

May 19, 2015

The regular meeting of Town Council was held on the above date at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall; all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been satisfied:

Present were: Pat O'Neil, Mayor  
Jerry Kaynard, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Sarah Church, Councilmember  
Chauncey Clark, Councilmember  
Hartley Cooper, Councilmember  
Susan Middaugh, Councilmember  
Mary Jane Watson, Councilmember  
Council-Elect – Mark Howard, Rita Langley

Mayor O'Neil called the meeting to order, and led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the invocation by Councilmember Watson. There were eighteen members in the audience, including one member of the media.

Mayor O'Neil administered the Oath of Office to Sarah Church, fulfilling the term vacated when Councilmember O'Neil was elected Mayor.

**Motion was made by Councilmember Watson, seconded by Councilmember Middaugh, to amend the agenda to move Action Item Two – A Resolution Honoring the Life of Rovena Jones Hazel – to before public comment; and after public comment and the Public Hearing, to start with the Finance Committee, carried unanimously.**

Mayor O'Neil stated Councilmember Middaugh initially suggested the resolution honoring Rovena Jones Hazel. Councilmember Middaugh introduced Mrs. Hazel's daughter, Rovena Owen. Ms. Owen introduced her brother, Allen Perry Hazel and his wife, Judy Hazel; her sister Maggie; cousin Mildred Michael; sister Andrea; and cousin Catherine Wells. Mayor O'Neil welcomed them and stated this resolution from the Town recognizes and honors the life of Mrs. Hazel, who was the last of her generation in a family that has its origin on Sullivan's Island as early as 1809. Mayor O'Neil presented the plaque to Ms. Owen, and she expressed her appreciation for remembering her family.

Mayor O'Neil stated there would be two public comment periods tonight – general comments and comments on the proposed budgets.

**I. FORMAT** – Mayor O'Neil opened the floor for comments.

Mark Howard, 1820 Central Avenue, stated a resident suggested temporary signage be placed on the beach paths during the month of May to remind dog owners of the time change for dogs on the

beach. That resident also stated hobie cats are being taken over the dunes at Station 27 to launch. Police Chief Howard stated beach patrol has increased, and the hobie cat situation will be researched.

Addison Ingle, 1719 Atlantic, commented that Mt. Pleasant is grooming the bushes on their side of the causeway, and questioned if the bushes on the Sullivan's Island side, especially next to the bridge, could be trimmed. He also asked if there was a plan from preventing parking on the causeway during the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration this year. It will be researched regarding the critical line in the area for trimming on the causeway.

Karen Coste, 322 Station 19, inquired what the fine was for a dog illegally on the beach. Chief Howard responded the fine is \$500 with fees up to a maximum of \$1,040.

At this time Mayor O'Neil called the Public Hearing to order for the fiscal year 2016 Town budget and the Utility budget.

Diana Browder, 2672 Goldbug, commented on the Island Club's proposed budget. As discussed at the last meeting, she stated there is need for plumbing maintenance, electrical wiring/fixture repair, insulation under the building, and repair of wood rot in the back room. She urged Council to approve the proposed funds for not only repairing the Island Club, but for making additional improvements for the only Recreation building on the Island. Building Official Randy Robinson stated after a general assessment of the building, the structural integrity of the building should be assessed before any improvements other than repair are made.

Mayor O'Neil commented that the budget for Island Club is still \$100,000 as proposed. At the last meeting a motion was made to amend the budget by requiring the Town to spend \$100K on the Island Club, and that motion failed. Therefore the funds are as proposed; however, the funds are not yet protected.

Wayne Stelljes, 3014 I'on, stated he supported the Island Club but wanted a legitimate study of the structural integrity before any improvements are made.

There being no further public comment, Mayor O'Neil concluded the public hearing at 6:34 p.m.

Finance Committee – Mayor O'Neil asked Councilmember Middaugh to give a brief update of the proposed Water & Sewer Budget for Fiscal Year 2016. He continued that it is the same budget that Council received at the last meeting; however, it also includes the rate table which was not available at the last meeting. Councilmember Middaugh stated on the water side, the average 6,000 gallon user will have a 4.7% water and sewer bill increase, which will be about \$5.69 a month. On the Sewer side, the main operational increase is in sludge hauling costs as well as SCE&G power rate costs. **Motion was made by Councilmember Clark, seconded by Councilmember Middaugh, to have First Reading of Ordinance No. 2015-04, An Ordinance to Adopt the Water and Sewer Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2015-16, carried unanimously.**

April Monthly Financial Statement – Comptroller Blanton reported that business license revenue has increased recently, and other general revenue and water revenue increased during April. Expenses are as expected. Surplus revenue from 2015, if any, could be moved forward to offset anticipated shortfall if Council desired.

Special Meeting – A Special Meeting will be held June 1, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. before the regularly scheduled Committee Workshop for Second Reading and Ratification of the Town and Utility budgets.

Town General FY 16 Budget - First reading of the budget was held May 4, 2015. The current budget is out of balance by \$324,154. Approximately 2/3 of the projected deficit is the new payments on the general obligation bond. The three basic ways to balance the budget are to raise millage, use reserve funds, and cut expenses. The assumed millage in the current budget is 1.6 mil increase (CPI). A one mill increase on a one million dollar property would cost a taxpayer about \$40 a year, and the Town would receive approximately \$60K. If the millage went to 7 mills a taxpayer would pay about \$200 more in property tax for the year. Other revenue sources are the 1.1 percent population growth for 2012 factor, which would be \$12K, and an Accommodations Tax increase of ½ percent. The Accommodations tax could be raised only by referendum, and the funds would total about \$15K per year. Because the funds are restricted and could not be used for general operating expenses, this was not further discussed. Methods to cut expenses were discussed such as charging user fees for garbage pick-up and reducing the current allocation for the Island Club. Councilmember Kaynard noted the Administration Committee wanted Council to consider a holiday salary bonus for employees provided the funding was available in December through unpaid salary of unfilled positions. Because it will not affect the budget, this will be voted on at a later date. After all discussion, it was determined that at the next meeting Comptroller Blanton would provide a budget using the CPI, the population growth, and 5 mills on debt service.

Councilmembers Cooper and Watson left the meeting.

## **II. COUNCIL ACTION ITEMS**

**1. Motion was made by Councilmember Kaynard, seconded by Councilmember Clark, to approve the Minutes from the April 21, 2015 Regular Meeting, carried by a vote of four, with Councilmember Church abstaining. Motion was made by Councilmember Kaynard, seconded by Councilmember Middaugh, to approve the Minutes from the April 30, 2015 meeting, carried by a vote of four, with Councilmember Church abstaining. Motion was made by Councilmember Kaynard, seconded by Councilmember Middaugh, to approve the Minutes from the May 4, 2015 Special Meeting, carried by a vote of four, with Councilmember Church abstaining.**

**2. The Resolution Honoring the Life of Roven Jones Hazel was presented at the beginning of the meeting.**

**3. The Resolution of Appreciation to the Municipal Election Commission for their work with the January Special Election and May Regular Election was approved.**

**4. Resolution for Construction Contract with Hill Construction – Councilmember Clark stated this resolution is the result of many years of meetings, deliberation and thought with staff, residents, and design professionals. The building is a Category 4 building to withstand storms, and will serve as the Emergency Operation Center for the Island after a disaster. The building is approximately 12,000 square feet and will have lightning protection and a generator for complete operation, including air conditioning. The generator will ensure staff can work to help residents after a disaster, as well as prevent mold in the building. Motion was made by Councilmember Clark, seconded by**

**Councilmember Middaugh, to authorize the Town Administrator to execute a construction contract for the new Town Hall/Police Department with Hill Construction in the amount of \$3,931,415.00, carried unanimously.**

5. The Proclamation for Beach Safety Week was approved.

6. First Reading of the Water and Sewer Budget was approved earlier in the meeting.

### **III. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

**1. General and New Correspondence** – Administrator Benke stated there were three resignations on the Board of Zoning Appeals – Jimmy Hiers, Bachman Smith, IV and Sarah Church. Advertising for these open seats will begin soon. In the interim, former BZA members will be appointed by the Mayor to serve until those seats are filled. Letters of appreciation were received from Jen and Tim Smith on Raven Drive regarding Water and Sewer employee Brian Jenerou, and from Sullivan’s Island Baptist Church regarding Police Officers Darren Botticelli and Nelson Gerena. Correspondence was also received from a resident on the new Raven Drive, requesting the Town pave that street. Administrator Benke introduced Josh Bloodworth, a student intern for the summer from the College of Charleston Masters of Public Administration program.

**2. Attorney’s Report** – no report.

### **3. Boards and Commissions Reports**

**Planning Commission** – Zoning Administrator Joe Henderson stated the Planning Commission met in May to consider conservation easement structures and uses. It made no recommendation to Council; however, an ad hoc committee was formed which will meet on May 29, 2015.

### **IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Finance Committee** – This was discussed earlier in meeting.

**Public Safety Committee** – Councilmember Clark. Monthly reports rendered. The street parking survey is almost complete. The no parking signs on one side of Middle Street in the Commercial District have been well-received and have provided room for the emergency vehicles to pass quickly through the area. Councilmember Clark noted that when construction begins on the new Town Hall, parking spaces around that area will not be available.

**Water and Sewer Committee** – Councilmember Middaugh. Monthly reports rendered.

**Administration Committee** – Councilmember Kaynard. Monthly report rendered.

**Land Use and Natural Resources Committee** – Mayor O’Neil. Monthly report rendered.

