



TOWN OF PAWLEYS ISLAND

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES

Town Hall – Conference Room | 323 Myrtle Ave | Pawleys Island SC 29585
12-12-2022 – 5:00 pm

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

ABSENT: Ashley Carter

STAFF PRESENT: Dan Newquist (Town Administrator), Mike Fanning (Chief of Police), Daniel O'Hara (Town Clerk)

ADDITIONAL PRESENT: Ross Durant (Town Attorney) Stacey Moree (Town Auditor)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Henry called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- a. Bert Mills: Mr. Mills introduced his wife Carmen Mills stating that they are aspiring residents on the Island. Mr. Mills stated that they have owned a couple of houses for about eighteen (18) years and own a creek lot, mentioning that they suffered a little damage during Hurricane Ian. Mr. Mills stated that he would like to speak about the Sea Level Adaptation Plan. Mr. Mills thanked the Town Council for sending out the draft plan and also thanked them for the Labor Day event. Mr. Mills wanted to state that he and Carmen are not opposed to the mitigation plan. Mr. Mills mentioned that the Sea Level Adaption Plan mentioned elevating the roads on the Island. Mr. Mills mentioned a personal experience with a previous home that elevated their roads and caused runoff onto his property. Mr. Mills states that when he reads road elevation and marsh elevation it makes him wonder about runoff and how it will affect everyone. Mr. Mills moved to his next point and stated that when he reads acquisition of properties, he stated that commendation comes to mind. Mr. Mills stated that he believes that he thinks that everyone will want to know what the Town Council is thinking there. Mr. Mills continued to mention regulations about what property owners can do with their land. Mr. Mills requested that as we look for actions and implementation where these things are going to happen to create a committee to discuss the impacts of some of the action items. Mr. Mills stated that we need a lot more information on how it will affect them.
 - i. Rocky Holliday mentioned that no decisions had been made on solutions. Rocky stated that the Town hired a consultant to assist the Town with her knowledge of working with other communities who are faced with the same problems. Rocky stated that the Universe is open, in terms of what the Town selects to help fix the problem. Rocky stated that the last thing the Town Council wants to do is to make something worse. Rocky stated

that we are going to make positive changes not negative ones and that in order for this to work we will need input from the entire Island. Mayor Henry stated that the Town Council will address this later during the meeting. Carmen Mills asked to speak following Mayor Henry's request for more input. Mrs. Mills asked how the adoption will affect the action items and if a committee is created, how someone who has an interest sits on the committee. Mayor Henry stated that it is important to get the people involved moving forward.

Mayor Henry summarized that part of the intent of the study is to help secure grant funding for these types of infrastructure projects. stated that the Town does not have extra money for these projects without the help of grant money. Mayor Henry continued to explain that when we adopt this document, we are saying that this is the right direction for the Town to fix a serious problem. Mayor Henry stated that we want to show the Federal and State Government that we have done our diligence and are ready to get money. Mrs. Mills asked if the money the Town would be applying for is for a project to yet be identified.

3. PUBLIC HEARING

a. 2023 TOWN BUDGET

- i. No one signed up to speak.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. 11-14-2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

- a. **Mayor Henry asked for any modifications, updates, or motions. Guerry Green motioned to approve the minutes. Rocky Holliday seconded the motion.**

5. REPORTS AND UPDATES

A. POLICE REPORT

- a. Chief Fanning stated that there had been four reported cases of fraud on the Island. Chief Fanning explained that one instance was stolen checks from a resident's mailbox or the post office or bank. Chief Fanning said that if you have instances of mail missing or anything like that to contact the Police Department. Chief Fanning listed off the other fraud cases reported on the Island mentioning cases of telephone fraud, real estate fraud, and an internet fraud extortion call they responded to. Chief Fanning stated that no one will call you over the phone to tell you that you owe money to Amazon, the IRS and then ask you to pay in gift cards. Chief Fanning continued to mention the real estate fraud that occurred on the Island, explaining that there was a piece of property that was put up for sale that the lister did not own. Chief Fanning noted that since the transaction began in Georgetown County the investigation was turned over to the County Sheriff's Department. Chief Fanning stated that the last case of fraud that was reported was a person that sent photos of themselves to a person they thought was a young girl in Utah.

Chief Fanning continued to explain that you should not exchange personal information or photos over the internet. Chief Fanning mentioned that there have been a lot of residents concerned about speeding on Atlantic Ave following a recent accident involving a dog. Chief Fanning noted that this month they have issued a total of five speeding violations three (3) speeding tickets. Chief Fanning stated that the department would continue targeted enforcement on the island.

B. BUILDING REPORT

- a. Daniel Newquist explained that the report contains active permits received from the County, then the permits received during the previous month. Included on the last page is a tally of all the permits that have been received during the year and the total fees collected. Daniel Newquist mentioned that at the recent ARB meeting, the board approved two new homes. Daniel noted that there would be a review of the SAFEBuilt contract and the transition process with the County later in the meeting in item 6D.

C. FINANCIAL REPORT

- a. Daniel Newquist explained that so far in the year in comparison to last year, the Town has received a higher amount of A-tax dollars in 2022 than in 2021. Daniel Newquist noted that the Town is sending checks to the Chamber of Commerce for 30% of allocated State Accommodation tax funds and the expenditure line item would significantly increase by the next meeting since payment has been delayed during the second half of the year. Daniel Newquist mentioned that underground wire payments year to date are lower than anticipated and explained that staff would monitor it as the year ends. This led to a discussion on how it will affect the 2023 budget and how to ensure the Town closes out these active accounts.
- b. Mayor Henry asked Stacey Moree to provide her report on the Town's 2021 financial audit. Stacey Moree went over the executive summary report with Town Council. Stacey Moree noted that the Town is in a good financial position. Stacey Moree informed Town Council that the Town has one year of operating general funds in reserve funds. And that the benchmark for most governments is thirty (30) to ninety (90) days.

6. BUSINESS

A. First Reading - 2023 Town Budget

- I. Mayor Henry noted that the Town Council did not vote on the first reading at the previous meeting, and it would need to be revoted today. Sarah Zimmerman noted that in years past there had been a budget workshop scheduled as part of the approval process. Mayor Henry mentioned that it generally occurs between the first and the second reading. Sarah Zimmerman asked what the expected salary increase was for the Police Department. Mayor Henry stated that the Town budgeted a 6% increase, and the cost-of-

living adjustment was 8.7%. This led to a discussion about the Town's budget for the 2023 year and the increase in expenses. There was a discussion on the special events budget, and it was noted that the budgets of all the individual special events are now incorporated into a budget, which will be delegated to the Events Committee to oversee. Sarah Zimmerman stated that she would like to find 2.7% to meet the cost of living. Guerry Green asked Chief Fanning how the Town compares to Georgetown County Police Department. Chief Fanning mentioned that they do not have an annual cost of living review and noted that they are generally behind all of the comparable departments in the area. This led to a conversation about how the Town has handled raises for the Police department in the past. Chief Fanning noted that it was promised to them that their raises are based on the social security rate increases. In the past some years the COLA was zero (0).

Daniel mentioned that in preparation for the 2024 budget, it could be beneficial to review our personnel policy and evaluate our current salary and benefits packages for Town employees and revisit the use of COLA as a metric to determine year-to-year salary increases. Mayor Henry concluded that in order for the Town to offer an 8.7% COLA raise, then there will need to be adjustments in expenditures in other budget categories. Guerry Green reiterated that just because we are currently in a prosperous timeframe with ATAX revenues, that doesn't mean that it would continue indefinitely and that there are many indications of an economic slowdown.

Mayor Henry asked for a motion to approve or deny the first reading of the budget. Guerry Green made a motion to approve the first reading. Rocky Holliday seconded the motion.

II. No date was set for the budget workshop but was later scheduled for January 10, 2023.

B. Hurricane Ian Response

I. FEMA Update

- a. Daniel Newquist stated that he had multiple meetings with FEMA and SCEMD over the past week. Daniel Newquist noted that there are FEMA representatives located at the Waccamaw Recreational Center to help assist individuals with claims. Daniel Newquist mentioned that he has confirmed that the money spent on dune repair and debris removal in the Town is eligible for up to 75% reimbursement. Daniel Newquist also noted that he would be filing reimbursement for personnel costs associated with emergency preparedness and immediate disaster response.

II. Creek Debris Removal

- a. Daniel Newquist stated that FEMA has informed him that the Town is eligible for reimbursement for work that the Town is legally responsible for. Anything that is not within the Town's jurisdiction would require an agreement with the responsible entity. For the debris in the navigable waterway of the creek that would be the State of South Carolina. For the debris on the west side of the North Causeway, that would be Georgetown County.

Daniel Newquist mentioned that he made contact with four contractors to remove the debris from the creek and C-Way Marine Construction was the only responsive contractor. C-Way's cost estimate for the work is \$17,000. Daniel Newquist noted that the OCRM debris removal emergency order expires on December 31st, but that he intends to request an extension to allow for more time to complete the work. **No votes or decisions were made.**

III. Sand Fencing/ Dune Vegetation

- a. Daniel Newquist mentioned that he is making progress on initiating a voluntary cost-share project to restore the sand fencing and dune vegetation lost during Hurricane Ian. Dan asked that interested property owners contact the Town Hall and once the details of the project are finalized then the Town would send out notifications to property owners on that contact list. Mayor Henry suggested that the Town send out the contact information of experienced contractors for individual properties who desire to begin their sand fencing and dune vegetation work now.

C. Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan – Resolution

- I. Mayor Henry stated that this plan will prepare the Town for shovel-ready projects to receive grant money. Mayor Henry thanked everyone in the community for their support and input into this report. Mayor Henry explained that the Town will need to adopt this document to move forward with pursuing money for projects. **Mayor Henry asked for a motion. Rocky Holliday motioned to approve the resolution. Guerry Green seconded the motion. All voted in favor.**

D. Georgetown County Building Dept Transition Agreement / SAFEBuilt Contract

- I. Mayor Henry stated that this has been in the making for a while and that through dedicated work from staff and involvement from the Planning Commission it is about to become a reality. Daniel Newquist stated that he will need approval from the Town Council for a transition of building department services from the County to the Town. Dan also reviewed a draft contract agreement with SAFEBuilt that will need approval. Daniel Newquist confirmed that SAFEBuilt is the vendor that the Planning Commission recommended. Daniel Newquist stated that he is planning to meet with Georgetown County

to work through the transition period and the targeted January 1st start date. **Mayor Henry asked for a motion to enter into a transition agreement with the County and to retain SAFEbulit as the Town's permitting entity. Guerry Green motioned to approve. Rocky Holliday seconded the motion. All voted in favor.**

E. Tyson House

- I. Mayor Henry stated that this has been up for discussion several times and it was discussed at the last meeting to send a letter asking the owner to put forth an effort to clean up the property by January 31st. Ross Durant provided input that if the Town Council would like to adjust the deadline, he could edit the letter. Sarah Zimmerman stated that she believes they should move the deadline to the end of February. **Mayor Henry asked for a motion. Rocky Holliday started the motion to send the letter as written with the change to February 28th. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All voted in favor.**

F. 2nd Street Stop Sign – Discussion

- I. Mayor Henry noted that the Town has received several inquiries about installing a stop sign at the 2nd Street intersection. Mayor Henry stated that Daniel Newquist had begun communication with SCDOT on the matter. Daniel Newquist explained that there are several options the Town has to get a new stop sign. Daniel stated that DOT would come out to do a field review of the location before determining a valid placement for a stop sign. But if the DOT does not approve the placement following the field review the Town has the option to obtain an encroachment permit. This would require the Town to enter into a maintenance agreement with SCDOT.

G. FEMA Flood Map Update

- I. Daniel Newquist stated the SCDNR is currently reviewing the Town's floodplain management ordinances. Daniel Newquist also noted that the new FEMA flood maps would be effective starting May 9th, 2023. Daniel Newquist mentioned that if any property owner would like to discuss the new maps and the effect, they have on their property they are welcome to schedule an appointment.

H. Virtual Town Committee Quorum – Discussion

- I. Mayor Henry explained that it is difficult for some committee members to attend in person since many do not live on the Island. Mayor Henry stated that he would like to be able to allow the ability for a virtual quorum to be achieved. Mayor Henry noted that he would still like to request an in-person quorum for the Town Council. This led to a discussion about whether to allow the committee chairs in a case-by-case situation to make the determination for a virtual or in-person quorum. The decision was tabled so that the Town Council could get better guidance from the Municipal Association of South Carolina.

I. 2023 Town Council Regular Meeting Schedule

- I. Mayor Henry stated that there was no need for a vote since it follows the Town ordinance.

6. COMMENTS

- a. Mayor Henry stated that there will be a prayer service in the nature park on Christmas Eve at 5:30 pm. Mayor Henry also asked if it would be easier for the Town Council to use electronic files during Town Council meetings.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Henry asked for a motion for adjournment. Rocky Holliday started a motion for adjournment. Sarah Zimmerman seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

APPROVED

DATE

ATTEST

DATE