



Town of Sullivan's Island, South Carolina
Town Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 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
Jody Latham, Councilmember
Scott Millimet, Councilmember
Gary Visser, Councilmember

Councilmember Carl Hubbard previously notified Council that he would not be able to attend this meeting.

Staff members present were Monty Anders, Town Attorney Larry Dodds, Charles Drayton, Greg Gress, Amanda Hawver, Town Administrator Joe Henderson, Rebecca Fanning, Police Chief Glenn Meadows, Fire Chief Anthony Stith, Bridget Welch, and Max Wurthmann.

Mayor Patrick M. O'Neil called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and stated the press and public had been notified in accordance with State Law. There were nine (9) members of the public present and one (1) member 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

- Christy Durbin, 1715 Atlantic Ave – feels there needed to be better communication and transparency about the plans for Phase 2 of the Nature Trail.
- Tim Harrell, 1601 Middle Street – gave an update about the Friends of Battery Logan restoration project.
- Hal Coste, 322 Station 19 – requests the police investigate an incident involving his daughter and granddaughter and a resident/property owner near Station 32.

II. Presentation:

A. Tanjanika Shivers – Night Tide

Read her award-winning poem inspired by Sullivan's Island and published in MUSC's annual literary journal, *Humanitas*.

B. Alissa Lietzow – Art on the Beach

Presented a video and slideshow giving background for the Art on the Beach event, as well as information for this year's event. It is a self-guided tour of homes on the Island that features curated art as well as food from catering chefs. The event is an annual fundraiser to benefit Charleston Pro Bono Legal Services, a non-profit that provides free civil legal services to hundreds of low-income individuals and families in our community each year.

Patrons will be advised on the best parking and no part of the event is held on public property. The group is also working on providing alternative transportation modes for participants. It will be held on Sunday, November 10, 2024, from 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. They are also requesting a special event permit this year to hold a market in Stith Park that will be open to the public and feature local a variety of vendors. There would be no additional cost or support needed from the Town. She then took questions from Council.

III. Council Action Items:

- A. Approval of the June 18, 2024, Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Councilmember Visser, seconded by Councilmember Higgins, to approve the June 18, 2024, Regular Council Meeting Minutes, passed unanimously.

- B. Consideration of monetary donations from Dominion Energy of \$25,000 and South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) of \$25,000 with the goal of establishing a tree planting program for Sullivan's Island.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Latham, to approve the receipt of \$25,000 from Dominion and the Department of Transportation to establish a tree planting program on Sullivan's Island, passed unanimously.

- C. Consideration of utilizing \$25,000 of Sullivan's Island Tree Funds to partner with Dominion Energy and SCDOT to establish a tree planting program for Sullivan's Island.

Motion was made by Councilmember Visser, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, to authorize and request \$25,000 from the Sullivan's Island Tree Commission to put towards the tree planting program, passed unanimously.

Mayor Pro-Tem Novak is in support of the program and the tree fund use of \$25,000 for tree planting. Councilmember Latham thanked Rebecca Fanning and Mayor O'Neil for their work regarding Dominion and the cutting of Palmetto trees.

- D. Consideration of partnering with [Global Eco-Adventures](#), a non-profit organization, to assist in establishing a tree planting program for Sullivan's Island.

Motion was made by Councilmember Millimet, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, to approve the Town Administrator and lawyer to move forward in the partnership with Global Eco-Adventures to assist in establishing a tree planting program, and present recommendations to Council, passed unanimously.

Councilmember Millimet also suggested using Global Eco-Adventures to help with renourishing the areas of the maritime forest that were illegally cut down.

- E. Consideration of the Nature Trail, Phase II project and consideration of a contract change order to redesign ADA ramps and boardwalks and accomplish project cost reduction of \$38,490.

Motion was made by Councilmember Millimet, seconded by Councilmember Visser, after listening to the public comments and after studying the original plan; the presented modified plans and the presentation by Town Staff, I believe the trail is a positive asset to the Town, its citizens and the public at large. This trail will give residents more access within the forest to see the benefits and beauty of the forest. I move to reaffirm, confirm, and approve the application and accept the award provided by the 2023 South Carolina Parks, Recreation, and Tourism grant. Further move to reaffirm, confirm, and approve the original Nature Trail concept plan as proposed by Joe Henderson originally presented to the LUNR Committee on November 3, 2022, and later presented to Council on August 7, 2023. Further move to amend the proposed plans to delete handrails for all ramps and boardwalks, along with the 10' extension of the Station 18 ramp to allow this handrail removal and to reduce the total cost of the project; and approve expenditure of matching funds to authorize staff to continue with the implementation of the plan and to complete the trail as amended, passed unanimously.

Mr. Henderson provided more details about the proposed amendments to the plan and how it will affect ADA access on the trail. He also provided visuals of the trail plans.

- F. Consideration of site clean-up and stabilization in and around historic Battery Logan site and request financial assistance Friends of Battery Logan.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Millimet, that the Town authorize Town staff to engage in collecting bids and contracting negotiations within the budget set forth by the bid in hand, authorized up to that amount in the bid in hand to pursue the first three phases of the clearing of Battery Logan project, passed unanimously.

Mr. Henderson gave background information about the request and project, as well as clarified the Town's role in the project. Mr. Harrell from Friends of Battery Logan also provided information and answered questions.

- G. Consideration of appointment of Town representatives to advisory committee for contracts with Charleston Water System.

Motion was made by Councilmember Millimet, seconded by Councilmember Visser, to designate the Sullivan's Island representatives for the advisory committee consist of the Town Administrator, the head of the Water & Sewer department, the chair of the Water & Sewer Committee of Town Council, and the Mayor, passed unanimously.

Mayor O'Neil provided information on the contract between the Town and CWS, which requires an advisory committee be created, with members from each. The members on the advisory committee are also on the negotiating committee that has been working with CWS.

- H. Consideration of required addendum to PEBA participation agreement to permit continued eligibility of Councilmembers.

Motion was made by Councilmember Latham, seconded by Councilmember Millimet, given that South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority has now required all county and municipal governments to make an irrevocable decision as to whether Councilmembers may qualify for participation in the state insurance benefit program, and given that the Town of Sullivan’s Island has considered Councilmembers to qualify for this program ever since the Town joined PEBA, and given that the opportunity to participate in the state insurance benefits can represent an important benefit for Councilmembers who devote many hours each month to Town matters at relatively little cost to the Town, I move that the Council endorse the required PEBA addendum to permit continued qualification of eligible Councilmembers in the State insurance benefits program, passed unanimously.

Mayor O’Neil commented that this addendum was sent to all municipalities in the state and required to make an irrevocable decision. There was further discussion among Council, and it was pointed out that the Councilmember will still be required to pay the “employee portion” for insurance, while the Town covers the “employer portion.”

IV. Reports and Communication:

A. Mayor’s Report:

- a. Mayor O’Neil commended the Fire and Police Departments for handling a gas leak incident in weeks prior. Police Deputy Chief Anders summarized the incident and thanked the multiple other units that assisted. Mayor Pro-Tem Novak and Councilmember Millimet also thanked the departments and noted the efficiency of the evacuation.
- b. Reminder to prepare for Hurricane season and have evacuation supplies ready.
- c. A Shore Birds and Sea Turtle Conference was held weeks prior to address any issues that the Beneficial Sand Reuse Project may have on local wildlife.

B. Correspondence since the July 1, 2024 Council Workshop included 43 letters; 27 were concerning the construction of the Nature Trail, 15 in support of the Nature Trail, and one thanking Council for their work regarding palmetto trees and power lines.

- Cynthia Ewing, 2514 I’On Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Steven Poletti, 1771 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Manda Poletti, 1771 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- David French, 1765 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Wendy French, 1765 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Amy Davidson, 1710 I’On Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Christy Durbin, 1715 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5

- Clay Boardman, 1709 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Eric & Jennifer Burr, 1705 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Ray Ann Osborne, 1801 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Bill Rayburn, 1721 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Aarati Alexander, 3203 Middle Street – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Cara Lynn Cannon, 2928 Jasper Blvd – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Barbara Spell, 1702 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Charles Stockdale, 1719 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5 & Grant application
- John Dobson, 1755 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Michael & Amy Cox, 1807 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- David & Mariana Hay, 2629 Goldbug Ave - Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Helen Sloan, 1505 Middle St - Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Tom & Sheryl Proctor, 1726 Atlantic Ave - Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Barbara Claypoole, 2102 Pettigrew St - Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Cindy Garland, 2 Citadel St - Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Laurie Arthur, 2850 Middle St – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Raye Ann Osborne, 1801 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Granger Osborne, 1801 Atlantic Ave – Questions and concerns regarding the nature trail at Station 16 to Station 18.5
- Carol Antman, 1714 Atlantic Ave – In support of the nature trail project
- Deirdre McMurtry, 1612 Atlantic Ave – In support of the nature trail project
- Jim Rocco, 1734 I'On Ave – In support of the nature trail project
- The So Family, 2914 Jasper Blvd – In support of the nature trail project
- Susan & Larry Middaugh, 2420 Raven Drive – In support of the nature trail project
- Howard Holl, 1808 Atlantic Ave – In support of the nature trail project
- Julia Khoury, 1728 I'On Ave - In support of the of the nature trail project

- Sarah Harper - In support of the nature trail project
- Karen Byko, 2862 Middle St – In support of the nature trail project
- Norman Khoury, 1728 I’On Ave – In support of the nature trail project
- Rob Byko, 2862 Middle St – In support of the nature trail project
- Dan Krosse, 2424 Myrtle Ave – In support of the nature trail project
- Lila Trussler, 1650 Atlantic Ave – In support of the nature trail project
- Eric Strickland, 1724 I’On Ave – In support of the nature trail project
- Penn Hagood, 2424 Raven Dr – In support of the nature trail project
- Rochelle Rutledge, 1764 Atlantic Ave – Thanks to Town Council & Staff for hard work to save Palmetto trees and in support to bury power lines

C. Administrator’s Report

- a. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Beneficial Sand Reuse Project has begun work at Breach Inlet on Sullivan’s Island and Isle of Palms. The Town has issued them a permit to authorize the use of Town property as a landing zone for equipment and officers.
- b. Personnel anniversaries:
 - Tyler Potter – Water & Sewer: 4 years
 - Andy Williams - Water & Sewer: 6 years
 - Paul Sottile – Fire: 7 years
 - Marc Micalizzi – Fire: 7 years
- c. Mr. Henderson stated the Army Corps of Engineers Project will begin on Sullivan’s Island sometime in August and will move to Isle of Palms second, the opposite of the original plan. Ahtna Marine is the contractor handling the project. There is no final decision as to where the sand will go. Residents will be notified about the project.
- d. The Station 21 boardwalk project is complete and open to the public. Final change orders for Station 26 ½, 22 ½, and 21 are being completed for project close-out. Station 24 and ADA access at Station 18 are the next projects.
- e. Clearing and grading is almost complete for the Nature Trail Phase II. Next will be construction of boardwalk, ADA ramps, and installation of matting and signs. The Trail is expected to open in early August. *Note: This phase of the Nature Trail will be funded exclusively from the 2023 SCPRT Grant and hospitality taxes. Hospitality taxes may only be used for funding new or renovated tourist-related buildings, cultural, recreational, and historic facilities, roads, streets, paths, etc. giving access to tourist destinations. Property tax revenue is not being used.*
- f.

D. Attorney’s Report: Nothing to report.

E. Boards and Commissions Report:

- a. Planning and Commission – There will be a new meeting in August to hopefully approve the Comprehensive Plan.
- b. Board of Zoning Appeals – Nothing to Report
- c. Design Review Board – Nothing to Report
- d. Tree Commission –Nothing to Report

V. Committee Reports – Discussion Items:

- A. Finance Committee – Mayor O’Neil presented a slideshow reporting on the current financial standing of the Town, as well as clarifying the Town’s debt and the settlement with Charleston Water System. A new Water & Sewer budget is being created to now include the settlement.
- B. Public Facilities Committee – Nothing to Report
- C. Land Use & Natural Resources Committee – The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 12, 2024.
- D. Administration Committee – Nothing to Report
- E. Water & Sewer Committee – The next Water & Sewer Committee meeting will be Thursday, July 25, 2024 at 8:45 a.m. The new budget should be ready to be presented at the July meeting.
- F. Public Safety Committee –Deputy Police Chief Anders reported on two significant events that occurred since Workshop involving both the Fire and Police Departments and impacted traffic. Chief Meadows stated they will reduce the number of overtime hours that the officers from the Sheriff’s Office will be working for traffic in hopes to reduce the budget. If this reduction negatively impacts traffic, more hours can be added.
- G. Recreation Committee –The Committee is waiting on a timeline from Thomas & Hutton regarding the Stith Park Master Plan. The golf cart and bike parade on July 4 went smoothly and thanked all staff, particularly Pam Otto.
 - a. Parade Awards:
 - Most Spirited: Cathy Curtis and family
 - Best Ensemble: The Crown Family
 - Most Original: Baxter Hahn
 - Most Patriotic: Maryann Mackay and Kelly Murphy
 - Best Bike: Christy Horwitz and crew
 - Third Place: Jeff Smith
 - Second Place: Brad and Talby Talbot
 - First Place: Howard Stone

VI. Adjournment

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Latham to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m., passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bridget Welch