



SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING -- WORKSHOP

5:00pm, Tuesday, September 10, 2024

1207 Palm Boulevard and

broadcasted live on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms>

MINUTES

1. Call to order

Present: Council members Bogosian, Anderson, Ward, Miars, Pierce, Carroll, and Mayor Pounds

Staff Present: Administrator Fragoso, Director Kerr, various department heads

2. Citizens' Comments

Terri Haack of the Wild Dunes Resort said that Johnson & Johnson will return for their 25th annual Success Retreat at the beginning of November. She shared the noise mitigation measures they have taken to minimize disruption to the neighbors. She said the event will be closely monitored to ensure compliance with the noise ordinance.

3. Special Presentations -- none

4. Dashboard of City Operations and Short-Term Rental Report

Administrator Fragoso shared that all three remaining paramedic positions have been filled. Police Department charges are up over the past two years. Calls for service in both departments are lagging from last year but are stable.

The number of new homes being permitted is ahead of last year.

As of September 3, 1,770 short-term rental licenses have been issued, and six are pending. 1,803 short-term rental licenses had been issued at approximately the same time last year.

Court numbers are slightly lower due to a cancelled session due to Hurricane Debby.

Council Member Bogosian asked Chief Cornett to address the increase in drug, gun, and DUI charges. Chief Cornett said he has tasked the officers with being more proactive, and many of these charges come as a result of traffic stops. These sorts of arrests and charges are up nationwide. He said that having PCI focused on parking allows the officers to be more proactive elsewhere.

5. Departmental Reports – in the meeting packet

6. Financial Review

A. Financial Statements and project worksheets

Director Hamilton said the City received the check for the 1% fund in the amount of \$283,000, which exceeded the budgeted amount of \$219,000. Expenditures are inline with the budget. The City has \$46 million in cash and earned \$206,000 interest in August.

The City received two grants for Public Safety body armor and parks & recreation development.

The auditors arrive on Monday. As of today, the City has \$1.7 million in excess revenues from FY24. Director Hamilton proposed to Council that the overage be split 15% to the General Fund, 5% to Disaster Recovery, 65% to Capital Projects, and 15% to Hospitality Tax to cover the shortfall created by the increase in solid waste removal costs.

She briefly reviewed the tourism funds received to date. All tourism monies for FY24 have been received. Administrator Fragoso pointed out that hospitality taxes are trending up, but all other tourism funds are trending down. Council Member Bogosian expressed concern about the trends in tourism funds and would like to look more closely at this data.

B. Discussion of setting the FY25 millage rate based on Charleston County assessment

Director Hamilton said that based on the property assessment from Charleston County, showing a 6.25% increase over last year, no adjustments need to be made to the FY25 budget.

She shared that a meeting with David Cheatwood of First Tryon “he is proposing a comprehensive schedule of all the major funds that have revenue, which does not include our capital fund and some of the smaller funds. I know that Council would like to see a comprehensive schedule that includes everything so we can kind of roll everything up into the budget. What they presented did not because that is not the purpose of what they are trying to do for us. They are trying to come up with a comprehensive schedule that shows how we can pay for projects and how those funds can be pulled from one fund to another.” They will meet with him again next week.

7. Procurement

A. Consideration of approval of implementation of new building access control system for Public Safety Building [FY25 Budget, Capital Projects Fund, State ATAX, \$190,000]

Administrator Fragoso said this expenditure has been approved by the Public Safety Committee and is in the budget. The new system will cover both the Public Safety Building and Fire Station 2. The total amount will be \$181,000.

B. Consideration of approval of training room IT upgrades [FY25 Budget, Hospitality Tax and State ATAX Funds, \$35,000]

Administrator Fragoso said this expenditure has been approved by the Public Safety Committee and is in the budget.

8. Capital Projects Update

Administrator Fragoso shared that the City has been awarded a \$1 million grant from FEMA for the Waterway Boulevard Multi-Use Path project. A pre-construction meeting is planned for later in the month. Council Member Hahn asked Administrator Fragoso to review all of the recent work done by the City to improve drainage. In addition, Administrator Fragoso highlighted the upcoming drainage project the City is doing in conjunction with the improvements at Wild Dunes Golf Course. Mayor Pounds added the City has purchased and or rented equipment to help in its stormwater efforts to keep the ditches clear. He thanked the Public Works Department for their stormwater work.

Administrator Fragoso said the City has received a draft of the Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan and will share that with Council after the corrections have been made.

The gangway and the floating dock have been installed at the marina. The kayak launch materials that will make the launch ADA-compliant will be built this month. She hopes the swings will arrive in the next month.

The pre-application meeting for the Marina dredging will be held later in the month. The contract for the ADA boardwalks approved by Council last month have been executed and she anticipates that work to be done in January 2025.

An RFB for the construction of two non-ADA-compliant boardwalks at 26a and 36a is out and the deadline is later this month. The City will present its application to the Greenbelt Board on Wednesday.

Administrator Fragoso said, “Sandbags for Breach Inlet between a section on Ocean Boulevard, that is ongoing. Also additional bags for Beachwood East between 11 and 20, not including 18 Beachwood East. We are really restricted on how quickly the manufacturers of these sandbags can produce them, so we get a shipment almost every week. We think in a couple weeks both projects should be completed. The Wild Dunes Shoal Management project application looks like it is very close to being issued. We received a note today asking for some final punch list, so hopefully we can get this project done this winter.”

Council Member Pierce asked if more bags will be added to the sea wall being constructed. Director Kerr said there are more bags to be placed.

Administrator Fragoso said they are waiting on the permit for the supplemental work following the beneficial use project, which has yet to begin on Sullivan’s Island.

Regarding the City Hall renovation, Administrator Fragoso said representatives from Trident Construction and MPS will attend the October workshop to present “a high-level analysis of the building assessment conducted, the options that were developed. The Committee has discussed and hasn’t made a recommendation. There seems to be a consensus among the options, consensus on one.”

The pre-construction meeting on the undergrounding power lines project was last week. The project will start within the next 30 days and be completed in 60 days.

9. **Strategic Plan Policy Initiatives and Priorities**

- A. **Livability**
- B. **Environmental**
- C. **Public Services**

Discussion of bulk container collections services and recommendation from the Public Services & Facilities Committee to enter into a new contract with the lowest responsive bidder for bulk container collection and disposal for condominiums and businesses through October 31, 2025 and after that date, businesses would be responsible for their own bulk container collection services

Mayor Pounds said this issue must be voted on at the September 24 Council meeting.

Administrator Fragoso reminded Council, “We only have a plan through the end of January. In July, City Council authorized extending the agreement with our current provider through the end of January for six months. The rate we are paying now is \$3.75 per yard. So I have included, I think page 65 in your packet includes the monthly cost to the City at that rate, and then the monthly cost to the City, potentially at \$2.50 if it selects a different vendor based on the responses to the request for proposals starting in February. So we need direction from Council on what happens after January. The Committee made a recommendation to engage the lowest responsive vendor that responded to the request for bids starting February 1 and continue to service all of the vendors, commercial and condos, through the end of October 2025, and then starting November 1st, only service condominiums, and businesses would be responsible for entering into a contract with a bulk container vendor to collect their bulk container materials. So right now we are covered through the end of January. The decision would be what happens after those six months.”

She added that Rod Turnage, President of the Chamber of Commerce, agreed with the Committee’s recommendation. Council Member Ward said that the businesses are not happy, and it is a big shock to them. Administrator Fragoso reminded him they are welcome to attend the meetings to make their comments.

Council Member Carroll asked why the City pays for trash removal at the condominiums. She explained that they are mostly residential and the bulk containers create efficiencies for the Public Works Department who previously had to empty multiple roll carts in those complexes.

When asked why the businesses can’t just reimburse the City for trash pickup, Administrator Fragoso said the City does not have a billing system in place that could handle that offering. She added that other communities do not pay for trash pickup for their businesses. Mayor Pounds added that he hopes the businesses will tap into the City’s contract to take advantage of the lower price per yard.

D. Personnel

Employee Referral Program

Administrator Fragoso said this is a recruitment and retention initiative. Current full and part-time employees will receive a \$500 award after a referred employee completes their 6-month probationary period. A less amount will be offered to those who refer seasonal employees or interns.

E. Other items for discussion

Discussion of Mayor-proposed initiatives to increase citizen engagement in the community

Mayor Pounds said he would like to form a Youth Council. He will speak with area high schools to understand how many teenagers may live on the island.

He would also like to create a semi-structured, less formal discussion opportunity for citizens to engage with Council members. These conversations would not have agendas and would not be live streamed. While a quorum of Council members might be present, no policy decisions or actions would be taken. Administrator Fragoso said she will make sure the effort complies with FOIA. Mayor Pounds asked Council members for their feedback on both initiatives.

10. Legislative Report

11. Adjournment

Council Member Ward made a motion to adjourn, and Council Member Anderson seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 6:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk