

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING

Date: November 2, 2015

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Members Present: Marc A. Grant, *Chairman*; Bill Harkins, *Council Member*

Members Absent: Lee Edwards, *Council Member*

Town Staff Present: Lynn Buchman, *Senior Administrative Assistant*

Others Present: Lt. Jason Covington, Msgt. Andrew Faucett, and Kiera Morris, *Beaufort County Sheriff's Office*; Lt. JoAnn Jones, *Port Royal Plantation Security*; and Eleanor O'Key, *Lowcountry Inside Track*

Media Present: None

1. Call to Order

2. Freedom of Information Act Compliance

Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Public Safety Committee Meeting of September 14, 2015

A motion to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2015 meeting of the Public Safety Committee was made by Mr. Harkins and seconded by Chairman Grant. The motion was approved by a vote of 2-0.

4. Unfinished Business

None

5. New Business

a. Proposed 2016 Public Safety Committee Meeting Dates

A motion to approve the 2016 meeting dates included in the agenda packet was made by Mr. Harkins and seconded by Chairman Grant. The motion was approved by a vote of 2-0.

b. 3rd Quarter 2015 Crime Statistics – Capt. Joey Woodward

Lt. Jason Covington of the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office, appeared before the Committee in the absence of Capt. Woodward, who he noted was on vacation. He presented a brief PowerPoint outlining the detailed crime statistics for the 3rd quarter of 2015, as cited in the Uniform Crime Report, which is included in the agenda packet.

He reviewed the breakdown of the statistics for Crimes Against Persons and Against Property. Mr. Harkins noted the unusual jump in the number of crime, and Lt. Covington explained a spike occurs

when population increases, and the particular crimes in Palmetto Dunes had been isolated to several individuals from Bluffton who have since been arrested. He also attributed the crime increase in the North and South Forest Beach area to an individual who was also arrested several weeks ago. Chairman Grant and Lt. Covington discussed the need to educate business owners about leaving cash in registers, and the safety tips being distributed through the Nixle program.

Mr. Harkins and Lt. Covington briefly discussed the West Marine break-in currently under investigation, which Lt. Covington indicated is believed to have been committed by a crime ring outside of Beaufort County that has targeted other West Marines on the East Coast.

Lt. Covington outlined the traffic and criminal tickets and warnings issued by patrol and a separate breakdown for marine patrol activities. Mr. Harkins noted the decreased number of tickets being issued this year, and Lt. Covington indicated because of the increased burglaries and break-ins, focus had been re-directed from traffic this quarter. Chairman Grant asked if more deputies would be needed next summer with increased traffic, since he noted the visibility of officers and issuance of traffic tickets might discourage speeding. Mr. Harkins and Lt. Covington briefly commented on such additional funding requests that Sheriff Tanner had submitted and would continue to request.

Mr. Harkins inquired how DUIs were determined by the marine patrol, and Lt. Covington indicated boating under the influence was established through standard field sobriety tests during marine checks.

The volunteer hours were reviewed for the reserve deputies and volunteers, and Lt. Covington recognized the great resource they provide. He outlined for Chairman Grant the requirement for reserve deputies to provide a minimum of 60 hours each quarter to maintain certification.

Mr. Harkins and Lt. Covington discussed the use of the holding cells, which Lt. Covington indicated were maintained on Friday and Saturday by officers from the Detention Center while bar patrols are conducted. He noted there are 3 holding cells with a maximum capacity of 10 prisoners, who are then transferred to Beaufort.

Chairman Grant and Lt. Covington discussed the safety information distributed through the Nixle program and the media as the holidays approach to discourage burglaries and encourage vigilance.

In response to Mr. Harkins' inquiry, Lt. Covington noted there are officers in field training and attending the academy assigned to Hilton Head Island and Bluffton, and once their training is completed, the Sheriff's Office will be at full staffing.

Mr. Harkins and Chairman Grant commented on the great job being done by the men and women in the Sheriff's Office. Chairman Grant asked for public comment, and there was none.

6. Adjournment

At 10:17 a.m. Mr. Harkins moved to adjourn the meeting and Chairman Grant seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 2-0.

Respectfully submitted:

Lynn W. Buchman
Senior Administrative Assistant

Approved by:

/Approved December 7, 2015
Marc A. Grant, Chairman