

March 20, 2020

An Emergency Meeting of Town Council was held on the above date at approximately 10:00 a.m., all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been satisfied.

Present were: Patrick M. O’Neil, Mayor
Chauncey Clark, Mayor Pro-Tem
Sarah Church, Councilmember
Greg Hammond, Councilmember (Present via FaceTime Video)
Tim Reese, Councilmember
Bachman Smith, IV, Councilmember
Kaye Smith, Councilmember

Mayor O’Neil called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and stated the press and public had been notified in accordance with State Law. There were no members of the public or media present due to the State of Emergency as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Operational Status Report- Town Administrator Andy Benke: On Sunday, March 15, 2020, Mayor O’Neil issued a Proclamation declaring a State of Emergency on Sullivan’s Island. Following that, the Town went to OPCON-2 which means the Town is planning and preparing for a crisis of some sort. Town Hall is currently closed with non-essential staff working remotely from home. The Fire, Police and Water and Sewer Departments remain fully staffed with the buildings closed off to the public and visitors.

Discussion and Consideration of a motion to delay Hospitality Tax Collection: Charleston County suggested suspending the collection Hospitality Tax on Sullivan’s Island for the next ninety (90) days.

Motion: Action: To suspend the collection of Hospitality Tax on Sullivan’s Island for the next ninety (90) days.

Moved by Councilmember Tim Reese, Seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Clark.

Motion passed unanimously.

COVID-19 Discussion:

- A. Long Term Operational Status
- B. Beach Access

Chief Griffin and Chief Stith both are not in favor of closing the beach due to lack of officers and man-power.

Mayor O'Neil invited Chairman of Charleston County Council Elliott Summey to join the meeting. Mr. Summey stated that after speaking with the mayors of Isle of Palms, Kiawah Island and Seabrook Island, he does not believe it is a good idea to close the beaches. Charleston County will continue to monitor the beaches, both on land and in the air.

Councilmember Church stated she is concerned with the large groups on the beach and the crowded street surrounding the beach accesses. She suggested closing the beach from 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Councilmember Hammond stated he was in favor of either a public press release restricting groups over 10 people or restricting beach access from 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Councilmember Bachman Smith, IV suggested having a press release to inform the public and increasing the police presence on the beach.

The consensus of Town Council was to keep the beach open until further notice.

Motion: Action: Adjourn Meeting at 11:01 a.m.

Moved by Mayor Pro-Tem Clark, Seconded by Councilmember Bachman Smith, IV.

Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,


Courtney Sottile