SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL
3:30 p.m., Tuesday, December 2, 2014

A Special Meeting of City Council was held at 3:30 p.m., Tuesday, December 2, 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, Loftus and Ward, Mayor Cronin, Administrator Tucker, Director Kerr, Attorney Halversen, Assistant City Administrator Dziuban and Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Mayor Cronin called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and public were duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2.   Old Business

Discussion of Beach Access Parking Management

Mayor Cronin reported that the City has sent a letter to the Secretary of Transportation and that he and the City Administrator had met with the local administration for SCDOT about the proposed beach access parking management program Concept B and golf cart parking; they received a favorable "nod" until the Secretary takes it under consideration on the staff level. In addition, they spoke to the parking limitations on Palm Boulevard from 43rd to 53rd Avenues and the idea of only providing two to four (2-4) spaces at the end of the streets for beach parking and none on Palm. Robert Clarke of SCDOT appeared to be favorable on releasing the City to proceed with the pay-to-park plan as outlined on both the pay-to-park areas and the residential-only areas, and leaving the remainder of the island unregulated as it is now. On the subject of golf cart parking, he was amenable to allow the City to designate spaces in the public right-of-way for golf cart only parking.

Mr. Clarke indicated to the Mayor and Administrator that he was going to make the Secretary's staff aware that the information would be coming to them.

Administrator Tucker reminded Council that the maps of the avenues showing available parking were the same as indicated in the Beach Management Plan that has not yet been updated; she added that the City knows that there are not that many spaces on the avenues now. To reduce the number of available parking spaces, the City has implemented two (2) mechanisms in tandem with SCDOT since the Beach Management Plan was approved, and they are (1) no parking on pavement which limits the number of spaces and (2) signs indicating no parking here to corner. In addition, there has been new construction with additional driveways that reduce parking. The Administrator explained that the goal of the letter was to ask whether a concept, like the one (1) proposed, would pass SCDOT's scrutiny and not be challenged. One area that has not been defined begins at Breach Inlet and moves northeast; Director Kerr suggested that five hundred to one thousand feet (500-1,000 ft.) from a beach access would be regulated resident parking and greater than one thousand feet (1,000 ft.) from a beach access would be unregulated parking, which would align the area with the remainder of the island.

Responding to a question from Councilmember Carroll, Director Kerr explained that 43rd and 44th Avenues were included in the Wild Dunes zoning, but they are outside the resort.

Mayor Cronin added that the roads and the rights-of-way are in the state system and not private roads.

When Councilmember Harrington asked about the City's authority to regulate the roads, Administrator Tucker stated that the City has the authority to regulate parking; the issue is whether the proposed method of regulating parking would be acceptable to SCDOT. The Administrator reiterated that the City's proposal is similar to the parking restrictions in the congested residential districts of the City of Charleston and Columbia; therefore, there is precedent for the type of managed parking, but not in a beach community.

Mayor Cronin added that the City has always had the authority to regulate the roads subject to the approval of SCDOT.

Councilmember Bergwerf referred to the maps indicating recommended regulated and unregulated roads on the island and called attention to a dividing line that runs down the middle of Hartnett Boulevard; she expressed the opinion that both sides of Hartnett should be included in the regulated parking area.

Director Kerr commented that the line separating regulated from unregulated was not a measured distance of one thousand feet (1,000 ft.), but a good estimation; the intention was to include Hartnett in the regulated parking area.

Councilmember Ward asked whether the avenue-side of a property located on the corner of Hartnett and an avenue down to 41st Avenue would be included in the regulated area; he was told that the avenue-side would be in the unregulated parking area unless or until such time as the resident petitioned for inclusion in the regulated parking area.

Councilmember Loftus reiterated his opinion that Option A was most fair in that everyone would be treated the same; he said that Option B had many negatives on which residents were going to push back.

Councilmember Bergwerf recalled that residents had expressed their opposition to any plan that would require that they get some kind of pass or permit to allow family or guests to park in their rights-of-way.

Councilmember Bettelli stated that some residents of the island were going to be dissatisfied with any plan that the City was to put into place.

Mayor Cronin commented that Council has not discussed the number of parking passes/permits to be sold, for the season, week, month or day.

In order to make that decision, Councilmember Bergwerf indicated that Council would need to have a census of the number of parking spaces available.

Mayor Cronin stated that the information could be obtained from Stantec and would take into consideration that streets on the west end of the island, particularly Charleston and Carolina, would be out of the equation, reducing the number of parking spaces by approximately two hundred (200) on a peak summer day.

Councilmember Bergwerf referenced an email from a man in Hanahan who stated that he did not mind paying to park, but he asked that the permits not be tied to license plates so that he could drive either of his vehicles to the beach. She thought that he made a valid point.

The Mayor remarked that it was a matter of enforcement.

Councilmember Loftus recommended that this gentleman should buy daily passes/permits when he comes to the island.

Councilmember Ferencz asked whether the season passes/permits would be accepted in the municipal parking lots and the answer was that they would not be. She then voiced her concern that a person who purchased a season pass should be allowed in the municipal lots if he could not find a space elsewhere.

Councilmember Bergwerf commented that the magic to the program was determining how many passes to sell so that persons who have purchased passes always had a place to park.

Councilmember Buckhannon noted that someone who has purchased a season pass to municipal lots could come to the island, find the lots full and have to find parking somewhere else.

Councilmember Harrington asked whether Stantec was to provide Council with a recommendation for the number of passes to sell.

Mayor Cronin indicated that they would, but Council could tweak the number before making a final decision.

Councilmember Carroll stated that on the lower numbered streets there is parking on one (1) side; he asked if it would be possible to rotate the sides on a yearly basis.

Chief Buckhannon answered that, on the west end of the island, SCDOT has allowed the parking to be rotated from one (1) side of the street to the other, but the deciding factor is the stability of the road bed to hold the parking. Currently a switch occurs when the road bed becomes unstable for parking.

Assuming that both sides of the road have stable road beds, the Mayor asked whether rotating parking from one side of the road to the other was feasible, and the Chief responded that it could be done.

Councilmember Carroll then asked whether it would be possible to have parallel parking on both sides of Palm Boulevard.

Administrator Tucker replied that parallel parking on Palm has been discussed a couple of times and decided against.

Councilmember Bettelli explained that, if the City could get SCDOT to approve the four foot (4 ft.) setback from the road for parking, it could make a request later to have parallel parking on the landside of Palm.

Mayor Cronin said that he was confident that SCDOT would approve the four foot (4 ft.) setback because Mr. Clarke had offered to lend the City with a piece of equipment that would mark it. If the City could have the equipment for a season, it would make lining Palm more efficient and with a more permanent substance that would not need maintenance as frequently.

Councilmember Ferencz asked Councilmember Bettelli what the objections had been to parallel parking on both sides of Palm Boulevard. Councilmember Bettelli said that there had been no objections, but the City did not want to give SCDOT too big a package to make decisions at one time.

The Mayor voiced several objections, such as:

- In order to parallel park on the land-side of Palm, a driver must turn around on one (1) of the avenues and he could barely park four feet (4 ft.) from the road due to the trees;
- Most of the people who park on the land-side of Palm are more than four feet (4 ft.) from the road; and
- When the doors are opened with perpendicular parking, those getting out are more than four feet (4 ft.) from the road.

Chief Buckhannon clarified that parallel parking is limited to the 21st Avenue curve; the balance of parking on Palm Boulevard is unregulated.

Councilmember Carroll asked Chief Buckhannon which manner of parking, parallel or perpendicular, was safer; the Chief responded that parallel parking is safer because it eliminates people backing into the roadway.

The question of how the City planned to communicate to residents that they must pay to park at the beach was posed by Councilmember Loftus; the Mayor responded that the City would need to put together a communication plan for residents and for the whole area.

According to Councilmember Loftus, signage was another issue that has not been discussed.

Administrator Tucker acknowledged that this program was going to require a lot of signs.

In the Mayor's thinking, every block on the island would need signage indicating whether parking was allowed or not allowed.

Councilmember Loftus also inquired whether the signs would be the typical industrial sign or the wayfinding-themed signs, and the Mayor answered that SCDOT would tell the City what the signage would be.

While the City was waiting for a response from SCDOT, Mayor Cronin asked Administrator Tucker to work with Stantec to get the information Council needs.

Councilmember Ward thought that consideration should be given to the cost of implementing the parking program; he asked when Council would see a budget for the project.

The Administrator stated that staff has been thinking about all of the issues that have been discussed, i.e. the budget, the cost to implement, vendors for the implementation, etc., at department manager level meetings. Staff has tried not to get too far until the City gets an affirmative reaction from SCDOT. In the meantime, there are other City projects that need to be accomplished before the fiscal year ends. The Administrator assured Council that the City staff has been working on the project and would be ready to move into action once SCDOT makes its decision. Work has begun on a preliminary budget that includes separating the implementation costs from on-going costs; a big question remains about the vendor, software and technology.

Mayor Cronin announced that he and the Administrator have a meeting next week with County Council about the public restrooms.

The Administrator recalled that the original FY15 budget included an estimate of one hundred fifty thousand dollars ($150,000) for potential implementation costs; for the approved budget, that amount was reduced to one hundred thousand dollars ($100,000).

The Mayor opined that the City will need more than one hundred thousand dollars ($100,000) in the first year; he stated that signage would consume a large part of that money.

Administrator Tucker reported that the City could not address the price for the passes until it has the costs of the program. If the goal is to offset the expense of operating the program with the sales of the passes, the City must know what the costs of the program will be.

Councilmember Buckhannon commented that the City's hands were tied until SCDOT makes its decision. He introduced the concept of having Palm Boulevard be a public parking area, but was told that it would not be possible because the City would not get credit for the parking based on the Beach Management Plan.

Back to the signage, Councilmember Loftus stated that the City should have a plan in place now due to the large number of signs that will be needed and the time necessary for their production. The City must know how many signs, exactly where they would be placed, etc. because this would not be a typical sign order.

Administrator Tucker responded that staff has made those determinations.

Councilmember Ferencz asked what the date for completion was; Mayor Cronin stated that the date would be as soon as the City is authorized and has ironed out all of the details that could be as late as July.

Councilmember Loftus then asked if there were any updates on the software package.

Administrator Tucker explained that the City has not yet selected a vendor because the City was not in a position to contract with a vendor before receiving the "go-ahead" from SCDOT.

Additionally, until the parking management plan is fully defined, staff does not have the specifications necessary to generate the RFB.

Councilmember Ward asked when Stantec started installing the wayfinding signs on the island because one (1) of them is in disrepair and falling off the pole.

3.   **New Business**

Annual Transportation Sales Tax Project Request

Mayor Cronin stated that the requests for FY15 were Phase II Drainage from 46th to 52nd Avenues and the engineering survey for a bike path along Palm Boulevard coupled with a bike exit ramp off the Connector onto the island; the City did not receive funding on either project.

MOTION: Mayor   Cronin   moved   to   re-submit   the   same   2   projects; Councilmember   Loftus seconded.

Mayor Cronin noted that the County has a limited amount of money and receives more requests than it has money; he reminded Council that City received significant funds in the past for the previous drainage project.

Administrator Tucker recalled that the City received one hundred thousand dollars ($100,000) from CTC funds last year toward the drainage project.

The fact that the City has completed the engineering is proof that this is a real project.

VOTE: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

First Reading, by title only, of Ordinance 2014-12 – **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF A GENERAL OBLIGATION REFUNDING BOND, SERIES 2015, OR SUCH OTHER APPROPRIATE SERIES DESIGNATION, OF THE CITY OF ISLE OF PALMS, SOUTH CAROLINA, IN THE PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF NOT EXCEEDING $1,500,000; FIXING THE FORM AND DETAILS OF THE BOND; AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR OR LAWFULLY AUTHORIZED DESIGNEE TO DETERMINE CERTAIN MATTERS RELATING TO THE BOND; PROVIDING FOR THE PAYMENT OF THE BOND AND THE DISPOSITION OF THE PROCEEDS THEREOF; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO.**

MOTION: Mayor Cronin moved to approve for First Reading, by title only, of Ordinance 2014-12; Councilmember Bettelli seconded.

Mayor Cronin explained that this motion was for the re-financing of the bond for the Recreation Center addition and that the City was hoping for significant savings in interest payments.

Councilmember Ward sought confirmation that this was the bond on which the City had to spend money that was not budgeted, and he was correct.

Councilmember Loftus inquired about the amount of savings the City anticipated from the re-finance; Administrator Tucker stated that the City is expecting to save approximately seventy-two thousand dollars ($72,000) over the remaining life of the bond.

Replying to Councilmember Ferencz' question, the Mayor explained that, when the budget was approved, the City did not know if there would be sufficient positive net results to pay down the principal to one and a half million dollars ($1,500,000) to re-finance without substantial legal fees.

VOTE: **The motion PASSED on a vote of 8 to 1 with Councilmember Ward casting the dissenting vote.**

5. **Executive Session** to receive legal advice related to potential claims concerning the City's proposed beach access parking management - not necessary

6. **Adjourn**

MOTION: **Councilmember Bettelli moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:42 p.m.; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk