, two hours before and after low tide, since those would be times that are characterized as when the dolphins would likely be strand feeding but had concerns about an unqualified prohibition of swimming in the Inlet. It was suggested that what is now Sec. 32-58 (a) (1) and (2) of the proposed amendments be moved into Sec. 32-43. Wildlife and marine life protection.

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 (*Second Reading and Public Hearing*). Town Administrator Cronin reminded Council that Ordinance 2020-07, which will allow electronic variable message display signs, will have second reading and a public hearing at the September Town Council meeting.
- **Ordinance 2020-08:** An ordinance amending the Town Code for the Town of Seabrook Island, South Carolina; Chapter 2, Administration; Article VI, Emergency Preparedness; Section 2-312, emergency Operations Plan; so as to adopt a new Comprehensive Emergency Plan (CEP) for the Town of Seabrook Island (First Reading). Town Administrator Cronin noted that Section 2-312 of the Town Code states that the last Emergency Operations Plan for the Town was updated on April 10, 1989. Since the Town’s Comprehensive Emergency Plan has not been adopted by ordinance, he recommended that Section 2-312 be amended to include the current CEP. A section of the ordinance provides that the newest version of the CEP become our baseline plan and that future updates can be adopted, upon recommendation by the Public Safety Committee, by resolution by Council

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Date: September 22, 2020



Town Clerk