

RECREATION COMMITTEE
Isle of Palms, South Carolina
August 7, 2007

The regular meeting of the Recreation Committee was held at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 7, 2007 in the Recreation Center, #24 Twenty-eighth Avenue, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Present were Chairwoman Rice, Councilwoman Hanbury, Recreation Director Page, City Administrator Tucker, and City Clerk Copeland. Councilman Buckhannon's absence was excused since he was out of town.

1. **Call to order.** Chairwoman Rice called the meeting to order and stated that the press and the public were duly notified in accordance with state and federal laws.
2. **Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes.**

Motion: Councilwoman Hanbury moved for the approval of the minutes of the regular meeting of June 12, 2007; Councilwoman Rice seconded and the MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **Citizens' Comments:**

Phil Charles, 16 Frank Sottile Lane, had contacted Councilwoman Rice for the opportunity to speak to the Recreation Committee today on the subject of a municipal pool on behalf of a group of residents on the island. He stated that he has three (3) children that are being raised on the Isle of Palms who participate in both the Recreation Department and the Wild Dunes Swim Team. He remarked that he was elected president of the Wild Dunes Swim Team this year; the team is in its twenty-sixth (26th) year and has one hundred eighteen (118) youth participating from Isle of Palms, Sullivan's Island and Mount Pleasant. He reported that Wild Dunes has made its pool available to the team, but it is reaching its capacity even with staying open an additional hour in the evening. There have been occasions over the last two (2) years when the team has had to rent the pool at Park West, and there were no home swim meets this year. The team has a board of directors and a mission statement that focuses on connecting the community and the young people; some of the values cited in the mission statement are developing the morale of the youth and the community, promoting water safety and demonstrating the positive results of hard work.

He commented that having completed another swim season, there was the realization that the program was about more than the young people; it is about the entire community and a pool. He stated that the group's point of view is a community pool that is open to the surrounding municipalities, supporting the virtues of a healthy life, promoting water safety, a source for providing physical fitness for the elderly, as well as general development of the youth. Mr. Charles stated that the ultimate purpose of his comments today were to get advice from the Committee on what the next step

should be. He stated that the group he represents has considered petitions versus a referendum and private funding versus Accommodations Tax funds.

Councilwoman Rice said that, as she had indicated in her e-mail to Mr. Charles, the City has two enormous capital projects currently underway, i.e. Fire Station #2 that will have a ribbon cutting in the fall and the Public Safety Building that will have a groundbreaking soon. In addition, the replacement of the bulkhead at the marina is on the schedule for the FY 2008; it will be an extensive, complicated and very costly project. These projects are necessities to ensure the safety of Isle of Palms residents, but, to accomplish them, the City is reaching its borrowing limit. She added that a community pool is on the Recreation Department's Long Range Plan and on the City's wish list, which was prioritized during the budget process this year. Councilwoman Rice explained that it had taken her ten (10) years and getting elected to the City Council to get the expansion to the Recreation Center, so she encouraged Mr. Charles not to give up, but to continue to work hard and maintain his passion for the project.

Director Page commented that the idea of a community pool had to be sold not only to the City Council, but also to the entire community. To accomplish that, she stated that he needed to have as many actual facts about what the group wants as well as how they envision it operating, i.e. Will it be open to the surrounding communities? Will there be a charge for non-IOP residents? If so, what will that fee be? What is the primary function of the pool since that dictates the design? What size do you want? Will it be indoor or outdoor?, etc. The Director also stated that building was the easy part; it was the maintenance and financial support that were the difficult parts.

Mr. Charles related that one path his group had discussed was going to Mount Pleasant Recreation to find out their operations costs, the original cost of construction, and possibly seek quotes from contractors. Another approach was to ensure that the City Council was aware of the priority that members of the Community were placing on a community pool for the City to obtain this kind of information.

Councilwoman Rice commented on the fact that a referendum on a community pool had been defeated more than ten (10) years ago, which indicates that there was a large portion of the population needing to be turned around. For instance, the Wild Dunes community has its own recreation facilities, and they represent a large voting block on the Isle of Palms.

Mr. Charles countered that there is a large population that supports the pool idea who do not live in Wild Dunes and who do not have access to Wild Dunes' facilities. He feels that there are many good reasons to re-look at the concept, and the group that he represents is willing to do the legwork for whatever needs to be done to make the dream a reality.

Director Page stated that Mount Pleasant had been approached about building a fifty (50) meter pool. What affect will that have on an Isle of Palms' pool? She also informed the Committee and Mr. Charles that some municipalities have teamed up with a local hospital(s) to build and support a pool as a part of the hospital's physical therapy programs.

In response to questions about who would use the pool, Mr. Charles stated that the current approach was to make the pool accessible to other communities, but those non-IOP residents will be required to pay to use it. Those funds will be a source of revenue to support and maintain the pool.

Other members of his group have suggested the use of Accommodations Taxes for the pool; Mr. Charles did not elaborate on the use of those funds, i.e. to build, support and/or maintain.

Councilwoman Hanbury asked if were still true that Isle of Palms residents who were not Wild Dunes residents were not allowed to use Wild Dunes recreational facilities; she was told that is still the case today. She also recollected that, in the previous referendum, the pool being proposed was going to be built with private funds; she added that a pool is not fiscally feasible nor is it a politically sound idea at this time. Councilwoman Hanbury went on to caution Mr. Charles as she commented that many of the newer homes are being built with pools, so the tourists do not feel the need that they may have in the past.

Administrator Tucker summarized by stating that the focus needs to be refined so as to define exactly what the group is seeking in a community pool. As for a petition versus a referendum, she stated her opinion that a petition would be a waste of time; she stated that, while people will review petitions, they also may tend to dismiss them. From a policy- setting standpoint, the tendency is not to necessarily believe that everyone who signed a petition was fully committed to the idea; however, when people go to the polls to vote, they are making a statement. The Administrator was firm in her corroboration of previous statements regarding the City's fiscal priorities for the near future. She added that she does not believe that a pool could be a reality for three (3) to five (5) years; in her opinion, it would take close to three (3) years for the planning stage to be completed with a ribbon cutting possibly in the fifth year. If the members of the group supporting the pool idea were to come upon a grant source that the City could be eligible for and apply for, there would be an incentive for the City to move the pool up on its priority list. She added that the expenses the City is facing are things out of the Council's control and things which must be done; compared to those fiscal challenges, a pool might be considered a luxury by a majority of the elected body.

Mr. Charles was informed that his group will be required to hire their own attorney for any legal advice they may desire pursuant to a referendum.

Councilwoman Hanbury asked if her recollections were correct that, in the previous proposal, the maintenance was to be paid for through private memberships. Director Page commented that memberships never seem to cover the operations and staffing expenses; as a rule, it is not possible to sell enough memberships, especially after the first year.

Councilwoman Hanbury asked Mr. Charles how many Isle of Palms families were involved in the Wild Dunes Swim Team. He told her that he would have to e-mail her the information.

Councilwoman Rice stated her support of a pool at the Recreation Center, but reiterated that the problems today are timing and money. She added that, when his group has a solid and comprehensive plan, they should go before the Ways and Means Committee with a presentation and be willing to accept that Committee's decision. In response to Mr. Charles' question, she stated that he could contact any member of the Committee at any time.

4. Recreation Department Report

Director Page began by replacing page 9 of the monthly report; there was an error she did not find until after Committee packets had been distributed. A copy of the reports for the months of June and July 2007 are attached. She proceeded by covering the highlights of these months; generally she has been very pleased with the attendance at all of the summer activities and the work that department employees have done. Director Page related that there had been approximately three hundred (300) participants in the beach run. On the subject of future events, the Director voiced her opinion that the Ghostly Tide Tales has "run its course," so she would like to discuss replacing it with a movie on the beach. This event would be held at front beach and give an opportunity to involve and support the front beach businesses. Director Page noted that, if approved by the Committee, she planned to go to the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee for \$3,500 of the approximately five thousand dollars (\$5,000) needed. Councilwoman Rice asked how a movie on the beach could be done; the Director explained that, for instance, there is a company called "Surf Drive-in" that she used in North Myrtle Beach. When asked if the weather alternative would be the gym, Director Page commented that the screen would not fit into the gym, plus it does not rain on Isle of Palms Recreation Department events. Director Page said she would study the contract to see if the company offered any suggestions as a backup plan should it rain. She reminded the Committee that the Half Rubber Tournament is scheduled for Saturday, August 18 and that she anticipates the same level of

participation as it has had in the past. The City's inter-departmental kickball game had been such a success that the teams played two (2) games; Director Page was quick to add that the Recreation Department had been the champions. The next City competition will be bocci ball as the Recreation Department tries to level the playing field to give the other City departments a chance to win. The Anthony Johnson Basketball Camp was a huge success with one hundred forty (140) youth participating. Soccer registration is in progress with the real flurry expected the week of August 13 through 17.

The Disaster Expo held July 26 in cooperation with Sullivan's Island was also a huge success; Director Page was most complimentary of the assistance she received from the Fire Department.

Other important items discussed by Director Page are as follows:

- Involvement with the Connector Run;
- Preparation for bid application on gym ceiling;
- Receipt of warranties on athletic flooring;
- Information acquired from VC3 on List Serve;
- Request for input from Livability Officer on Special Events Application;
- Success of Disaster Preparedness Expo;
- NIMS training for the Recreation Department staff;
- Research into Rubber Walk Pour for playground to replace wood carpet; and
- Development of fall programming.

Lastly, Director Page informed the Committee that there had been an incident of vandalism at the Recreation Center; the guilty parties were identified, and the Director participated in discussions with them and their parents. City Administrator Tucker noted that she had asked that as little information as possible be placed in the Director's report because the City feels that the actions taken will lead to sufficient behavior modification to turn these young people around. Therefore, there was a desire to protect the young people from undue exposure.

Councilwoman Rice stated that one of her goals for the year was for the Recreation Department to have its own List Serve to communicate with the residents of the community who use the facilities. She wants to be certain that everyone who registers for anything sponsored by the Recreation Department submits his/her e-mail address to build the Center's database. For the future, she wants e-mail to be the Recreation Department's primary means of communication. Director Page assured her that the information was being gathered, but that the staff is still in the process of learning just how to use the data for e-mailing.

Councilwoman Rice commented that three (3) weeks is a long time before school starts; therefore, in her opinion, the August 1 end to Summershine camp was too early. She asked that next year the Director look into some kind of alternate program for August between the end of camp and the beginning of school. Director Page reminded her that the soccer camp is available this week in the mornings.

Another goal discussed by Councilwoman Rice was a more readable flyer. She expressed her feeling that there was too much information crammed into an 8½ X 11 page; kids, in particular, see the program that is emphasized and, if it does not fit their age bracket, tend to throw the flyer away without studying the whole thing. The Director informed her that she has been working on a new format for the fall flyer and that new software has the capability of maintaining the e-mail addresses, as well as sorting the entrants by interests. She also stated that the flyer is intended to be a teaser since it is trying to appeal to two (2) groups of people – the visitor and the resident. Ideally, Councilwoman Rice would like a monthly informational e-mail going to Isle of Palms residents who participate in the programs the Recreation Center offers. Director Page stated that she thought the mass e-mails could be sent out as early as January 2008; she wants to ensure that the participants in the fall programs are included.

There was discussion on changing the date of the Halloween carnival to the Saturday before Halloween. Since the topic had come up last year, Director Page stated that she had questioned people then about holding the carnival on a night other than Halloween, but they all replied that they liked having it on Halloween night. Director Page continued that she thought it was a good alternative to “Trick or Treat,” because not all children in Isle of Palms live in safe, friendly neighborhoods. Councilwoman Rice countered that there is no need for an alternative; she believes that the Isle of Palms is an ideal “Trick or Treat” world. Director Page stated that one problem she saw with moving the date was that Ray St. John with the jump castle will not be available on Saturday night. Director Page also made it clear that she would follow the directions given her by the Committee; Councilwoman Rice asked that this year the carnival be held from 5:00 to 7:00 pm on Saturday, October 27, 2007.

Councilwoman Rice noted that parents with the Volleyball Clinic really loved it, so she was interested in knowing when more volleyball was scheduled. Director Page responded that she does not know if the Department will have the girls to field a team, and she will find out if Mount Pleasant is planning to have a team to play against; she will definitely look into it.

On the subject of tennis, Director Page commented that she is still searching for an instructor.

Two additional programs that Councilwoman Rice was interested in pursuing were cooking and babysitting classes. The Director responded that the cooking was in the planning stage and the babysitting will also take place.

Director Page confirmed that the CPR classes are open to the public and that use of the defibrillator is taught as part of the class.

Councilwoman Hanbury asked about reports of a dead animal at the Recreation Center and was told that there had been a dead deer that the staff had assisted the Animal Control Officer with, but it had not been on Recreation Department grounds. Councilwoman Hanbury also commented that there had been talk about filling in holes at the dog park, and she wanted to know if people were using the tools that were provided for that purpose. Director Page said that she did not know the answer to that question.

5. Old Business: Middle School Dance

Director Page wanted the Committee's opinion on moving the Middle School Dance to the last Friday in the month from the first Friday night. There is no conflict in 2007 with the Thanksgiving weekend because there are five (5) Fridays in November, and Thanksgiving falls on the fourth Thursday; traditionally there is no dance in December. The only conflict is that the October dance would fall on the night before the Halloween carnival, and the staff will need all day Friday to prepare for the carnival. Councilwoman Rice decided that the Halloween carnival would be held on Halloween so that the Middle School Dance could be on Friday, October 26. Director Page agreed to ask parents who attend the carnival how they feel about changing the date from Halloween night.

As part of the Middle School Dance discussion, the Director asked if the Committee still favored selling passes as they have in the past. Director Page explained to the Committee that the Recreation staff is trying to develop a way that the young people will be admitted to the dances without having to issue each one a pass, which many lose. The Committee decided to continue pre-selling memberships to the dances at five dollars (\$5.00), Isle of Palms resident or not, and, in addition, the young people do pay to attend each dance.

6. New Business:

Director Page asked for permission from the Recreation Committee to go before the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee to request \$3,500.00 to partially fund the Ghostly Tide Movie, which is anticipated to cost five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00).

MOTION: Councilwoman Rice moved to authorize Director Page to go before the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee to request \$3,500.00 for the Ghostly Tide Movie scheduled for Friday, October 19, 2007; Councilwoman Hanbury seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

In response to Councilwoman Rice's questions, Director Page stated that there would be hot chocolate and a fire.

7. Miscellaneous

Director Page presented the Committee members with the copy of a letter from Daniel James requesting permission to hold a surfing competition. When Administrator Tucker was asked for her opinion, she stated that there is a huge interest among some of the island's residents. She also commented that she would like to see the City have a list of approved events for a given year and that no additional ones will be accepted once the list is finalized. Councilwoman Rice noted that Folly Beach has historically been the site of surfing events because it has better surf; therefore, he should seek support from the City of Folly Beach, not the Isle of Palms. Director Page was instructed to relate that information to Mr. James.

Councilwoman Hanbury stated that the vehicle frequently seen parked at 32nd Avenue belongs to Kai Dilling, and she reported reading in the newspaper that he is teaching surfing lessons at the beach. Her plea was that a call be placed to the police when his vehicle is seen there. Administrator Tucker stated that she has called Douglas Kerr, Building Director, when she has seen the vehicle.

The next meeting is planned for 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 11, 2007.

Having concluded the business of the meeting, it was duly adjourned on a motion by Councilwoman Hanbury at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Carol Rice, Chairwoman