



**TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA
ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL**

Tuesday, April 4, 2023

Committee met at 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, April 4, 2023 at Town Hall (2056 Middle St.), all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been met. Present were:

Committee members: Justin Novak (Chair), Kaye Smith, and Scott Millimet

Staff: Town Administrator Andy Benke and Staff Members Jason Blanton, Joe Henderson, and Pam Otto.

Public: No (0) members

1. Call to Order

Chair Novak called the meeting to order, stating the press and public were duly notified pursuant to state law, and all Committee members were present.

Media: None present

Public: None present

2. Discussion of Improving Participation in Public Meetings

Chair Novak summarized the last few meetings, listening to and considering public input concerning how public meetings are conducted and advertised. He reviewed the items the Committee has considered recommending to Council, as well as suggestions that were presented but will not recommend.

They will recommend increasing the public comment time limit from 90 seconds to two (2) minutes. It will also be recommended to add a “public comment” agenda item to committee meeting agendas. They discussed keeping the discussion/forum, or more informal 15-minute Q&A session at Council Workshop rather than Council Meetings, as well as utilizing Citibot more for notifications. There was also discussion about how to respond to public comments during the meetings. Council meetings will continue to be more formal, and Council will not engage in conversation after public comments. Conversations between Council and the public are more suited to take place at Workshop, toward the beginning. The idea of a quarterly forum was also discussed as an option. Chair Novak also suggested creating educational materials to mail to residents regarding how meetings are conducted and how the public can give input.

It was discussed that there was a need to get the word out about Citibot, and getting residents signed up for the push notification. It was decided to pursue a way to post more information about Citibot in the Island Eye News.

The recommendations to Council should be:

- Increase speaking time at Council Meetings to 2 minutes
- Add a Public Comment agenda item to every agenda that goes out
- Have a fifteen (15) minute public back and forth section at the beginning of Workshop meetings
- Publish outlines of the rules and procedures of participation in the meetings and mail it out to residents
- Push agendas through Citibot

Implementing and enforcing a rule that prohibits unruly or disruptive behavior was also discussed and it was agreed that civility should be encouraged. Mr. Benke stated people can be asked to leave the meeting if they do not comply with the rules. Mr. Millimet also suggested the various ways for residents to engage be included in the educational material. Mr. Benke also wants to encourage residents to engage with staff prior to meetings or with questions, as staff likely has answers.

Motion was made by Justin Novak, seconded by Kaye Smith, to recommend to Town Council to increase speaking times at Town Council meetings to two minutes; that each agenda have a specific public comment agenda item; that at Workshop, there be 15 minutes of public comment, that is more flexible and allows for feedback, at the beginning of the meeting; to put together a published outline of meeting structures, rules, procedures and opportunities to participate, to be mailed to residents and posted online; and at every opportunity encourage civility, reminding participants that they are all neighbors; passed unanimously.

3. **Adjourn.** There being no further public discussion or new business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:16 a.m.

Motion was made by Justin Novak, seconded by Scott Millimet, to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 a.m., passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,


Pamela Otto

Approved at the May 16, 2023 Council Meeting