

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
12:00 noon, Thursday, August 7, 2014

The regular meeting of the Public Safety Committee was held at noon on Thursday, August 7, 2014 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Bergwerf and Carroll, Chair Bettelli, Administrator Tucker, Fire Chief Graham, Police Chief Buckhannon, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Chair Bettelli called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and public have been duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. **Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

MOTION: Councilmember Bergwerf moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 2, 2014 as submitted; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **Citizens' Comments – None**

4. **Old Business**

A. **Discussion of Message Boards**

Administrator Tucker stated that the message boards had been on the agendas for both the Public Works and Recreation Committees. Since the digital sign was removed from the FY15 budget, the estimated cost of a replacement was included; the question is whether to have a static WELCOME sign or to have another message board, both in the wayfinding theme.

Councilmember Carroll commented that he had added a discussion on social media to the Recreation agenda; he noted that he was a strong proponent of social media. The consensus of the Recreation Committee was to have a static WELCOME sign and to push City information out to the public through social media, i.e. Facebook, Twitter and the City's website.

On the other hand, Councilmember Bergwerf said that she looked to the message boards for information; she added that comments on the social media sites should not be permitted because it would be too labor intensive.

The Administrator noted that the media sites would be maintained by Assistant Dziuban in City Hall, and, in the initial years, information will flow out, but no comments will come in.

Assistant Dziuban reported that, when Director Page went to one (1) of the signs to clean it up, the strips that hold the letters disintegrated.

Despite the fact that many residents have told Administrator that they do not notice the messages on the board, Councilmembers Bergwerf, Bettelli and Carroll indicated that residents with whom they have spoken want messaging to continue.

B. Update on Ticket Writers – CSDC Systems

Administrator Tucker acknowledged the presence of David Stokes, the JEMS Technical Manager. The Administrator then recalled that the City first purchased the JEMS court system that is functional and operates well; the second purchase was to be the ticket writers that would marry up to the court system, but the vendor has yet to provide them. Also at issue is the fact that the City paid for the ticket writers in 2013, expecting delivery immediately.

Mr. Stokes appeared very apologetic as he explained the problems at CSDC that have created the situation with the City. The software purchased by the City is referred to as Mobile JEMS 6; over a year ago, the persons developing that software left the company with the project incomplete. Sales representatives for CSDC were not aware of the fact that Mobile JEMS 6 was not ready and sold it before it was developed; the City of Isle of Palms was one (1) of those purchasers. The company has been working very hard to complete the project; as of today, the software has been delivered and tested and it works.

Chief Buckhannon reported that the software has been installed at City Hall and in Captain Usry's office and was tested yesterday; the scanners are being installed on laptops. The Chief noted that he has asked CSDC for their assistance with the scanners; he also explained that the Police Department has not scheduled training because personnel have been too busy to take time for it. According to the Chief, the software will be loaded onto the laptops once the scanners have been installed.

Administrator Tucker told Mr. Stokes that, if he finds himself in this situation in the future, he should refund the money to the customer and hope to have the product available in the very near future. The Administrator added that the City could have been earning interest on those funds and that she will be looking for a check from CSDC for the interest lost.

5. New Business

A. Consideration of 4-way Stop at Waterway Boulevard and 25th Avenue

Chair Bettelli asked Chief Buckhannon what the City had to do to have SCDOT to put a four-way stop at Waterway Boulevard and 25th Avenue as requested by a resident.

Chief Buckhannon explained that first a letter had to be written to the state with the request; they will, in turn, pull the accident history and study the traffic volume to determine whether the action is needed. The Chief informed the Committee that, according to Police records, no accidents have been reported at 25th Avenue and Waterway Boulevard, and the only complaints he has received are about bikers. He added that 25th Avenue is the only through street on Waterway Boulevard.

Responding to Councilmember Carroll's question, the Administrator reported that the City has only received this one (1) request for a four-way stop at that location.

Councilmember Bergwerf commented that the City will not be charged by SCDOT to review the spot; she saw no reason not to make the request.

Since the City has only received one (1) request, Chair Bettelli recommended that the intersection be monitored for problems.

B. Discussion of Animal Control Ordinance Amendment Relative to Tethering of Animals and Limiting the Number of Dogs

The Administrator stated that many municipalities have laws about the tethering of animals and/or limiting the number of dogs per household; she recalled from the previous meeting that the Police Department could address problems of tethering under the provision in the City code entitled "Ill Treatment of Animals." The Administrator asked whether the Committee was interested in additional laws directly addressing these issues.

Chair Bettelli said that he has received complaints about dogs, but they have been about barking dogs.

Councilmember Bergwerf agreed that the dog complaints are about the noise from barking, not the number of dogs.

Administrator Tucker advised the resident to call the Police Department to get the issue on record.

The consensus of the Committee was that no ordinance changes were needed.

C. Discussion of Fishing from the Beach

Referring to an email sent to the City and to Councilmembers, the Administrator commented that people are passionate on both sides, and this individual is very passionate against fishing from the beach. Additionally, Administrator Tucker stated that she could not find an ordinance relative to regulating fishing from the beach or prohibiting fishing for shark from the beach. The island does have a designated swimming area, the County Park, that people fishing normally stay away from.

Councilmember Bergwerf remarked that the people fishing are typically on the beach early in the day, not in the heat of the day.

Chair Bettelli stated that the City cannot make the beach exclusive to swimmers.

The Committee members agreed that they had not seen any chumming and that no action needed to be taken on this matter.

D. Contracts in Excess of \$10,000

- 1. Award of a contract to Safe Industries for the budgeted purchase of SCBAs with spare cylinders in the amount of \$48,395.11, state contract pricing**

MOTION: Chair Bettelli moved to approve the contract award to Safe Industries as detailed above; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. Award of a contract to Vic Bailey Ford, Inc. for the budgeted purchase of 1 Ford Police Interceptor SUV in the amount of \$26,484, state contract pricing

MOTION: Chair Bettelli moved to award a contract to Vic Bailey in the amount of \$26,848 as detailed above; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Award of a contract to Vic Bailey Ford, Inc. for the budgeted purchase of 1 Ford Police Interceptor SUV in the amount of \$26,412, state contract pricing

MOTION: Chair Bettelli moved to award a contract to Vic Bailey Ford, Inc. in the amount of \$26,412 as stated above; Councilmember Bergwerf seconded.

Councilmember Carroll asked for clarification on the difference in pricing; Chief Buckhannon stated that one (1) vehicle is marked and the second is unmarked.

VOTE: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Highlights of Departmental Reports

Fire Department – Chief Graham

In the month of June, Fire Department personnel reported to a hazardous spill at the marina, people stranded on a sandbar and a vehicle fire on Palm Boulevard. Personnel responded to total of one hundred forty-seven (147) calls; forty-five (45) of the calls were for EMS. Thirteen (13) fire inspections were performed in June. There were no significant vehicle maintenance items in the month, and the Department received a wide variety of recognition from the public.

The month of July started with personnel responding to two (2) kayakers in distress at Bull's Bay; around the middle of the month, personnel responded to a jet ski stranded on a sand bar in a lightning storm. A true sign that summer has arrived is the increase in the number of stings from stingrays; five (5) were treated in one (1) day. In July, Fire Department personnel responded to one hundred eighty-four (184) total calls with seventy-two (72) of them being EMS calls. When available, Charleston County EMS is on the island for weekends. Chief Graham observed that the call volume was up and the calls have been more serious. JT Hall has been certified to be an instructor. The rescue truck's springs were replaced in July for approximately twenty-nine hundred dollars (\$2,900); another costly repair was replacing the motor for an electronic valve at over one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

Police Department – Chief Buckhannon

Chief Buckhannon reported that the island has seen quite a few thefts of golf carts; police think that juveniles are responsible. Several larcenies on the beach where the person looks for key fobs, finds the vehicles and steals valuables from them; assisted by the new surveillance cameras, officers have a person of interest.

Administrator Tucker reported that other beaches are experiencing the same problem.

One (1) interesting theft was the lifeguard chair from the County Park.

The Administrator stated that the expanded camera system surveys traffic coming from all four (4) directions at the intersection of Palm Boulevard and 14th Avenue. The Chief added that officers can now see the traffic patterns.

The second “Coffee with a Cop” was held at Hudson’s Market in the Villages at Wild Dunes; forty to fifty (40-50) residents attended, making this the most successful event to-date; the next meeting will be held in mid- to late August or early September.

In the month of July, a total of six thousand two hundred and three (6,203) calls were received; four thousand nine hundred forty-eight (4,948) were for the Police Department; calls were up forty percent (40%) from the same month in 2013.

Answering the Administrator’s question, Chief Buckhannon stated that total calls are both calls to the Consolidated Dispatch Center and to 886-6522.

The Chief reported that burglaries were down thirty percent (30%) year-to-date compared to the same period in 2013.

Officers made six hundred ten (610) traffic stops in July and issued one hundred forty-nine (149) citations. In addition, officers wrote one hundred ninety-one (191) reports and made seventy-two (72) arrests with forty (40) arrests attributable to alcohol offenses.

In July officers responded to seventeen (17) noise violations, with one (1) citation being written, and issued three (3) citations for fireworks.

7. Miscellaneous Business

A. TST Plan for 2nd and 3rd Avenues in the 2014 Road Resurfacing Program

Administrator Tucker reported that 2nd and 3rd Avenues are to be resurfaced in 2014.

B. Discussion of golf cart crossing at 25th Avenue

The Administrator reported that this agenda item was added based on a call to City Hall; she commented that the caller must have seen such crossings in private communities and not on SCDOT roads.

Chair Bettelli stated that he usually sees a vehicle stop for a loaded golf cart.

Councilmember Carroll indicated that the golf cart issues that concern him are at 21st Avenue and at the shopping center which residents are illegally accessing as they ride their golf carts on the sidewalk.

Councilmember Bergwerf voiced concern that she is seeing more and more underage drivers.

The consensus of the Committee was to take no action.

Next Meeting Date: 10:00 a.m., Thursday, September 11, 2014 in the Conference Room.

8. Executive Session – not needed

9. Adjourn

MOTION: Councilmember Carroll moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:20 p.m.;
Councilmember Bergwerf seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk