

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING

Date: April 4, 2016

Time: 10:00 AM

Members Present: Marc A. Grant, *Chairman*; Bill Harkins and Lee Edwards, *Council Members*

Members Absent: None

Town Staff Present: Greg DeLoach, *Assistant Town Manager*; Brian Hulbert, *Staff Attorney*; Charles Cousins, *Director of Community Development*; Darrin Shoemaker, *Traffic & Transportation Engineer*; Jeff Buckalew, *Town Engineer*; and Lynn Buchman, *Senior Administrative Assistant*

Others Present: John McCann, *Council Member*; 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 March 7, 2016

A motion to approve the March 7, 2016 minutes was made by Mr. Harkins and seconded by Mr. Edwards. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

4. Unfinished Business

a. North Forest Beach Area Community Task Force/Scope of Effort

Mr. Jack Daly with the Forest Beach Working Group, which was formed at the suggestion of the Committee, presented a report from its first 2 meetings. He reviewed the major issues identified by the Group that affect public safety in the community, as follows:

- Substandard housing. The group suggested that the State Fire Marshal be invited to visit the area and provide a clear definition of “ready access” as it relates to fire safety so that the definition can then be used to identify and provide clearer direction of basic safety standards. In addition, outside legal counsel should be engaged to provide advice as to violations and legal remedies.
- Crime. The group suggested that a different neighborhood approach be applied to more effectively patrol the Forest Beach community, and that a meeting with Sheriff Tanner would be beneficial. Chairman Grant suggested that the group invite Sheriff Tanner to one of its meeting to address these suggestions directly, and Mr. Daley indicated that would be done.
- Town permitting process. The group has suggested that during the Town permitting process, the Town should ensure that the applicant has complied with local ARB requirements or at least notify the local ARB of permits issued within the community.

- Circle to Circle Committee. The group agreed that the Circle to Circle Committee process and the new Coligny Beach Park will benefit the area, but Mr. Daly pointed out there are no public parks in North Forest Beach, and more is needed in the way of pocket parks and greenspace.
- Town Council representation. Mr. Daly pointed out that Forest Beach is split among 3 Wards, and the Group suggested that when redistricting is done after the 2020 census, an attempt should be made to rejoin the community into one Ward or an additional Ward created.

Mr. Daly also presented reports on 3 subdivided houses in Forest Beach. A discussion followed concerning approvals obtained, any violations observed, and what legal measures, if any, that can be taken to correct any violations. The group is encouraging the Town to stand firm on violations to the Town Code. Brian Hulbert, Staff Attorney, reviewed the process followed by the Town to determine compliance and what actions can be taken, but he noted that each case is different.

Mr. Daly described the process followed for creation of the Forest Beach Working Group, a diverse and well-rounded group separate from the Forest Beach Owners Association, that will continue to meet to discuss community issues and the role this area will play in the Town's Visioning process.

Mr. Edwards noted a need to address the problem of lockouts being used as long-term dwelling units, and the Committee members noted frustration in their ability to affect change, and a brief discussion followed about the need to hire outside counsel. Further discussion was deferred for Item 4.b.

Comments from the public were solicited, and Bruce Bartow from Oceanwalk noted that crime in Oceanwalk is dropping, as are the number of lockouts, but he expressed his concerns that a downturn in the economy could result in an increased spike in long-term rentals of lockouts and crime. He expressed his support for the State Fire Marshal visit to obtain a final opinion on lockouts.

A motion to invite the State Fire Marshal to visit Zanadu and Oceanwalk was made by Mr. Harkins and seconded by Mr. Edwards. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

b. Consideration of a Recommendation to Hire Attorney to Provide Legal Opinion on Lockouts

Mr. Harkins noted that recommendations had been sought for outside counsel experienced in matters of lockouts, which resulted in a phone conversation with attorneys in the Robinson Law Firm in Columbia and a letter of intent was requested. A brief discussion followed, and a motion was made by Mr. Harkins and seconded by Mr. Edwards that the Committee recommend to Town Council that the Robinson Law Firm in Columbia be retained for a fee of \$7,500 or less to provide legal services in the form of a second opinion and fresh review of the issues related to lockout units within the Town. Greg DeLoach, Assistant Town Manager, confirmed that the estimated cost would comport with the Town's rules of procurement. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

5. New Business

a. Discussion of Traffic and Pedestrian Related Safety Issues in Stoney Community

Chairman Grant noted that several citizens in the Stoney Community had reported dangerous traffic, school bus, and pedestrian issues in the Stoney Community, and suggestions had been made to lower to speed limit from 45 MPH to 35 MPH in the Gum Tree to Crazy Crab area and to make crossings safer for pedestrians. A motion was made by Mr. Harkins and seconded by Mr. Edwards that the Committee request the Town Manager to ask staff to provide a report at a future Committee meeting that would include statistics of accidents in that area. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Darrin Shoemaker, Traffic & Transportation Engineer, was asked to briefly comment on the issues discussed. Mr. Shoemaker acknowledged this was a busy area with many collisions occurring, particularly at the intersection of William Hilton Parkway and Squire Pope Road, and pedestrian

crossing safety remains an ongoing concern. He noted the speed limit is under the jurisdiction of the SC Department of Transportation (SCDOT), so any revisions would need to be made in the form of a request from Town Council to SCDOT to consider changes. The possible positive and negative effects that the widening of US 278 from Squire Pope Road to the bridge might have on the Stoney Community was discussed briefly.

6. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Harkins and seconded by Mr. Edwards. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0. The meeting adjourned at 10:53 AM.

Respectfully submitted:

Lynn W. Buchman
Senior Administrative Assistant

Approved by:

/Approved May 2, 2016
Marc A. Grant, Chairman