TOWN OF PAWLEYS ISLAND
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Town Hall – Conference Room | 323 Myrtle Ave | Pawleys Island SC 29585
11/11/2024 – 5:00 PM

PRESENT: Mayor Brian Henry, Rocky Holliday, and Sarah Zimmerman

STAFF PRESENT: Daniel Newquist, Corey Higdon, and Chief Fanning

ADDITIONAL PRESENT:

ABSENT: Ashley Carter, Guerry Green

1) **CALL TO ORDER / OPENING REMARKS**
   - **Mayor Henry called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.**

2) **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
   - There were no public comments made.

3) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - 9-23-2024
   - **Mayor Henry requested a motion to approve or amend the 9-23-2024 Town Council minutes. Mr. Holliday motioned to approve the minutes. Mrs. Zimmerman seconded the motion.** No further discussion. **All voted in favor.**

4) **REPORTS AND UPDATES**
   A) Police Report

Chief Fanning began the police report by elaborating on two unfortunate drownings that occurred in the Town in the month of October. The first drowning occurred near the Midway Inlet and the Town Police Department was alerted via a swimmer-in-distress call. A U.S. Coast Guard helicopter located the body of the swimmer about a half mile from the coast an hour following the initial call. The second drowning occurred near the Second Street beach access and the Town Police Department was also alerted via a swimmer-in-distress call. When Chief Fanning and Detective Fairfield arrived on scene, a man was seen floating a hundred yards or so away from the shore. The officers were able to recover the swimmer but he was later pronounced deceased at the hospital. In regards to these recent drownings, Chief Fanning noted the idea of implementing a flag system to warn beachgoers of hazardous conditions in the water, referencing nearby Huntington Beach State Park as an example of a beach that uses the flag system. He added that there have been 13 drownings since 2010. He continued to state that he and the Town's Administrator, Dan Newquist, have a meeting scheduled with Huntington Beach State Park to assess the feasibility of the flag system for the Town of Pawleys Island.

Mayor Henry questioned if either drowning occurred due to a riptide, to which Chief Fanning elaborated that he is unsure of the exact cause of the drownings, but there was a NOAA warning for the conditions of the water on the day of the first drowning and rough seas were present during the second incident. Mr. Holliday commended and honored both Chief Fanning and Detective Fairfield for their efforts in both incidents. Mayor Henry added by also commending the officers and referencing a previous incident

where both officers showed tremendous diligence and respect towards the family of the victims. Mayor Henry continued to elaborate on possible mitigation efforts for these incidents, suggesting that there are physical and educational solutions. Physical solutions include the flag system, life rings, lifeguards, etc. while educational solutions include web pages and signs explaining swimmer safety. Chief Fanning noted that ocean conditions can change rapidly and can vary across the four-mile-long island.

He continued with his report to state that aside from the two unfortunate drownings, there were no other significant incidents on the island. He concluded his report by acknowledging recent parking issues on the south end due to the South End Parking Lot closure for repairs.

B) Building Report

Mr. Newquist began his report by highlighting the increased volume of building permits with the Town of Pawleys Island officially entering the offseason. He noted that there had been 16 new building permits since Town Council last met in September, with the total for the year reaching 101 permits from January to the end of October. He added that a Certificate of Occupancy was issued for 490 Myrtle Avenue and 636 Pritchard Street. He concluded his report by updating the council that several new construction projects are set to begin on the island in the coming months.

C) Financial Report

Mr. Newquist prefaced his report by elaborating on the Town's increased budget monitoring as the calendar year ends. He updated Council on the Town's revenues through 2024, which is well on track to meet the anticipated revenue outlined in the budget for 2024. He lastly noted that the Town's expenditures are also on track to meet the expected expenditures in the 2024 budget.

5) BUSINESS

A) 2023 Annual Audit Presentation

Stacy Moree presented the Town's 2023 Annual Audit. Key highlights in her presentation include totals in the Town's balance sheet for 2023, which includes $4,626,145 in total assets and $2,702,544 in total liabilities, giving the Town a net position of $1,923,601. Ms. Moree also noted that the Town received $1,319,695 in gross State and Local Accommodation Tax revenues. These A-Tax revenues accounted for a majority of the Town's total revenue of $2,377,684.

Mr. Holliday raised a question of where FEMA reimbursements are classified in the revenues, to which Ms. Moree clarified that they are classified under the grants revenue section. Additionally, Mr. Holliday questioned if FEMA has any outstanding balance with reimbursements for the Town, to which Ms. Moree and Mr. Newquist clarified that FEMA is entirely caught up on reimbursements for the Town. Lastly, Mayor Henry asked if there were any red flags that arose from the 2023 audit, in which Ms. Moree reassured that there were not. She added that her only suggestions are to work as closely as possible with the Town's bookkeeper to make sure every expenditure and revenue is classified correctly.

B) First Reading- 2025 Annual Budget Ordinance

Mr. Newquist initiated his presentation of the 2025 budget by detailing the Town's anticipated revenues for 2025. The revenue budgeted for 2025 very closely mirrors the revenues for 2024. Notable increases in the budgeted revenues for 2025 included increases in special event revenues and interest income, as both outpaced their 2024 budget projections. Notable decreases include the Underground Wiring Project, which is anticipated to be phased out and completed in the next few years. Mayor Henry recommended that Town Council members could be given a notification of who has outstanding balances in terms of the Underground Wiring Project to potentially progress in obtaining the remaining balances.

Moving forward, Mr. Newquist presented the budgeted expenditures for 2025. Beginning with the administrative expenditures, Mr. Newquist highlighted increases in the budgeted costs for professional services (accounting and legal services) and events. He continued to highlight the budget for interns, which he elaborated that the Coastal Carolina internship program was a major help for the Town during the absence of a Town Clerk in the early months of 2024. Mrs. Zimmerman raised a question about a decrease in the budgeted group health insurance expenses, to which Mr. Newquist clarified that the decrease was due to councilmember Guerry Green no longer being included in the Town's health service plan.

Mr. Newquist continued to present the budgeted expenditures for the Police Department, which included a decrease in capital outlay expenditures for 2025 versus the previous 2024 budget, which saw an increase due to the anticipated purchase of a new police vehicle. Another highlight included increases in salaries for the Police Department, which include a 2.5% COLA increase and a 1.5% merit increase. Within the judicial category, Mr. Newquist noted that the victim expenses budget category was moved from the Police Department to the judicial section of the budget. In terms of the Public Works budget section, Mr. Holliday raised a question regarding the increase in the trash services budget category, to which Mr. Newquist elaborated that the increase is due to the Town's anticipated purchase of ten new Big Belly trash receptacles using funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Mr. Holliday also noted an increase in the supplies budget category, to which Mr. Newquist clarified that the increase is due to the street signs budget category being combined into supplies. Mayor Henry and Mr. Holliday recommended decreasing the supplies budget category to $7,000 instead of $9,000 based on trends in past years.

Closing out the budget discussion, Mr. Newquist highlighted that in the Community Facilities budget section, the "Town Hall Office Supplies" category was added, while in past years it was a separate category in both the Administration Department expenditures and the Police Department expenditures. Mrs. Zimmerman questioned what expenditures would be classified in the "contract maintenance" budget category in the community facilities section. Mr. Newquist explained that this budget

category includes regular maintenance around the office, such as Lane's Pest Control and Maids of Honor cleaning services. Mr. Newquist explained a new budget category, the Building Department category. He noted that the Town's auditors recommended that a Building Department category should be added to the budget to keep better track of the expenditures and revenues in terms of building services. Lastly, Mr. Newquist covered the Beach Management section of the budget, which he highlighted that A-Tax revenues are budgeted at the same amount as the previous year. **Mayor Henry requested a motion to approve the first reading of the 2025 Annual Budget ordinance. Mrs. Zimmerman motioned to approve the first reading of the 2025 Budget. Mr. Holliday seconded the motion.** No further discussion. **All voted in favor.**

C) Resolution 24-03- Georgetown County Hazard Mitigation Plan Adoption

Mr. Newquist explained FEMA's 5-year required update to municipalities' hazard mitigation plan. He highlighted the action items in the new Georgetown County Hazard Mitigation Plan that have emphasis on Pawleys Island notably the goals laid out by the Town's Comprehensive Plan. He noted that the mitigation plan could be used to apply for various grants. **Mayor Henry requested a motion to adopt the Georgetown County Hazard Mitigation Plan. Mrs. Zimmerman motioned to adopt the plan as presented. Mr. Holliday seconded the motion.** No further discussion. **All voted in favor.**

D) Pawleys Creek Study/Committee Formation - Discussion

Mayor Henry prefaced the discussion by noting that the health of the Pawleys Island Creek is a priority of the Town, similar to the recent emphasis on beach renourishment and flood mitigation/drainage in the Town. He continued to explain that the silting of the creek is the primary concern, with the creek filling in over time. He elaborated on his recent experience of walking the creek from the Pritchard Street boat landing to the South End of the island to assess the current condition of the creek. Mayor Henry stated that the silting of the creek did not seem to be the main concern from his assessment, but rather the noticeable change in texture to the bottom of the creek. He expressed that the texture of the creek seems to be more sandy than in the past, with less clusters of oysters throughout the creek. Mayor Henry recommended that the Town form a committee to lead a study of the conditions of the creek and assess what options there are to mitigate any issues regarding the creek. He elaborated that he has seen interest in the study from individuals in the Town of Pawleys Island along with interest from those who live on the creekside of unincorporated Pawleys Island. Mrs. Zimmerman expressed similar interest in the formation of a Pawleys Creek Study committee. Mayor Henry lastly noted that the study of the creek can run concurrently with the study of drainage on the island. Closing the discussion, Chief Fanning offered drone footage over the years to help assess the changes in the creek.

6) COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

- There were no additional comments made by council members.

7) ADJOURN

APPROVED

12/9/24
DATE

ATTEST

12/12/24
DATE