



**Town of Sullivan's Island, South Carolina
Town Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 20, 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
Scott Millimet, Councilmember
Gary Visser, Councilmember

Staff members present were Jason Blanton, 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 fifty (50) 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

- Mary Regner, 1914 I'On Ave – stated she is available to answer any questions about the Stella Maris Special Event request on behalf of the Stella Maris Women's Club
- Ralph Byers, 3025 Middle St – asked about the current status of the Stormwater Master Plan and about how the new pipes will be stored; he is concerned they will block access to his property
- Barbara Spell, 1702 Atlantic Ave – asked about what the nature trail is costing the Town and if maintenance costs have been considered

II. Oath of Office: Police Officer Michael Mitchum

Police Chief Glenn Meadows introduced Officer Michael Mitchum, who was sworn in by Mayor O'Neil. He received a standing ovation.

III. Recognition to Officer Tyler Mahon – Life Saving Action

A lifesaving plaque and medal was given to Officer Tyler Mahon by Chief Meadows and Deputy Chief Anders. Chief Meadows gave background on Officer Mahon's actions and read aloud the plaque. Officer Mahon received a standing ovation as well as a lifesaving medal. He introduced his family and fiancé.

IV. Presentations:

1. Coastal Science and Engineering – update on USACE sand reuse project and Town sand re-handling project, Steven Taynor

Steven Traynor from Coastal Science and Engineering gave an update on the re-handling project, mention the USACE project has been delayed by a week. Sullivan's Island is expected to receive about 200,000 cubic yards of sand. There will be some public beach closures during the construction, which will be happening around the clock. He then reviewed the plan for the Town sponsored supplemental project, which includes moving the sand to various areas. It will be used for dune restoration, dry sand beach construction, and some will be stockpiled for the Town's future use. The project will hopefully take no longer than four weeks, once the permits are issued. Consideration of bids will be presented at the September 9 Council Workshop, with the final decision being made at the September 17 Regular Council Meeting. He then took questions from Council.

2. CARTA Proposed FY2025 Budget, Andrea Kozloski

CARTA is required to present their budget and get approval for it every year from every municipality in the jurisdiction. Andrea Kozloski from CARTA presented highlights from the FY2025 28-million-dollar budget, up 1.8 million dollars from last year. She also summarized timelines for various projects, both current and future.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Latham, to approve the FY 2025 Proposed CARTA Budget, passed unanimously.

3. Art on the Beach Tour and Fundraiser, Alissa Lietzow

Ms. Lietzow touched on the high points from the presentation at the July Council Meeting. Art on the Beach is the main fundraiser for the Charleston Pro Bono Legal Services and has been going on for 25 years. This year they are seeking approval from Council to host a market in Stith Park as a supplement to the event and as a way to involve people that may not be able to obtain tickets. They are not asking for any money from the Town, it would be free to everyone, and all vendors would be required to obtain a Sullivan's Island business license to set up a 10x10 tent. There would not be any road closures or Town staff needed, and the organization itself will not profit from the market.

Councilmember Visser voiced his opposition to the market, stating it would set a precedent for other organizations to make the same request. Ms. Lietzow then answered questions from Councilmembers.

V. Council Action Items:

Mayor O'Neil stated September's Council Workshop will be on the second Monday, September 9, due to the Labor Day holiday. The Regular Council meeting will be Tuesday, September 17 at 6:00 p.m.

A. Approval of the July 16, 2024, Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Councilmember Millimet, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, to approve the July 16, 2024, Regular Council Meeting Minutes, passed 6-1, Councilmember Hubbard abstained.

B. First Reading, by Title Only, Ordinance 2024-07, An Ordinance to Amend the Water and Sewer Fund Budget FY2025 For July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Visser, to approve the First Reading, by Title Only, Ordinance 2024-07, An Ordinance to Amend the Water and Sewer Fund Budget FY2025 For July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, passed unanimously.

Water and Sewer Committee Chair Novak outlined the budget provided in the meeting packet, which changed due to the 40-year contract with CWS being confirmed, adding an additional 100,000-gallon capacity per day over the next 40 years.

Mr. Millimet thanked the negotiation group for coming to a favorable conclusion with CWS.

C. First Reading, by Title Only, Ordinance 2024-08, An Ordinance to Amend the Zoning Ordinance Section 21-7, Impact on Pending Construction

Motion was made by Councilmember Millimet, seconded by Councilmember Higgins, to approve First Reading, by Title Only, Ordinance 2024-08, An Ordinance to Amend the Zoning Ordinance Section 21-7, Impact on Pending Construction passed unanimously.

Zoning Administrator Charles Drayton reviewed the previous ordinance and the need for the proposed changes. Councilmember Millimet and Mayor Pro-Tem Novak expressed their support and Mayor O'Neil provided some more background information. The original ordinance was to provide some transition time when the ordinance was overhauled in 2004. Staff feels new changes to current ordinances should take effect immediately.

D. Consideration of the Town Hospitality Taxes for partial funding of the second phase of the Sullivan's Island Nature Trail

Motion was made by Councilmember Millimet, seconded by Councilmember Visser, to approve Town Hospitality Taxes for partial funding of the second phase of the Sullivan's Island Nature Trail as requested, passed unanimously.

Mr. Henderson stated hospitality tax use can only be used for recreational facilities and construction related to tourism-oriented projects, which fits the Nature Trail Project. The total project will cost \$167,000, with the grant covering \$100,000 and the Town match being \$67,000, which comes from hospitality tax revenue. Mr. Blanton stated this money has previously been used for boardwalk and road maintenance and the budget is usually around \$700,000. The money does not have "use it or lose it" requirement and is currently in an account earning around 5.5% interest per year.

E. Consideration of Special Event Permit for the Stella Maris Church Home Tour and Reception at the Sullivan’s Island Club

Mary Regner from the Stella Maris Women’s Club provided a brief background of the requested event and stated the all the funds will go toward building a new parish hall for the church. The tour will include a variety of homes and will be limited to parishioner participation.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Millimet, to move agenda item E until after Executive Session, agenda item IX, passed unanimously.

F. Consideration of Participating in Native Plant Week as a Municipal Partner

Director of Resilience and Natural Resources Rebecca Fanning gave background on Native Plant Week, which is celebrated annually statewide during the third week in October. There is an opportunity for people from the Town to attend a symposium and a luncheon to discuss topics concerning native plants. The LUNR Committee has forwarded a request for monetary sponsorship from the Town. There are varying price points that can be contributed. Councilmember Latham suggested having further discussion in September after getting more information. It was agreed to be discussed further at the September Council Workshop. Ms. Fanning then took questions from Council.

VI. Reports and Communication:

- A. Mayor’s Report: Mayor O’Neil stated there was a Proclamation to begin and end a state of emergency for Tropical Storm Debby
- B. Correspondence since the July 1, 2024 Council Workshop
 - Bill Swayne, 1725 Atlantic Ave - opposition to the Nature Trail Project and questions regarding underground utilities for the Town
 - David Spell, 1702 Atlantic Ave – opposition to the Nature Trail Project
 - Linda Swayne, 1725 Atlantic Ave – concerned about flooding at Station 18
 - Raye Anne Osborne, 1801 Atlantic Ave – concerned about flooding at Station 18
 - Laura Sertich, 3034 Marshall Blvd – request for hurricane season storm preparation
- C. Administrator’s Report
 - a. Stormwater Master Plan – Seamon and Whiteside is nearly finished with their survey work and analysis of the existing infrastructure. They hope to have an Open House before the October Council meeting. They also hope to present the final construction drawings for the SCIIP Grant, which includes stormwater improvements to the drainage basins at Stations 16, 25, 28 ½, and 31. They are still accepting photos and complaints regarding flooding.
 - b. Pay application for the Boardwalk reconstruction projects at Stations 21, 22 ½, and 26 ½ is included in the packet. There were significant changes from the original contract for various reasons during construction.
 - c. Requests for Bids for the Old Bridge Restoration Project construction will close on September 20, 2024. Thomas and Hutton submitted for permits from SCDOT and DHEC OCRM. This project has been approved from FEMA and most of the cost will be covered by grants, which the Town will be reimbursed for. The Town will be responsible for roughly 1 million.
 - d. Republic Services has requested to raise their prices by \$1.00 per home per month for yard waste services, which would take effect January 1, 2025. This request is due to inflation costs.
 - e. Boards and Commission vacancies will be discussed at this meeting.

- f. Special Events:
 - Beach Sweep – 8/25/24
 - Goose Creek High School Beach Sweep – 10/26/24
 - Stella Maris Home Tour – 10/27/24
 - Art on the Beach – 11/10/24
 - LOWVELO (MUSC Hollings CC) Bike Tour – 11/2/24
 - SIES 5k Race – 11/9/24
 - g. Personnel anniversaries:
 - Lisa Lawson, Police – 1 year
 - Amanda Hawver, Fire – 21 years
 - Joseph Gavarelli, Water & Sewer – 1 year
 - Gary Erickson, Police – 8 years
 - Glenn Meadows, Police – 3 years
 - h. A Town Resident Project Memorandum was sent out in the July 29, 2024 water bills regarding the following projects:
 - ACE Beneficial Reuse and TOSI’s Sand Rehandling Project
 - Dominion Palmetto Removal
 - SCIIP Grant Project and Stormwater Master Plan
- D. Attorney’s Report: Nothing to report.
- E. Boards and Commissions Report:
- a. Planning and Commission – Mr. Drayton stated the Commission approved the recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan, which will be presented to Council in the September Regular Council Meeting.
 - b. Board of Zoning Appeals – Nothing to Report
 - c. Design Review Board – Nothing to Report
 - d. Tree Commission –Nothing to Report

VII. Committee Reports – Discussion Items:

- A. Finance Committee – Mr. Millimet stated the interest will likely go down over the next year. Jason Blanton provided a summary of current funds in the first month of the 2025 fiscal year.
- B. Public Facilities Committee – Chair Hubbard stated they are working on dates to begin with the sub-committee to make decisions about the Old Town Hall.
- C. Land Use & Natural Resources Committee – A September meeting date is to be determined.
- D. Administration Committee – Nothing to Report
- E. Water & Sewer Committee – The next Water & Sewer Committee meeting will be Thursday, August 22, 2024 at 8:45 a.m. An advisory committee for CWS will be organized to act as a liaison between the Town and CWS.
- F. Public Safety Committee –Deputy Police Chief Anders spoke about a current training officers had for active shooters, organized by Officer McGougan. There will be a training for MADD and DUIs on August 23. There have been no reports or trappings for coyotes and no major traffic events. Mayor O’Neil discussed a meeting held by the County Board of Elections to discuss safety measures during elections and voting.
- G. Recreation Committee –The next Recreation Committee meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 23 at 9:00 am to discuss the Stith Park Project.

VIII. Executive Session:

Motion was made by Councilmember Latham, seconded by Councilmember Higgins to enter Executive Session at 7:30 p.m., passed unanimously.

- 1. Legal Advice** – Attorney Larry Dodds: Town Facilities and Use for Fundraisers
- 2. Legal Advice** – Attorney Larry Dodds: Tree Replanting on Town Property and Restoration of Vegetation in the Maritime Forest
- 3. Personnel** – Boards and Commissions Seats: Review of Applications submitted for seats on various Boards and Commissions

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

Motion was made by Councilmember Visser, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak to come out of Executive Session at 8:38 p.m., passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilmember Visser, seconded by Councilmember Latham to approve directing Town staff to develop a formal plan for restoration of vegetation within the Maritime Forest, passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Millimet to approve the Special Event Permit for Stella Maris Home Tour and Reception for the use of the Island Club, passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Hubbard to allow Art on the Beach Tour and fundraiser to set up the market in Stith Park pursuant to their application for a Special Event Permit on November 10, 2024, passed 6-1, with Councilmember Visser opposing.

Motion was made by Councilmember Latham, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak to approve the following people for seats for another three (3) year term, until 2027 on the Board of Zoning Appeals: Jackie Edgerton, James Elliott, Jeremy Graves, and Elizabeth Tezza; and to add amendment to readvertise for one (1) BZA position, passed unanimously as amended.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Hubbard to approve the following people for seats for another three (3) year term, until 2027, on the Tree Commission: Mark Miller and Derek Wade, passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Millimet to approve the following people for seats for another three (3) year term, until 2027 on the Design Review Board: Beverly Bohan; and to amend for continuing discussion for the remaining one (1) seat on the DRB requiring additional information regarding eligibility, passed unanimously.

X. Adjournment

Motion was made by Councilmember Millimet, seconded by Councilmember Latham to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 p.m., passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bridget Welch