



TOWN OF PAWLEYS ISLAND TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Town Hall – Conference Room | 323 Myrtle Ave | Pawleys Island SC 29585
12-13-2021 – 5:00 pm

PRESENT: Mayor Brian Henry, Sarah Zimmerman, Guerry Green, Rocky Holliday (Virtual)

ABSENT: Ashley Carter

STAFF PRESENT: Ryan Fabbri (Town Administrator), Mike Fanning (Chief of Police), Jono Fairfield (PI Police Investigator), David Durant (Town Attorney) Preston Janco (Town Clerk)

PUBLIC HEARING – 5:00 PM

Final Reading of Ordinance 2021-11: An Ordinance Adopting the 2022 Annual Operating Budget

Mayor Henry called the public hearing to order and asked if anyone had signed up to speak. Bill Caughman signed up to speak so Mayor Henry called him up and stated that he had three minutes of speaking time.

Bill Caughman stated that this was only his 2nd time addressing the Town Council, however, he has some big concerns with Pawleys Island defunding the police. He stated that more reliance on Georgetown County would not be a smart option. Bill discussed that he has a house in Hagley and has never seen a Georgetown County officer patrol near his house. He likes that the Pawleys Island police patrol near his house on the Island. Bill stated that crime is not a problem in the middle of the Island, however, property owners on the North and South End of the Island must worry about crime. Georgetown County police will also not be able to enforce the ordinances of Pawleys Island possibly making the parking and town violations worse. Bill stated that Council needs to take a long look at the subject of police and that defunding the police does not make any sense.

Mayor Henry closed the public hearing.

REGULAR MEETING – Directly following public hearing

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Henry called the meeting to order.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Henry asked if anyone signed up for public comment. No one signed up.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. 11-15-2021 Regular Meeting
- B. 11-16-2021 Work Session

Mayor Henry called for a motion to approve the minutes from 11-15-2021 and 11-16-2021. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All approved.

4. REPORTS AND UPDATES

A. Police Report

Chief Fanning discussed the police report and how in the month of November there were several citations for suspension of license, marijuana, and expired registrations. There was also regular parking enforcement citation.

B. Building Report

Ryan Fabbri discussed that there was nothing out of the ordinary with the Building Report. The new construction was from a house recently approved by the ARB. Guerry asked why the dock did not have an evaluation. Ryan stated that its not a dock but instead it is a demolition permit, and the fee was just listed as N/A.

C. Financial Report

I. Approve Payment to Sanders Brother Construction for \$31,695.00 (Invoice #5765)

Mayor Henry discussed that the first two were for the drain improvements and back flow prevention valves purchase and installation. Mayor Henry asked where the Town stands financially on the project Rocky Holiday chimed in and stated that there are donated funds committed for the project, but they have not been received yet. Rocky stated that the total cost was under the projected amount. Brian asked if Rocky and Ryan could pressure DOT to get out and repave the road that was tore up from the project. Sarah asked if the drains were successful and Guerry stated that they were. Rocky said that with the highest King Tide the road was dry and believes that the project was an amazing success. He stated that the condo owners at Pier Village are thrilled and Rocky would like to proceed with additional drain installation at intersection of Pritchard and Springs. Rocky asked if Sarah could handle the fundraising since that is her area. Sarah stated that she would.

Mayor Henry asked for a motion to approve the payment to Sanders Brother Construction. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All approved.

II. Approve Payment to Wapro Inc. for \$13,927.00 (Invoice #23376)

Mayor Henry asked for a motion to approve the payment to Wapro Inc. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Rocky Holliday seconded the motion. All approved.

III. Approve Payment to Law Offices of N. David Durant & Associates for \$15,846.74

Mayor Henry asked for a motion to approve the payment to the Law Offices of N. David Durant & Associates. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All approved.

IV. Approve Payment to Belser & Belser for \$1575.00 (Invoice #23540)

Mayor Henry asked for a motion to approve the payment to Belser & Belser. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All approved.

V. Approve Payment to Coastline Electric Inc. for \$2,530.23

Mayor Henry stated that this was for additional outlets for the Christmas lights. Mayor Henry asked for a motion to approve the payment to Coastline Electric Inc. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All approved.

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Pursuant to Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70- (a)(2) legal advice or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege.

Upon returning to open session, Council may take action on matters discussed in Executive Session

Mayor Henry asked for a motion to step down into executive session to discuss matters protected by attorney-client privilege. Guerry Green motioned to step down. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All approved to step down into executive session.

Mayor Henry stated that nothing was voted on in executive session.

Mayor Henry asked for a motion to step out from executive session. Guerry Green motioned to step out. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All approved to step out from executive session.

6. BUSINESS

A. Resolution 2021-04: Resolution to authorize mayor to sign a settlement agreement with regard to currently pending litigation.

Mayor Henry asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2021-04. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All approved.

B. Resolution 2021-05: Resolution to approve payment to Sunset Lodge LLC, Frank Beattie, and Barry Stanton for their litigation expenses.

Mayor Henry asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2021-05. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All approved.

C. Second Reading of Ordinance 2021-10: An Ordinance amending the 2021 annual budget

Ryan stated that budget amendment consists of changes to franchise funds, revenue, grants, a-tax, expenditures, debt service, and legal due to all the unknowns brought about from this year. The Town received much more in grants and state a-tax funds than expected. The legal fees were also unexpected during the preparation of last year's budget. Mayor Henry recognized that these were just house keeping items and asked if anyone from Council had any questions. No one had any questions.

Mayor Henry asked for a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 2021-10. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All approved.

D. Second Reading of Ordinance 2021-11: An Ordinance Adopting the 2022 Annual Operating Budget

Mayor Henry discussed the main topics of concern for the 2022 budget was the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and the Police Department Budget. Guerry Green asked if he believes next years revenues will match this year's revenues? Ryan Fabbri stated that to his knowledge and the statistic he has yes. Ryan stated that if he is incorrect the revenues could equal \$40,000 less or \$60,000 more. Sarah Zimmerman stated that she has heard rental bookings are slammed so 2022 is expected to see a high revenue again. Guerry Green asked what if the Creek Dredging and fixing the North End jetty is too much? Ryan stated that it will just stay in the budget showing no funds going towards those projects. Mayor Henry stated that he has concern with the 5.9% COLA for the Town employees, and he suggests a 4.5% COLA with a 0-3% merit increase that averages at 1.5%. Guerry Green stated that there is no reason to say inflation does not exist, but the high COLA is of concern. Chief Fanning stated that in the past the COLA has been 0 or just above 0 and we were told by Council that higher COLAs would average that out in the future.

Sarah Zimmerman chimed in and stated that if the employees do not get the exact 5.9% COLA it will be like giving them a pay cut because prices on everything are much higher. Sarah stated that with the increase in a-tax revenue it can be assumed that more people are on the Island which means the police are busier and the front office is busier, so everyone has more responsibility. Guerry Green brought up that the increased revenue could normalize this year. Sarah said that there have been years where the COLA was 0. Chief Fanning stated that in the past the Town had to play catch up on the COLA but that was after cutting a full-time police position. Ryan stated that the COLA does not affect him because it is not included within his contract. Chief Fanning stated that the part-time officers also get the COLA, but they do not get merit raises. Mayor Henry asked for a motion to go with the compromise of 4.5% COLA. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Rocky Holliday seconded the motion. Mayor Henry interjected and said that a vote may not be needed. This could just be procedural for the approval of the budget. Ryan was asked by Sarah what other local governments are doing. Ryan stated that he

was unsure but one thing he was sure about was the police departments are getting large bonuses from the ARPA funds so many local governments are giving extra money to employees in other ways. Ryan stated that not giving the employees the full 5.9% would be a pay cut. Mayor Henry and Guerry Green stated that the Town may have to play catch up in the future then. Mayor Henry, Rocky Holliday, and Guerry Green vote in favor of the compromise. Sarah Zimmerman votes to go against the compromise.

Mayor Henry discussed the talks of reducing the police department. This would be for creating additional funds for capital projects for the Town. Mayor Henry discussed that it is possible the Town will need taxes in the future, and he acknowledged Sarah's example from the budget workshop of how many people that seemed to be in favor of a beach tax or donation. But he also mentioned that the problem with implementing a tax is that it can be a slippery slope to higher and higher taxes. Mayor Henry stated that now the Town needs a "Rainy-Day Fund" but not at the cost of taking away safety. Mayor Henry stated that the Town could leverage more technology to contribute to public safety on the Island. He asked how does Litchfield react without a police force? Georgetown County handles their policing. Mayor Henry reiterated that he is not for defunding the police, however, he recognizes Council as stewards of the Town's money and is wondering if the police department has too many people per the population of the Town. Guerry Green stated that is also not in favor of defunding the police and just wants to preserve the legacy of Pawleys Island. Guerry recognizes that in the past the Town did not have to worry about having money in the bank because there used to be a lot of money saved, however, the Town had to spend that on Beach Renourishment and the Underground Wire project. Guerry discussed that an officer is retiring soon from the PI Police Department and is wondering by not filling that position if more money can start being saved. Rocky Holliday thanked Chief Fanning for well researched memo on crime, police department scheduling, and additional technology that was disbursed to Town Council. Rocky sees the dramatic drop in larcenies and burglaries from 2016 and is wondering how much of that is from technology. Rocky Holliday stated that he is worried that in 2-3 years the Town will no longer have a surplus and property owners want large projects to be work done. Rocky stated that he would like to take advantage of the soon-to-be empty position from the retiring officer and rely more on Georgetown County for policing like Litchfield does.

Sarah Zimmerman stated that a lot of people have grown to expect the level of service that Pawleys Island receives and that most people count on it. She recognizes money needs to be put away and believes that technology has helped reduce crime. Chief Fanning stated that Litchfield as a dedicated police unit during the summer months due to a grant. Georgetown County will not bring their beach patrol to Pawleys Island because they can only afford Litchfield through a grant. Guerry Green stated that the Town deserves the same coverage that Georgetown County gives Litchfield. Chief Fanning stated that it is hard to get part-timers to fill the schedule due to all of them

having other jobs. Chief Fanning stated that he can not guarantee someone will be patrolling at the expected times. Mayor Henry thank Chief Fanning for the well-researched memo. Mayor Henry asked Ryan how many people are on the Island during the off season. Ryan stated he would guess anywhere between 500-1000. Mayor Henry proposes that the Pawleys Island Police Department change to 3 full time officers with 12-hour coverage and change per the needs of the Town. He also recommends installing additional cameras around the Island and to have the department keep the older police vehicle instead of getting a new one. Chief Fanning stated that he will have to speak to the Sheriff about getting additional police coverage on Pawleys Island at night. Chief Fanning stated that he can also get in touch with SC highway patrol to monitor the Island for DUIs at night since there won't be any PI officers on at night. Mayor Henry stated that if it fails then the Council can revisit this at next years budget. Chief Fanning stated that the Pawleys Island Police Department is very dedicated, and they are motivated to giving everyone on the island a great quality of life. Chief Fanning introduced Jono (Pawleys Island Investigator) and stated that the police will still give 300% of their effort even being down one officer. Mayor Henry asked for a motion to draft a resolution to accommodate a 3 person police roster, installing cameras, adding county protection, and aiming for the police budget to meet \$400,000. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Rocky Holliday seconded the motion. Ryan and David Durant chimed in and stated that Council would be better off approving the budget now and amending it at the start of the new year to meet these conditions. Ryan stated that the retiring officer will still be here until March, and they still have vacation hours to cash in. Guerry Green withdrawals his motion. Ryan strikes the police car line item from the budget. Mayor Henry asked for a motion to approve the budget as is without the addition of the new police vehicle. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All approved to pass the second reading of Ordinance 2021-11.

E. Approve Christmas Bonus

- I. Full Time Employees (\$400 net)
- II. Part Time Employees (\$150 net)

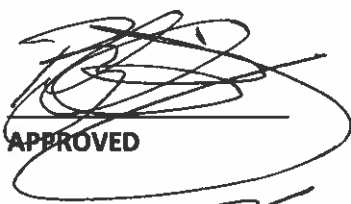
Mayor Henry asked for a motion to approve the Town employee's Christmas bonuses. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All approved.

7. COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

No comments were given.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Henry asked for a motioned to adjourn the meeting. Sarah Zimmerman motioned to adjourn. Rocky Holliday seconded the motion. All approved and the meeting adjourned.


APPROVED


ATTEST

1/19/22
DATE

1/18/2022
DATE

