



**Town of Sullivan's Island, South Carolina
Town Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 16, 2024, 6:00 p.m.**

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

Present were: Patrick M. O'Neil, Mayor
Justin Novak, Mayor Pro-Tem
Ned Higgins, Councilmember
Carl Hubbard, Councilmember
Jody Latham, Councilmember
Gary Visser, Councilmember

Councilmember Scott Millimet had previously notified Council that he would not be available for this meeting.

Staff members present were Town Administrator Andy Benke, Fire Chief Anthony Stith, Jason Blanton, Town Attorney Larry Dodds, Charles Drayton, Greg Gress, Amanda Hawver, Deputy Police Chief Glenn Meadows, Bridget Welch, Greg Gress, and Max Wurthmann.

Mayor Patrick M. O'Neil called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m. and stated the press and public had been notified in accordance with State Law. There were three (3) members of the public present and no (0) members of the media present. Mayor O'Neil led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence for prayer or reflection.

I. Format: Public Comments

- Ralph Byers, 3025 Middle Street – comments about the Stormwater Master Plan; would like the older drainpipes near his property be addressed in the plan to prevent sinkholes forming in his yard. SC DOT had previously told him this would be addressed in 2022.

Motion was made by Councilmember Higgins, seconded by Councilmember Hubbard, to amend the agenda to add an Executive Session contractual matter item: Drs. Nicole Elko of Elko Coastal Consulting, Inc. and Steven Traynum of Coastal Science and Engineering, Inc. regarding the US Army Corps of Engineers Breach Inlet Sediment Rehandling Project, passed unanimously.

Mayor Pro-Tem Novak stated the issue was a timely matter.

II. Correspondence:

1. Hannah Dodson, 1462 Thompson Ave – Report of an encounter with a coyote
2. CG Hintmann, 413 Station 22 ½ - Emails stating concerns with speed and electric bikes

III. Council Action Items:

- A. Approval of the December 19, 2023 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Councilmember Visser, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak to approve the December 19, 2023 Regular Council Meeting Minutes, passed unanimously.

- B. Second Reading, By Title Only, Ordinance 2023-07, An Ordinance to Amend the Zoning Regulations Regarding Height, Scale, and Mass for New Constructions, Additions, and Historic Properties: Zoning Ordinance Sections §21-20, §21-25, §21-27, §21-31, §21-43, §21-44, §21-138, and §21-140; Consideration of Text Changes to Limit Height, Scale, and Mass

Motion was made by Councilmember Higgins, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, to approve Second Reading, By Title Only, Ordinance 2023-07, An Ordinance to Amend the Zoning Regulations Regarding Height, Scale, and Mass for New Constructions, Additions, and Historic Properties: Zoning Ordinance Sections §21-20, §21-25, §21-27, §21-31, §21-43, §21-44, §21-138, and §21-140; Consideration of Text Changes to Limit Height, Scale, and Mass, passed 5-1, with Councilmember Hubbard opposing.

Councilmember Visser, Chair of the Land Use and Natural Resources Committee provided background information for these amended recommendations from the Planning Commission, which has been discussed at multiple prior meetings. Charles Drayton presented a summary of the information and an outline of the changes proposed. He then took questions from Council. Councilmember Latham stated that contrary to some beliefs, larger houses do not always increase property values, according to data from the Bankers Association and HUD. Comments were made by Mayor O’Neil and Councilmember Visser.

- C. Approval of the Community Engagement and Belonging Statement for the Town of Sullivan’s Island

Motion was made by Councilmember Latham, seconded by Councilmember Hubbard, to approve the Community Engagement and Belonging Statement for the Town of Sullivan’s Island, passed unanimously.

This statement was put forward by the Sullivan’s Island Youth Council and DeLacy Poletti presented it before the Administration Committee. Councilmember Latham, Mayor Pro-Tem, and Mayor O’Neil commended the group for their contribution.

IV. Reports and Communication:

- A) Mayor's Report: Nothing to Report
- B) Administrator's Report:
 - i) Boardwalks – standing water is currently impeding repairs but the contractor is doing as much as possible.
 - ii) Residents at 1001 Middle and 1009 Middle have applied to DHEC OCRM for a general permit to construct and vegetate the dune in front of their homes to help mitigate ongoing erosion. If granted, machines will access the area via the Station 10 beach path.
- C) Attorney's Report: Nothing to Report
 - i) 2663 Bayonne Street – Thomas and Josephine Hutchinson have requested a fee simple title. Attorney Dodds gave background on the Town ordinance as well as State statute that supports this title. This title does not affect accreted land. The title cost \$25 and the Town is not able to deny it.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Latham, to approve the fee simple title, passed unanimously.

- D) Boards and Commissions Report
 - a) Planning and Commission – work is continuing on the Comprehensive Plan and a draft will potentially be ready by the next Committee meeting.
 - b) Board of Zoning Appeals – Nothing to Report
 - c) Design Review Board – Nothing to Report
 - d) Tree Commission – approved Arbor Day for April 26, 2024 and Mr. Drayton will provide a Proclamation for the next Council meeting.
 - e) Municipal Elections Commission – Nothing to Report

V. Committee Reports – Discussion Items:

- A. Finance Committee – Nothing to Report
- B. Public Facilities Committee – A meeting will be held soon about the Senior Officers Quarters. The Battery Gadsden sign has been posted.
- C. Land Use & Natural Resources Committee – The canceled meeting has been rescheduled for Thursday, January 18, 2024.
- D. Administration Committee – Nothing to Report
- E. Water & Sewer Committee – Nothing to Report
 - a. Greg Gress warned there will be a big freeze this Saturday and Sunday (January 20-21) and residents are advised to prepare.
 - b. The next Water & Sewer Committee meeting will be Thursday, January 25 at 8:45 a.m.
- F. Public Safety Committee – The Charlie Post Race will be on Saturday, January 27, starting at the Fish Fry Shack.
 - a. An application was submitted for an SRO Grant of an \$81,000 reimbursement and they should receive an answer soon.

- b. A revised outline of staff recommendations will be re-emailed to Council for review.
 - c. There have been two recent coyote encounters. Deputy Chief Meadows reminded citizens to verbally haze coyotes should they encounter any. Additional traps were positioned near the encounters. Activity will likely increase from now until March due to mating season.
 - d. Mayor O'Neil reminded citizens to lock their vehicles, there have been thefts recently.
- G. Recreation Committee – Nothing to Report

VI. Executive Session:

Motion was made by Councilmember Latham, seconded by Councilmember Higgins to go into Executive Session at 6:48 p.m., passed unanimously.

- A. Personnel – Administrator Retirement search Committee Update
- B. Contractual – Drs. Nicole Elko of Elko Coastal Consulting, Inc. and Steven Traynum of Coastal Science and Engineering, Inc. regarding the US Army Corps of Engineers Breach Inlet Sediment Rehandling Project

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Hubbard to come out of Executive Session at 7:54 p.m., passed unanimously.

Mayor O'Neil stated that no votes or actions were taken while in Executive Session.

VII. Upon Returning to Open Session, Council may take action on items discussed during Executive Session.

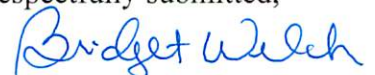
Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Latham, to have the Town of Sullivan's Island to retain Coastal Science and Engineering and Dr. Nicole Elko to do engineering drawings and come up with a potential proposed RFP to spread and redistribute sand that is going to be displaced on our beaches by the Army Corps of Engineers, passed unanimously.

This will allow Council to evaluate proposals on how to distribute the sand that will potentially be rehandled onto the beaches and decide if the Town should agree to the project.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Higgins to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m., passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bridget Welch