

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING

Date: September 14, 2015

Time: 10:05 a.m.

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

Members Absent: Lee Edwards, *Council Member*

Town Staff Present: Chief Brad Tadlock, *Fire Chief*; Deputy Chief Mike Mayers, *Deputy Fire Chief – Operations*; Jeff Buckalew, *Town Engineer*; Greg DeLoach, *Assistant Town Manager*; Brian Hulbert, *Staff Attorney*; and Lynn Buchman, *Senior Administrative Assistant*

Others Present: Kim Likins, *Council Member*; Capt. Joey Woodward and Kiera Morris, *Beaufort County Sheriff’s Office*; 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 May 4, 2015

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 4, 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. Fire Rescue Semi-Annual Report, Mid-Year Response Statistics & Strategic Plan Update

Chief Brad Tadlock presented a brief PowerPoint to provide the second update this year in compliance with the Strategic Plan. He highlighted the yearly statistics through June 30, noting a call volume increase of approximately 11%. He attributed the upward trend over the past few years to the improving economy, more visitors, and population growth, but noted the increase would not impact their ability to provide coverage to the Island. He pointed out that the calls are more consistent year-round rather than spiking during the summer months. Chief Tadlock provided a breakdown of fires compared to 2014, noting consistency, and he briefly detailed the 4 major fires occurring in 2015.

Chairman Grant and Chief Tadlock briefly discussed open burning, and Chief Tadlock indicated there have been no major issues, with an average of 15 open burnings occurring each month since April. He noted complaints are down, and only 1 citation due to unlawful burning of household garbage or construction debris is being issued each weekend that burning is allowed. Due to the extremely wet conditions, he explained that additional burn days are being added. Chief Tadlock indicated a yearly update on open burning would be provided to the Committee early next year.

For the strategic plan update, Chief Tadlock highlighted accomplishments, what had been initiated, and what they are actively working on. Accomplishments he listed included:

- Completion of the Fire Rescue Ordinance and establishment of the department name;
- Hydrant flow identification required by ISO and industry standards is in progress;
- Traffic pre-emption system is in place and doing well;
- Internal Incident Scene Safety Officer program has been completed;
- Beach and water fire rescue operations initiative is underway;
- ISO public protection classification is in progress with an internal audit 80% completed and ISO evaluation expected in FY2016, where it is expected that under the new standards the department should score at least what it has in the past;
- Staff alerting upgrade has been completed;
- Fire Rescue won the EMS Lifeline Silver Award from the American Heart Association;
- Smart 911 was implemented with 80% funding through the 911 phone fees collected; and
- A hiring pool has been implemented.

A brief discussion of the Smart 911 central database followed, and Chief Tadlock explained how the personal profile is accessed and data can be retrieved in any 911 center, and how the public is being advised about the program. Chairman Grant and Mr. Harkins thanked Chief Tadlock for his report.

b. 2nd Quarter 2015 Crime Statistics – Capt. Joey Woodward

Capt. Joey Woodward, of the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office, presented a brief PowerPoint outlining the detailed crime statistics for the 2nd 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. Capt. Woodward indicated the burglaries were a little higher than in 2014, but he noted suspects have been identified with some in jail and others still being sought. Details of the vehicle collisions were reviewed, with 1 fatality reported that occurred in Sea Pines that is being investigated by the Highway Patrol. He also noted incidents involving vehicles vs. pedestrians and vehicles vs. bicycles.

Capt. Woodward outlined the traffic and criminal tickets and warnings issued by patrol and a separate breakdown for marine patrol activities.

The volunteer hours were reviewed for the reserve deputies and volunteers, and Capt. Woodward recognized their invaluable service to the department. He finished his presentation by outlining the total calls for service broken down into various categories.

Mr. Harkins complimented the Sheriff's Office on the excellent job they are doing with the resources they have. He and Capt. Woodward briefly discussed how island-wide or community liaison groups could partner with the Sheriff's office to provide an ongoing information source and elevate the good relations already in place between the Sheriff's Office and the public. Capt. Woodward agreed that getting the message out to the property owner associations and communities to be more vigilant and keep the Sheriff's Office advised of what is going on in their community would be helpful.

Capt. Woodward agreed to provide Chairman Grant with further information about arrests being made in connection with the larcenies reported. A brief discussion followed on real solutions communities can implement to take ownership in solving some of the problems, including possible community forums. Chairman Grant suggested that a plan of action be created for each area, since they all have different needs, and asked Capt. Woodward to consider this and report back to the Committee. Capt. Woodward noted the Sheriff's Office has crime prevention officers who are available to speak to the communities, educate them on what to look for, and help them develop a protocol for getting information to the Sheriff's Office. He also noted monthly meetings are being held with security chiefs on Hilton Head Island and Beaufort County where information is shared, which could also be accomplished with community groups. He offered to speak with Sheriff Tanner about this further.

Chairman Grant also discussed with Capt. Woodward ways to proactively report the safety measures being taken in our community to both residents and visitors. Capt. Woodward explained the free Nixle program that reports to subscribers any incidents that have occurred, arrests that have been made, and provides immediate reports of police activity. He will provide additional information to the Committee on the Nixle program. Mr. Harkins also asked Capt. Woodward to consider inserting, if it is not already being done, public safety tips in the various apps that are available to tourists and residents. Mr. Harkins noted the community groups should include those inside gates and others, to allow them to share concerns they have and to promote ideas and suggestions for the Sheriff's Office to consider. Mr. Harkins suggested this should be a conversation item at an upcoming Town Council meeting, and Chairman Grant agreed.

Chairman Grant asked for questions from the public. Council Member Kim Likins asked Capt. Woodward if more cameras would help deter and/or solve crime and where those might be beneficial. Capt. Woodward indicated he had already spoken with the Town Manager about additional spots cameras are needed, and this would be pursued. Mr. Harkins and Capt. Woodward briefly discussed the license plate reader and how that can be used to identify criminals, and Capt. Woodward agreed to provide additional information about this system at a future meeting.

Chairman Grant asked for any additional comments from the public. Rochelle Williams addressed the Committee about the need for speed humps in the Oakview, Muddy Creek and Spanish Wells Road area where children are playing and excessive speeds have been noted. Chairman Grant agreed to look into the matter.

Joe Izzo, a resident in Yacht Cove, outlined a need for a traffic control system at the corner of Yacht Cove and US 278, noting various safety issues. Chairman Grant explained that an island-wide traffic study is underway, and he would check with Town Staff to determine what, if anything, could be done.

6. Adjournment

At 10:50 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 November 2, 2015
Marc A. Grant, Chairman