

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
7:00 p.m., Tuesday, July 22, 2008

The regular meeting of the City Council was held at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 22, 2008 in City Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. In attendance were Council members Bettelli, Buckhannon, Duffy, Loftus, Piening, Rice and Taylor, Mayor Sottile, City Administrator Tucker, City Attorney Sottile, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland. Councilman Cronin's absence was excused. There was a quorum present to conduct business.

1. Mayor Sottile called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and the public had been duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act. The invocation, delivered by the Mayor, was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

2. Approval of Previous Meetings' Minutes

MOTION: Councilman Taylor moved to approve the minutes for the Public Hearing and regular City Council meeting of June 24, 2008 as submitted; Councilman Buckhannon seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Citizens' Comments

Sandy Stone commended Councilman Duffy's efforts at the Ways and Means Committee meeting to reduce City expenses by exploring the purchase of a smaller and more fuel efficient vehicle for the Building Department. Mr. Stone commented that citizens did not often see that kind of action, but it was appreciated.

Julie Hussey, a consultant working with the Berkley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments, asked that City Council participate in the program entitled "Our Region – Our Plan" from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 26, 2008 at the Charleston Area Convention Center. This gathering will provide the participants of the tri-county area an opportunity to combine their inputs to envision the future, identify priorities and consider actions that could be taken together. Ms. Hussey commented that the various municipalities were updating their Comprehensive Plans and that this meeting would provide a way to link them all together. She reported that the COG had received some eighteen hundred (1,800) responses from a survey that had run in the *Post and Courier* and that water quality outranked air quality as a concern for local residents.

4. Announcement and Review of Procedures

Appointment of Councilman Bettelli to CARTA Board

Mayor Sottile stated that he plans to relinquish his duties and responsibilities one at a time beginning with his seat on the CARTA Board of Directors. In the past, Councilman Bettelli has been his proxy; therefore, he is the best candidate to replace the Mayor.

MOTION: Councilman Buckhannon moved to appoint Councilman Bettelli to the CARTA Board of Directors; Councilman Taylor seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Review of Procedures

Mayor Sottile explained that he had asked Administrator Tucker to review the responsibilities of the departments of the City in the face of a natural disaster.

Administrator Tucker noted that hurricane season runs from June 1 through November 30. She explained that a key code word for an emergency event was "OPCON," which translated was Operating Conditions; she stated that there were degrees of OPCON that range from OPCON 5, the normal level, to OPCON 1, the emergency event was imminent. The Administrator proceeded to review each OPCON level and briefly describe the actions of each department at that level; Council members and residents that there would be valuable information available at the annual Hurricane Expo to be held from 5:00-7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 23, 2008 at the Sullivan's Island Fire Station. The outline of her comments is attached to the minutes.

Mayor Sottile announced that the City had received a state award from the Municipal Association of South Carolina for the Bark Park at the Recreation Center that was displayed in front of the dais; the City will keep the award for a year, but there was also a plaque to commemorate the City's achievement. The Mayor recounted that this was the second Achievement Award the City had received; the first being ten or so years ago that was shared with Sullivan's Island for the water line under the Cooper River. He congratulated Recreation Director Norma Jean Page and her staff for a job well done.

5. Reports from Standing Committees

A. Ways and Means Committee

1. Approval of Budget for Public Safety Building Project

Chairman Taylor reported that the primary focus of the meeting had been to finalize the budget for the Public Safety Building; Cole+Russell had provided additional information related to the bi-directional amplifier for communication signals within the building. This item had appeared on the budget at a cost of one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000), but investigation has provided a more accurate estimate of fifty thousand

dollars (\$50,000) that reduced the total financing amount by one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) to \$6.7 million.

The City has combined the costs associated with the Public Safety Building, reconfiguring the City Hall to include the Building Department, demolition of the existing Building Department and creating additional parking at the site of the Building Department; the total cost was estimated at \$8,340,696. Over the years, the City has reserved in excess of \$1.5 million for this project; there have been collection of approximately \$590,000 from the FY2008 millage increase that was earmarked for this construction of the Public Safety Building. In addition, the City would reimburse itself from the City's saved funds for the purchase of property in the amount of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000).

MOTION: Councilman Taylor moved to authorize the City Administrator to seek financing for \$6.7 million for a Public Safety Building in the general market beginning July 23, 2008; Councilman Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. Award of Contracts in Excess of \$10,000

A.	Public Safety	
NAFECO	Thermal Imaging Camera	\$10,535.00
Motorola	Radio Repeater	\$12,913.91

MOTION: Councilman Taylor moved to approve the award of the thermal imaging camera and the radio repeater; Councilman Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

B.	General Government	
Xerox	5 yr copier lease	\$39,911.40

MOTION: Councilman Taylor moved to approve the copier lease; Councilwoman Rice seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

C.	Building Department	
West Ashley Toyota	pickup truck	\$19,575.60

Councilman Taylor recalled that twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) had been budgeted for a new truck for the Building Department; having researched the market, Director Kerr recommended a 6-cylinder, 2-wheel drive Toyota that would meet the needs of the Building Inspector. At the Ways and Means meeting, Councilman Duffy asked that the Director research a 4-cylinder and more fuel-efficient vehicle before a purchase decision as made. Director Kerr learned that the demand for fuel-efficient

vehicles has driven up their cost and that the 2008 smaller pickup was sold out, only the 2009 model was available. When factoring the higher cost of the 2009 versus the fuel economy, the savings were negligible over a four (4) year period.

Motion: Councilman Taylor moved to approve the purchase of the Toyota Tundra from West Ashley Toyota for \$19,575.60; Councilman Buckhannon seconded.

Councilman Duffy reported that he had located a 2008 4-cylinder Toyota Tacoma available in the Charleston market; he calculated that, based on the MSRP and the two thousand dollars (\$2,000) cash rebate, the purchase price was less than the price of the Tundra. He noted that the loss in payload was only one hundred thirty (130) pounds.

Amendment to Motion: Councilman Duffy moved to amend the motion to purchase the Toyota Tacoma; Councilman Loftus seconded.

Councilman Bettelli recalled that one selection criteria had been the need for additional cab space for the manuals and other paperwork that the Building Inspector must carry along with him.

Councilwoman Rice stated her belief that the City should be downsizing its vehicles and that this purchase for the Building Department was a good place to start.

Councilman Taylor reminded the Council that the City had switched to smaller and more fuel-efficient Chevrolet Impalas several years ago. In this case, Councilman Taylor stated that he would yield to the decision of the department head to know his department's needs, especially since there was not a significant cost savings.

Call for the Question on the Amendment: Mayor Sottile called for a roll call vote on the to Amendment; the VOTE WAS A TIE with Council members Bettelli, Buckhannon, and Taylor and Mayor Sottile casting negative votes. WITH A TIE VOTE, THE MOTION WAS DEFEATED.

Call for the Question on the Original Motion: Mayor Sottile called for a roll call vote to purchase the Toyota Tundra; the motion PASSED on a vote of 6 to 2 with Councilmen Duffy and Piening casting "nay" votes.

B. Public Safety Committee

Councilman Buckhannon gave the report of the meeting since Chairman Bettelli had been out of town at the time of the meeting. He stated that Chief Buckhannon had

made the presentation to the City of the CALEA certificate signifying the Police Department's accreditation. Among the subjects discussed were an update on progress with the Public Safety Building and issues on golf cart parking. With the absence of the Committee chairman, Mayor Sottile decided to hold a special meeting of City Council to discuss a smoke-free workplace ordinance; the meeting has been set for 5:00 p.m., Monday, August 11. The members reviewed the citizens' responses to the City's letters explaining the SC DOT proposal for a demonstration project for Palm Boulevard and 41st Avenue and decided to recommend to City Council to proceed with the project.

MOTION: Councilman Buckhannon moved to proceed with the demonstration project for 41st Avenue and Palm Boulevard; Councilman Bettelli seconded.

Mayor Sottile stated that the design of the project was displayed on the easels that were in several locations in Council Chambers. Councilman Bettelli gave an overview of the project explaining the following:

- There would be a temporary barricade at the end of Cameron Boulevard;
- Traffic on Palm going to Wild Dunes in the right lane would be a free flowing lane;
- Traffic on Palm going to the Marina would have a STOP sign; and
- Traffic coming from the Marina would have a STOP sign.

Mayor Sottile explained that this project was the result of the traffic that backed up from Wild Dunes primarily when visitors were leaving the resort and, with the addition of The Village, traffic is only going to increase. He remarked that Council was trying to be proactive in solving the problem, and this project was SC DOT's recommendation to do. Because this was a DOT demonstration project, if it created more problems than it solved, it could be removed in a matter of days.

Councilman Taylor asked how long the trial period would last; Mayor Sottile responded that no time limit had been place on the project.

Councilwoman Rice stated that she could not support this project; she envisioned vehicles with trailers backing up to and from the marina, as well as problems for the emergency vehicles from Fire Station 2 on 41st. She anticipated Waterway Boulevard becoming more of a thoroughfare and problems with speeding. She reported that there had not been traffic issues at this intersection and there had been no policemen posted there this summer. She reported that, in conversations with Wild Dunes resort, she had learned that they do not have the Saturday to Saturday pattern any longer.

Councilwoman Rice commented that the project should be held until the spring when tourists would be returning in large numbers rather than as school was starting. She stated that the project was going to become a nuisance to residents who frequently travel 41st Avenue rather than a solution to a problem that apparently does not exist.

Councilman Loftus commented that he was one of those residents who traveled through the intersection every day and, from a traffic standpoint, the City had been fortunate over this summer. He related discussions he had with Dave Kynoski of the Wild Dunes Community Association where Mr. Kynoski reported that the intersection had been a safety issue for residents on the north end of the island. Councilman Loftus expressed his opinion that the project deserved a trial in an effort to relieve the concerns of the residents of that end of the island; he repeated that it could easily be removed if it did not work.

Councilman Taylor expressed his concerns as follows: (1) the interruption of the normal flow of traffic with the addition of STOP signs, (2) the issues of emergency vehicles navigating the new signs and (3) DOT's apprehension expressed some time back of addition a STOP sign that could potentially back up traffic on Palm Boulevard. He stated that his number one concern was people trying to maneuver the pedestrian access. Councilman Taylor said he would not oppose the project, but he did not want to see it in place for six (6) months.

Mayor Sottile stated that, if the problems that Councilwoman Rice raised were to materialize, Chief Buckhannon and Chief Graham had the authority to stop it without returning to the Public Safety Committee or to City Council for permission.

MOTION: Councilman Taylor moved to amend the original motion to limit the project to a maximum of forty-five (45) days; Councilwoman Rice seconded.

Councilman Loftus commented that forty-five (45) days was not a realistic time frame; he noted that people needed a certain amount of time to adjust to any type of change.

Call for the Question: In roll call vote, the AMENDMENT FAILED on a vote 2 to 6; only Councilwoman Rice and Councilman Taylor supported the change.

Call for the Question: In a roll call vote, the MOTION PASSED to proceed with the SC DOT demonstration project on a vote of 6 to 2; Councilwoman Rice and Councilman Taylor opposed the motion.

Councilman Bucckhannon reported that the Committee had also discussed a wireless mesh internet access for the City, but had decided that it was not financially prudent at this time.

Administrator Tucker announced to City Council that Chief Graham had sought and been awarded a grant for radios in the amount of \$17,549 that defrayed some of the costs of new radios.

C. Public Works Committee

Councilman Loftus gave the Committee report because Council Bettelli had been out of town. Councilman Loftus commented that, in Director Pitts' monthly report, trash collection was up over the past three (3) months despite indicators that the number of visitors to the island has been down. He reported that low hanging limbs on Oak Harbor have been trimmed. On the subject of beach debris, he reported that one of the rental companies has not been informing their clients of the new regulations, so the Livability Officer was to be asked to converse with that company.

Councilman Duffy related that he had encountered the Folly Beach Mayor who liked the Beach Maintenance ordinance so much that he planned to replace Folly Beach with Isle of Palms and submit it to the Folly Beach Council for consideration.

D. Recreation – no meeting

E. Personnel – no meeting

Chairman Piening announced that Beach Services Officers Neal Johnson and Rich Bailey had been named Employees of the Month for July for their keen observations that led to the arrest of persons who were involved with a string of twenty (20) robberies on the beach.

Safety Sweepstakes Winners were:

Trent Buzille, Fire Department	Russell Roper, Public Works
Derrick Ambas, Police Department	Carol Keller, Recreation

6. Reports from City Officers, Boards and Commissions

- A. Board of Zoning Appeals – no meeting**
- B. Planning Commission – minutes attached**
- C. Real Property Advisory Committee**

Councilwoman Rice reported that the marina has been very busy here at the height of the season. She announced that rope barriers have been placed in areas of the marina to prevent golf carts from driving and/or parking in those areas. The advertisement for the bid on the bulkhead was in *The Post and Courier* on Sunday, July 20; the pre-bid conference has been scheduled for July 30 and the bid opening will be Friday, August 15. Councilwoman Rice also noted that there would be discussions of the Morgan Creek Grill lease at the next meeting because the renewal date is October 1.

7. Reports from Special or Joint Committees

- A. Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee** – minutes attached
- B. Beach Advisory Committee** – no meeting

8. Petitions Received, Referred or Disposed of - none

9. Bills Already in Possession of Council - none

10. Introduction of New Bills, Resolutions and Proclamations - none

11. Miscellaneous -

Related to the City's award, Administrator Tucker thanked Emily Dziuban who authored the entry for the City to win.

12. Executive Session - none

13. Conclusion/Adjourn

MOTION: Having concluded the business of the City Council, Councilman Buckhannon moved to adjourn at 8:22 p.m.; Councilman Taylor seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk