



Town of Hilton Head Island
Finance & Administrative Committee Meeting

Tuesday, October 15, 2019 at 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 3

MEETING MINUTES

Present from the Committee: Tom Lennox, *Chairman*; Bill Harkins and Tamara Becker
Council Members

Present from Town Council: David Ames and Glenn Stanford; *Council Members*

Present from Town Staff: Josh Gruber, *Assistant Town Manager*; John Troyer, *Director of Finance*; Cindaia Ervin, *Finance Assistant*

Present from Media: Kathrine Kokal, *Island Packet*

1. Call to Order

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. FOIA 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. Finance & Administrative Committee Meeting, September 17, 2019.

Mr. Harkins moved to approve the minutes from September 17, 2019. Mrs. Becker seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

4. Unfinished Business-None

5. New Business

a. Language for public speaking at Town Council Meetings.

Josh Gruber, Assistant Town Manager, shared the history of citizens speaking at Town Council, the current requirement to sign up 24 hours in advance and the potential additional need to add a second public comment section to Town Council Meeting Agendas. Bill Harkins, Committee Member, asked if citizens still have to sign up 24 hours in advance and Mr. Gruber stated yes. The process of how and the deadline to sign up to speak at Town Council meetings would not change; however, adding an additional option of when citizen could speak potentially could. He stated that the intent is to allow citizens who wish to speak before Town Council, however, if they are not present at the first call for public

comment due to other constraints, they would be able to do if present at the second call. Mr. Gruber also stated that this is not to give citizens the option to speak two times for public comments and that they would still only have one time to address full Council. David Ames, Council Member, stated that he felt that it was important to give the citizens an opportunity to speak at their convenience and having two opportunities to do so allows those that have to work more flexibility.

Mr. Lennox, asked for public comment regarding the issue. Several citizens spoke in favor of adding an additional public comment section. They also shared concern of duplicity and remaining fair regarding time limits.

Mr. Lennox asked Mr. Gruber to provide information from the Town's outside legal counsel regarding the constitutionally and restricting citizens from not speaking more than once at a Town Council Meeting and he agreed.

b. Language for providing compensation to the Mayor for hours worked during storm response.

Josh Gruber, Assistant Town Manager, discussed with the Committee the history of Town of Hilton Head Island Mayors providing services when needed during storm responses. He stated that if a Mayor is expected to provide services, it may be time that the Town think about compensation. Mr. Lennox thought that it would be best that Staff have time to analyze and provide further data to the Finance & Administrative Committee at a later date. Mr. Lennox made a motion to remove item 5b from the Finance & Administrative Committee Agenda and to refer to staff to provide more data regarding compensation. Mr. Harkins seconded. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

c. Discussion of MOU with Palmetto Electric Cooperative regarding Franchise Agreement.

Josh Gruber, Assistant Town Manager, explained to the Committee the history and proposed draft extension presented. Mr. Gruber stated that the Palmetto Electric Franchise Agreement has a 15-year term of which the Town receives 3% of gross proceeds. Glenn Stanford, Council Member, asked how the funds received are currently being used. Mr. Gruber stated the Franchise Agreement Funds received is considered General Fund Revenue. Historically it has been used for the underground burial of the current utility lines. However, that project is almost complete so with future funding potentially could be used to assist in increasing disaster reserves. The proposed MOU with Palmetto Electric would still reimburse the Town at 3%; however, it would now have a term limit of 25 years with a written notice of cancellation one year prior to the expiration date by either party.

Mr. Lennox asked for public comment regarding the agenda topic. Many citizens had positive thoughts regarding renewing the Franchise Agreement and felt that having a 15-25 year contract shows the valuable partnership that the Town would be embarking on with Palmetto Electric.

The Committee was concerned if the Franchise Fee of 3% would still hold sufficient today or if it should be raised so they asked Mr. Gruber to review the current data and provide information if an increase should be added. Mr. Harkins made a motion to recommend the proposed Palmetto Electric Franchise Agreement to Town Council for 1st reading with the understanding that Town Staff would provide data regarding the percentage increase if

needed. Mrs. Becker seconded. With no further discussion, the motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

6. Adjournment

At 2:41 pm Mr. Harkins moved to adjourn. Mrs. Becker seconded. The motion to adjourn was approved by vote of 3-0.

Submitted by: Cindaia Ervin, Secretary

Approved: December 17, 2019

Tom Lennox, Chairman