

## City Council

7:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 29, 2014

The regular meeting of City Council was held at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 29, 2014 in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Bergwerf, Bettelli, Buckhannon, Carroll, Ferencz, Harrington and Loftus, Mayor Cronin, City Administrator Tucker, City Attorney Halversen, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland; Councilmember Ward's absence was excused. A quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Mayor Cronin called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and public had been duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. After a brief invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance, Clerk called the roll.

### 2. Appointment and Administration of Oath to New Employees

**MOTION: Councilmember Bettelli moved to appoint Patrol Officers Crocket, Postell, Reynolds and Zimmerman to the City rolls; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mayor Cronin then swore in each officer and welcomed them to the family that is the Isle of Palms.

### 3. Reading of the Journals of Previous Meetings

**MOTION: Councilmember Bettelli moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of March 18, 2014 as submitted; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### 4. Citizens' Comments

#### B. Employee Recognition

Mayor Cronin invited Chief Buckhannon to the podium. Chief Buckhannon described being given Animal Control Officer Keelan's notice of retirement from the City effective May 1, 2014; ACO Keelan told the Chief that he was returning to New Jersey to be closer to family, especially his grandchildren. The Chief noted that ACO Keelan has been with the City seven (7) years, and, despite the Chief's best efforts, he was unable to change ACO Keelan's mind. The Chief stated that ACO Keelan has been a vital member of his staff, as well as other City Departments; ACO Keelan stepped in with a smile and performed whatever menial task was place in front of him.

Upon joining the Chief, ACO Keelan was presented with a shadow box containing his badge, his patch and his employee identification card noting his retirement. Mayor Cronin and the City Administrator echoed Chief Buckhannon's sentiments.

ACO Keelan expressed that he had enjoyed working with the City and the opportunity with work with the City's staff, but the call of his grandchildren was too great to ignore.

**A. Consideration of a City-sponsored Event – Travel Channel Filming on the Beach**

Assistant Dziuban explained that the Travel Channel wants to do a one (1) day shoot on the beach, either May 19<sup>th</sup> or May 20<sup>th</sup>. They plan to have a crew of about fifteen (15) carrying basic camera gear; they will have no vehicles on the beach. They hope to create a minimal amount of disruption on the beach during the shoot in the Wild Dunes area. The filming will be for a show that promotes the latest travel gadgets on the market. Assistant Dziuban added that they have presented the City with a certificate of insurance naming the City as an additional insured.

**MOTION: Councilmember Bettelli moved to make the Travel Channel's one day shoot on the beach, either May 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup>, a City-sponsored event; Councilmember Harrington seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**5. Reports from Standing Committees**

**MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved to re-order the *Agenda* to have the Public Safety Committee first; Councilmember Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**B. Public Safety Committee**

Councilmember Bettelli reported from the meeting of April 9<sup>th</sup> and the first order of business was to review the FY15 Capital and Operating Budgets for the Fire and Police Departments. The Committee was told that the existing traffic counters are operational and that Stantec is working on the permit from SCDOT, allowing the new counters to be installed. Regarding the Stantec project of beach access parking, the Committee was informed that they have entered a very important phase of their work, i.e. the collection of data on which they will base the parking management recommendations. Along with the Planning Commission, City Council has scheduled a roundtable discussion for May 1<sup>st</sup> with Stantec personnel. Under the heading of "New Business," Chief Buckhannon reported on the Police Department's having achieved the Gold Standard Award and the CALEA Conference held earlier. Achieving the Gold Standard meant the City was credited with having met the standards for paperwork and procedures several times in the past and that the focus of this level of achievement was on how those standards and practices are exemplified by the officers and perceived by co-workers, residents and Council.

At this time, Captains Caldwell and Usry and Chief Buckhannon unveiled the Gold Standard Achievement Certificate to City Council and the people of the Isle of Palms; the certificate will hang on the Wall of Fame in the Public Safety Building.

Chief Buckhannon expressed his thanks to the members of the Police Department, especially Captains Caldwell and Usry, for their hard work in the successful achievement of the Gold Standard. The Chief stated that this award is not meant only for the Department's command staff, but for the entire Police Department and the City of Isle of Palms; he also thanked City Council for allowing the Department to go through the process. This award means that the Department exemplifies the highest standards in law enforcement community. According to the

Chief, there are six hundred twenty-eight (628) agencies in the United States that are nationally accredited, and thirty-one (31) of those are in South Carolina. The Chief, the Captains and members of the department who were present received a big round of applause.

Continuing with the Public Safety Committee report, Councilmember Bettelli noted that the City has community outreach opportunities, like the "Coffee with a Cop" offered by the Police Department. The Committee unanimously voted to approve the purchase of surveillance cameras.

**MOTION: Councilmember Bettelli moved to award a contract to Technology Solutions in the amount of \$25,586.19 for the budgeted purchase of surveillance cameras; Councilmember Carroll seconded.**

Mayor Cronin commented that these cameras will replace a series of cameras that have been in service for ten (10) years and add a couple more to get more information on traffic volumes and flow. The Mayor reported that Chief Buckhannon has been in discussions with SCDOT about adding a couple of these cameras to their network throughout the state.

**VOTE: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

From the Fire Department report for March, Councilmember Bettelli reported that personnel responded to forty-seven (47) calls, and twenty-four (24) were EMS calls. The average response time for EMS in March was twelve and a half (12.5) minutes; the Chief will request to have EMS stationed on the island, at least Saturday, Sunday and holidays over the summer. The Fire Inspector conducted eleven (11) inspections, several at Harris Teeter and the new businesses going into The Island Center. Chief Graham and Battalion Chief Maibach attended training in Columbia in reference to emergency management. Personnel from both the Isle of Palms and Sullivan's Island attended a meeting with staff from Consolidated Dispatch to make changes that will benefit both entities as the summer approaches. At this time, the Fire Department is fully staffed.

From the March report from the Police Department, Councilmember Bettelli reported on an incident on Ensign Court where a subject was found to be involved with a burglary as well as trespassing; the subject was arrested for trespassing. Since the Police were able to tie the subject to other burglaries in the area, he was also charged with the burglaries. On March 27<sup>th</sup>, an officer routinely patrolling in the 200 block of Ocean Boulevard observed a number of City ordinance violations, including the discharge of fireworks and excessive noise. The subsequent investigation resulted in twenty-eight (28) individuals being charged with "minor in possession of alcohol," one arrested for having a quantity of marijuana, and the responsible party for the rental property was charged with the transfer of beer to minors. During the month of March, dispatchers responded to a total of five thousand three hundred fifty-five (5,355) calls; of that number, four thousand sixty-eight (4,068) were for the IOP Police Department. Officers had three hundred ninety-five (395) traffic calls that resulted in one hundred five (105) citations being written. Officers wrote one hundred thirty-three (133) reports and made seventy-six (76) arrests, with twenty-eight (28) attributed to the one (1) party. From the Livability Report, the Chief stated that there were fifteen (15) noise complaints in the month; one (1) citation, eleven (11) warning citations and three (3) were found to be unfounded.

The next meeting of the Public Safety Committee will be at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> in the Conference Room.

**A. Ways and Means Committee**

**1. Financial Statement**

From the meeting of May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Mayor reported that financial information reviewed was through March 31<sup>st</sup>, which is three-quarters ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of the way through the fiscal year. In the General Fund, overall expenditures are at seventy-one percent (71%) of budget and revenues are at seventy-four percent (74%). Treasurer Suggs had reported that, based on the last receipt of property taxes revenue, there is a strong possibility that the City might not meet budget; to-date, total property tax revenues are at four million ninety-eight thousand dollars (\$4,098,000) with collections from March, April, May and June yet to be received. Collections continue to be strong in Local Option Sales Taxes and business licenses. Reminding Council that the due date for business licenses was moved to April 30<sup>th</sup>, collections year-to-date total six hundred fifty-three thousand dollars (\$653,000).

**2. Tourism Schedules**

Municipal Accommodations Taxes are running nine percent (9%) ahead of the same period in FY13, and Hospitality Taxes are running ten percent (10%) ahead of FY13. In March, there were no collections for State Accommodations Taxes or the Charleston County Accommodations Tax Pass-through.

**3. Project Schedules**

The Mayor reported that there were no significant changes to the project schedules in March.

**MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to award a contract to L&L Contractors in the amount of \$77,990 to replace the City Hall generator and \$20,900 for a new transfer switch if needed; Councilmember Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The IOP Water and Sewer Commission offered City Council the opportunity to paint a logo or name on the water tank while the painters are on the tower finishing their project. After a lengthy discussion, Council chose to take no action on this item.

Also considered was recycling on the beach in cooperation with Charleston County; the program is basically in place, but the issue of paying for the service remains unclear. Charleston County has indicated that it has a scheme in place to cover maintenance costs after July 1, 2014; if the City wants to begin the recycling program earlier, it will be required to pay the maintenance costs, which are expected to run seventy-two hundred dollars (\$7,200) from the FY14 budget. After hypothesizing several scenarios, the Committee decided to begin the beach recycling program as quickly as the blue barrels can be delivered and deployed on the beach and to pay the FY14 maintenance costs from State Accommodations Taxes.

Responding to citizens' concerns about poor lighting on Front Beach, the Committee had an in-depth discussion about an experimental lighting project; the primary impediment to additional/different lighting is the need for improved electrical service to the area. An experimental section of lighting draped between trees will cost approximately eight thousand forty dollars (\$8,040), including adding electrical service. The experimental program was approved, but the project was sent back to Committee for further research.

The balance of the meeting was spent in a budget workshop; Mayor Cronin complimented both Council and staff for the contributions to bridge the gap to have a balanced budget. The Mayor indicated that major changes were made – items have been deferred, but those deemed to be necessary will proceed.

Administrator Tucker described this budget as “a new adventure” for staff and Council in that revenues were discussed first and were followed by Capital and Operating budgets. In addition, staff provided Council with several tools for a better understanding of the source of revenues, the use of tourism funds in balancing the budget and the need for additional sources of revenue in the future. The budget was presented to Council showing what was needed to balance it, as well as a menu of options to accomplish that goal. Councilmembers will have another opportunity to make changes to the budget before Second Reading. In the end, the Administrator described the FY15 budget process as “a challenging, but very positive experience.”

Mayor Cronin listed several of the changes the Ways and Means Committee has made:

- Taking advantage of a one-time accounting correction related to the timing of an insurance payment, reducing the gap by one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000);
- Increasing the SCE&G franchise fee from three percent to five percent (3%-5%);
- Reducing the amount budgeted for part-time firefighters' wages; and
- Increasing the off-island business license fees to two hundred percent (200%) of on-island businesses.

Increasing the per hour rate for the parking kiosks was considered, but the Committee decided against taking that action; they will discuss the option of having the kiosks operate twelve (12) months a year in the future.

The Mayor announced to Council that he has invited a representative of the Charleston Visitors Bureau to the next Ways and Means Committee meeting to talk about the impact of their efforts for the City of Isle of Palms.

The next Ways and Means Committee meeting will be held at 5:45 p.m. on Tuesday, May 20<sup>th</sup> in Council Chambers.

Administrator Tucker announced that the City, in conjunction with Sullivan's Island, will hold a Disaster Expo between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on May 21<sup>st</sup> at the Public Safety Building.

Mayor Cronin urged all citizens to attend and be made aware of what is before them in the event of a disaster; he indicated that he learns something new every year about how to prepare, when to prepare, how to exit the island under emergency conditions, etc.

### **C. Public Works Committee**

Reporting on the meeting of April 10<sup>th</sup>, Councilmember Loftus noted that the Committee had reviewed the Department's activities for March, as well as the garbage and debris collections as they compare to previous periods. As did other Committees, the Committee reviewed the FY15 budget looking for ways to balance it. This Committee also discussed beach recycling; Councilmember Loftus stressed the need for public education. Lighting at Front Beach was also discussed.

The next Public Works Committee meeting will be at 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup> in the Conference Room.

Councilmember Carroll pointed out the fact the largest number of visitors to the island are day visitors and educational efforts need to be directed to this group. Administrator Tucker noted that the City is getting assistance from Charleston County's public information office.

### **D. Recreation Committee**

Councilmember Carroll reported on the April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Recreation Committee stating that the adult baseball season has started and everyone loves the new lighting and fencing; other athletics that started in March for adults are 3 on 3 basketball, 6 vs 6 soccer and table tennis. Spike Nights is a volleyball clinic attended primarily by girls; it began originally as a program for girls who did not make the school teams and provides an opportunity for them to hone their skills. Special events include Island Gras, which Councilmember Carroll believes will become as successful as the Holiday Street Festival – all that is needed is good weather. The annual Easter Egg Hunt was also haunted by inclement weather, and activities had to be moved into the gym. The 2014 *Tae Kwon Do* tournament was held on Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup> with seventy-one (71) participants coming from Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, California and South Carolina. A middle school dance was held on March 31<sup>st</sup> three hundred forty-four (344) young people in attendance; the last middle school dance of the 2014 school year will be held on Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup>. "Music in the Park" will be held Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> on the grounds of the Rec Center; the event will be family friendly and feature bluegrass music. The Piccolo Spoleto Sand Sculpting Contest will be held on Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup> in front of the Windjammer. The IOP Beach Run is planned for Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup>.

The Recreation Committee also reviewed the budget tools provided by staff and the Recreation Department's Capital and Operating budgets. Additionally, the Committee looked at the use of Facebook to disseminate information about Rec events and other City activities to residents and visitors. Before moving forward, the City must develop and adopt a policy on social media that would become a part of the employee handbook.

The next Recreation Committee meeting will be 5:00 p.m., Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup> in the Conference Room.

Councilmember Harrington remarked about what a wonderful job the Recreation Department does for the City, but he added that many visitors also take park in Recreation activities and amenities. That being the case, he questioned why more tourism funds were no being spent to support the Department.

The Mayor responded that at least thirty percent (30%) of the bond payment for the building comes from tourism funds and many events are paid by State Accommodations Taxes. The Administrator remarked that no Hospitality Taxes were used in the Recreation Department.

#### **D. Personnel Committee**

From the Personnel Committee meeting of April 10<sup>th</sup>, Councilmember Ferencz reported that the bulk of the meeting was spent going through the FY15 budget. The Councilmember noted that the Committee has taken on several long-term projects that have been and will continue to be discussed over several months. One (1) such project is gathering wage ranges from other local governments and determining if the City's ranges are competitive; the Committee agreed that they wanted more time to study the information provided before making recommendations to Council. Information related to staffing levels in each Department was provided for the Committee. Another long-range project has been the consideration of hiring a city-wide mechanic or continuing to contract for services; the Committee agreed that they need more information. The Administrator had reported that she had no new information on a new City-wide employee evaluation tool.

The Personnel Committee will hold its next meeting at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 1<sup>st</sup> in the Conference Room.

March Safety Sweepstakes winners were William Seabrook from the Building Department, Roger Eagle from the Fire Department, Amanda Postell from the Police Department and Willie Powell from the Public Works Department.

#### **F. Real Property Committee**

Councilmember Loftus reported from the Real Property Committee meeting of April 8<sup>th</sup> where Marina Manager Berrigan had informed the Committee that the marina tenants were working to get parking under control at the marina and to resolve the problem of bandit boats. Mr. Berrigan stated that boots are being put on vehicles and boats are being locked; boaters will receive a warning initially, but repeat offenders will be ticketed and must pay to have the boat unlocked. Under Old Business, the Committee learned that Mayor Carmen R. Bunch Park has been cleared; the City is waiting on the design for the entrance from Charleston County. Repairs to the watersports dock were completed ahead of schedule, and SCE&G finished the electrical connection just before Easter weekend; Tidal Wave Watersports was operational for the Easter weekend. Relative to the marina consulting projects, a preliminary design for the marina has been completed by John Tarkany; a presentation will be made to the Ways and Means Committee on May 20<sup>th</sup>. John Shaffer is developing a plan for the docks on the Intracoastal Waterway; Mr. Berrigan and Mr. Shaffer attended a workshop on the Boating Infrastructure Grant as a possible source of funding for the renovation of the Intracoastal docks. As other Committees, the Real Property Committee reviewed the FY15 budgets that fall under its

purview. In New Business, the Committee unanimously approved the contract award for the new generator at City Hall. All City tenants were current with their rents.

The Real Property Committee will hold its next meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> in the Conference Room.

**6. Reports from City Officers, Boards and Commissions**

- A. Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee** – minutes attached
- B. Board of Zoning Appeals** – no meeting in March
- C. Planning Commission** – minutes attached

**7. Reports from Special or Joint Committees** – None

**8. Petitions Received, Referred or Disposed of** – None

**9. Bills Already in Possession of Council** – None

**10. Introduction of New Bills, Resolutions and Proclamations**

**A. First Reading, by title only, of Ordinance 2014-03 – An Ordinance to Raise Revenue and Adopt a Budget for the City of Isle of Palms, South Carolina for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2014 and Ending June 30, 2015.**

**MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to approve for First Reading, by title only, of Ordinance 2014-03 – An Ordinance to Raise Revenue and Adopt a Budget for the City of Isle of Palms, South Carolina for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2014 and Ending June 30, 2015; Councilmember Bettelli seconded.**

Councilmember Buckhannon stated that it has been great to see Council work so well at the Ways and Means Committee meeting to pull the FY15 budget together; he stated that he appreciated taking the time to go line-by-line through the budget. He also expressed his thanks for the Treasurer's time spent preparing the information on a number of expenses that the City has absorbed over the past many years without imposing a tax increase or additional fees. This budget process has shown that the City must begin to look for sources of new revenue in the near future.

The Mayor assured Councilmember Loftus that there would be the opportunity to make changes to the budget between First and Second Reading.

Councilmember Ferencz asked whether the budget would be sent back to the Department Heads for additional fine tuning. Mayor Cronin responded that this version of the budget would be discussed by committees again in May and that a department head is on each committee. Councilmember Ferencz suggested that each department should study the Miscellaneous and Contingency lines; although a cushion is nice, in a year that draws heavily on the City's tourism funds is a year to tighten the belt as much as possible. Another source of reductions may be Non-capital Tools and Equipment, which has increased by one hundred seventeen percent (117%) in a relatively short period of time.



Administrator Tucker reminded Council that the threshold for capital items was increased from one thousand dollars (\$1,000) to five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in the past couple or three (3) years; therefore, items that would have been capital purchases at one (1) time are now coded to Non-capital Tools and Equipment and expensed. This increase accounts for the sudden and sharp increase.

Councilmember Carroll pointed out that the FY15 budget would not have been balanced without the tourism funds from which to draw, but that process cannot continue indefinitely; without a substantial increase in tourism revenue, these funds will be depleted in about three (3) years. He stated that the City cannot continue to spend more and more money each year.

Mayor Cronin commented that the City spends money to provide services for the citizens and the City is not going to change that.

Councilmember Carroll continued saying that the City must find ways to save money and cut expenses.

Councilmember Ferencz added that, as Council began considering other revenue sources, it became clear that the day visitors only contribute eight percent (8%), whereas the residents contribute twenty-six percent (26%) to the overall revenue of the City. She remarked that the City has to find a way to make the day visitors become more responsible in paying for the services they enjoy when on the island.

**VOTE: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**B. Proclamation for Lupus Awareness Month**

**C. Proclamation for Police Week**

Administrator Tucker reported that she has checked parliamentary procedures relative to proclamations and learned that they do not have to be read, but it is necessary to read and appropriately pass resolutions. In lieu of reading the proclamations, the Administrator summarized the contents of the two (2) proclamations before Council.

**MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to proclaim the month of May 2014 as Lupus Awareness Month; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to proclaim May 11-17, 2014 as National Police Week and to publicly salute the service of law enforcement officers in the IOP community and across the nation; Councilmember Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## **11. Miscellaneous Business**

**Next Meeting Date: 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 27, 2014 in Council Chambers.**

12. **Executive Session** – not needed

13. **Conclusion/Adjournment**

**MOTION:** Councilmember Buckhannon moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m.; Councilmember Loftus seconded and the motion **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland  
City Clerk