



## **SURFSIDE BEACH TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**

**Civic Center, 829 Pine Drive, Surfside Beach, SC 29575**

[www.surfsidebeach.org](http://www.surfsidebeach.org) - (843) 913-6111 (843) 238-5432

### **TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA Tuesday, June 13, 2023, • 6:30 PM.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Mayor Hellyer called the Meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Councilmembers Drake, Holder, Kreklau, Stamey, and Mayor Pro Tempore Keating were in attendance. Absent: Councilmember Kinken. Others present were Town Administrator Vincent, Town Attorney Bouchette and Town Clerk Medina.
2. **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
  - A. **Invocation:** John Shaffer, Discovery Church, gave the invocation.
  - B. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Mayor Hellyer led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. **MOTIONS RELATING TO THE AGENDA** - None
4. **MINUTES APPROVAL** – Councilmember Keating made a motion to approve the minutes for the May 23, 2023, regular meeting and the June 1, 2023, Special meeting. Councilmember Stamey second. All voted in favor. **Motion carried.**
5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None
6. **COMMUNICATIONS** - None
  - A. **ADMINISTRATORS REPORT** – Town Administrator Vincent/ Chief Clemons. Administrator Vincent gave his report. He spoke about a meeting he attended with the Chamber of Commerce. Also, a Rotary meeting that recognized our Police Department. He will be attending a conference at the end of the week.

Chief Clemons gave an update on the Pier. The deck boards are in, and removal of the trestle continues. The electrical panel at the end of the Pier is complete. Plumbing, HVAC and electrical work continues. The interior stairs are being installed. The handrails for the front steps are currently being fabricated. Director J. Adair is working with the selected contractor regarding the final design and layout of the pier parking lot. Other items were the RFP for building D was put out today. Perry's Bait and Tackle signed their lease last week.

One last item from the Fire Department, on May 25, 2023, B shift responded to a cardiac arrest at a residence in town limits. Captain Josh Newton and Engineer Kasey Crooks were on duty. They responded with Horry County Fire Rescue units from station 20. Once on scene, they found a patient in cardiac arrest with family performing CPR. They took over CPR and began providing Advanced Life Support Care. Basic Unit 20 arrived and placed on an automatic CPR device. This allowed Captain Newton to place a breathing tube in the patient. Shortly after this, the patient was found to have a pulse.

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The paramedic from station 20 arrived, and Advanced Life Support was continued throughout their transport to the hospital. The patient was recognized to have a blockage in the heart and was taken to a specialist at the hospital. The patient was treated in the hospital and was discharged on June 8. Many people and actions played a part in this person being alive today. Many times, the outcome is not as favorable as this one. The ability of someone to have critical, life-saving care in a timely manner was no doubt a large contributing factor in why this person is still alive today. We have made a commitment to be the difference, and through this incident, we have demonstrated our ability to be the difference. Thank you again for your support in helping us to improve the level of services we provide and your continued support as we strive to continue improving the level of services we can provide in the town of Surfside Beach.

## 7. DISCUSSION

**A. To allow Town Council to attend meetings via telephone or electronic audio/video.** Mayor Hellyer stated that this was added to the agenda for consideration because, at any time, a Councilmember could not physically attend the meeting. This would allow remote participation. It would be on a case-by-case basis. It was previously spoken about and denied. The concern was that there may be improprieties by the person on the phone.

Councilmember Stamey stated it might be a good idea, but it should wait to vote for an entire board.

Councilmember Holder stated it would be good because it's not good to be blindsided because of missing a meeting.

Councilmember Keating stated that the ordinance was temporarily suspended two years ago because of COVID. When the emergency order ended Council decided not to extend the order. Who decides what is a valid reason? This can be subjective. I would not support this at this time.

Councilmember Kreklau stated he is against it. If you are sick, you have more important things to worry about. I believe if you sign up for this, you should be able to show up.

Councilmember Drake stated that he had been sick for three days and still showed up. There have been things happen in the past that were a fiasco.

Mayor Hellyer stated that sometimes there might be circumstances that would warrant this. Maybe we will bring it back up at a later date.

## 8. BUSINESS

**A. SECOND READING - ORDINANCE 23-0956, AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE, TO ADOPT THE 2023-24 FISCAL YEAR MUNICIPAL BUDGET AND TO SET THE TAX MILLAGE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2024.**- Town Administrator Vincent recapped the last three budget meetings. At the last meeting, the Council voted on Option 1, which was:

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- Add 3 Fire @ \$227,250, 16.6% savings/Sept. 1st (\$37,723.50)
- 1 HR/RM @ \$80,000 25% savings/October 1 (\$45,000)
- Remove 1 PWs employee @ (\$63,100)
- Reduce forensic audit from \$100,000 to \$75,000 (\$25,000)

Reduction: (\$170,823.50)

**Revenue:**

- Increase tax rate to 4 mills = \$320,000  
+\$1,718.50
- Add 1 FT Mechanic (PWS) Salary Range \$38,802-55,099

**Revenue:**

- Sanitation Fund (Not General Fund)

**BALANCED BUDGET**

Councilmember Keating asked what the assumed fishing fee amount was in the budget.

Director King stated she believed they were not added in.

Councilmember Keating stated I've looked at this several different ways. Over the past year, we have discussed having American Rescue Plan Act funds available to pay for the pier. One easy thing we can do to alleviate the need for a property tax increase is to assign \$350,000 of the American Rescue funds to the pier fund. This alleviates the need for \$675,000 over the hospitality tax and local A-tax to be transferred to the pier fund. That can be reduced to \$325,000. Transfer those remaining funds of \$350,000 into the General Fund. That can offset the salary bump of what would have been resulting in the property tax increases.

I think the county is undertaking only its tax increases this year and the property reassessments next year. If our properties are assessed higher than they have been, the town will realize a net revenue increase next year. I'm just not convinced that a property tax increase is necessary now. We have funds available to support the completion of the pier. We have the funds available that can be allocated to pay down that debt service over the next several years until we have to pay off the bond on the early call date. I'm not convinced that the need for a property tax increase has proven at this time.

Councilmember Keating made a motion to accept the proposed budget for second reading, predicated upon that adjustment of transferring a \$350,000 from the interfund transfer assigned to the pier into the general fund and allocating \$350,000 American Rescue funds to the pier. Councilmember Drake seconded.

Councilmember Stamey stated my understanding is that we were trying to put the AR funds aside because other projects and tasks need to be done. We need a new police department and courthouse, which will cost money.

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Councilmember Holder stated he disagreed with using the AR funds.

Councilmember Kreklau stated he is against a milage increase. I do not feel that I have been convinced of the need for a tax increase. I believe we will have a good season.

Councilmember Drake stated we do not need a tax increase for this 1.9 square mile town. We should look at other alternatives.

Mayor Hellyer asked Director King if she agreed or disagreed with Councilmember Keating's proposal.

Director King stated I guess we can do it. The only thing would be that the American Rescue money, I don't think, should go for operations, but that's just my opinion. That money was given to all cities and towns to help them out.

Councilmember Stamey stated instead of making all these transfers, why don't we give the Fire Department only one firefighter? We can always come back and make changes.

Councilmember Holder made an amended motion to approve this as a first reading using the American Rescue fund. Councilmember Stamey second.

Councilmember Keating said that our Ordinance states that should it be a significant change, you must revert to a first reading. I do not believe this is a significant change because the final number does not change.

Councilmember Keating restated the amended motion as a motion to accept Ordinance #23-0956 for the first reading modified to allocate \$350K of the American Rescue funds to the Pier Fund for debt service with a corresponding reduction of the interfund transfers to the Pier Fund and transfer that \$350K to the General Fund, thereby eliminating the 4 mil property tax increase.

Councilmembers Drake, Keating, Kreklau, and Mayor Hellyer voted in favor. Councilmembers Holder and Stamey voted against. **Motion carried.**

## **B. PIER COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. Operating hours:**

2023 operating hours of 7 am-11 pm

2024 operating hours of 7 am-11 pm Oct-Mar, 6 am-1 am Apr-Sept

Revisit overnight fishing options for the 2024 season.

Councilmember Keating stated this was previously voted on at the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting to accept the 2023 operating hours of 7 am to 11 pm.

### **2. Fishing Fees:**

Standard fishing: \$12 daily, \$45 Weekly, \$150 yearly

King Fishing: \$14 daily, \$65 Weekly, \$200 yearly

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Proposed a 50% discount for full-time residents, veterans, first responders, guests with autism and children under 12.

Councilmember Keating made a motion to accept the recommendations for fishing fees: Standard fishing: \$12 daily, \$45 Weekly, \$150 yearly and King Fishing: \$14 daily, \$65 Weekly, \$200 yearly. Children under 12 are free with a paying adult. Councilmember Drake second. All voted in favor. **Motion carried.**

### **3. Only select a food and beverage establishment for building D.**

Councilmember Keating stated that the Administrator was instructed to issue an RFP for the final leasable space. There is nothing we can do until we receive the submittals of the RFP.

Chief Clemons stated the RFP was put out today.

## **9. PUBLIC COMMENTS – or Business Conducted (5 minutes per speaker)**

**A. Harry Hohlmann**, 10 Ave North, I can speak about our event every Monday during the summer starting at seven. First, say that I think it's a great event. The hula dancers were my idea. Unfortunately, the Pier parking lot is not available anymore. Two weeks ago, somebody on Facebook wrote there were hundreds of tickets given out because of the hula show. There were 12, I believe. I was down there last night. I saw one ticket being written. And it was right over where it says, do not park on the street. I don't feel sorry for a person. The people who live in the area have a little problem with it. I was there at six o'clock. I don't think there were more than 1 or 2 spaces to be had. So, my point is the tourists go there. It's a free thing, that's why we wanted it. You spend a lot of money. Then the town's going to give you back something. This is my idea. Put it on either Third or Fourth Avenue South. You have parking on Third, Fourth and Fifth Avenue, a bathroom on Third Avenue, and a handicap ramp. People have to think outside of the box. You have staff. The staff should be thinking about this stuff. Thank you.

**B. Robert Krauss**, 4th Avenue North, and also Peer Committee Chairman. Glad you guys took no action. Our recommendation was not only food and beverage. We strongly recommend it due to the survey results and the location of that building on the end of the pier. That's all we ever said. Thank you.

**C. Diana Taylor**, Seventh Ave North, I have lived here since 1986, and I just wanted to take the time to say Tabitha Mull is quite a positive breath of fresh air. We are lucky to have her. You picked a winner. Thank you.

## **10. TOWN COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND/OR COMMENTS**

**A. Councilmember Kreklau**, Thanks to all those listening. I don't have much to say, but the budget, I don't know, was a substantial change or not. But we must get something passed before July 1st, when we must have a balanced budget by State law. Have a great night.

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**B. Councilmember Drake,** Thank you, both residents online and in Chambers. As far as the budget, I am against raising taxes. The hula dancers do a good show. We should look into the parking. Thank you to the department heads for coming together for the budget. Thank you very much.

**C. Councilmember Stamey,** thanks for everybody coming out. We do need a tax millage increase at this time. For a pretty simple reason, everything is going up. We need a way to pay for it. I thought they needed it last year. We've gone through it; if we don't increase it this year, you're going to get two years, No increase, but believe me, it's sooner or later to make your town work and keep the things that all of us love. Thanks for coming.

**D. Councilmember Keating,** thank you, everybody, for coming, Especially the fire department, that's out there supporting their fellow officers, and I commend the officers that did respond and put their training to the best practical use to bring one of our residents back home safely and quickly. I appreciate anything you guys do. Thank you very much. Over the past several months, I've said that we seem too fast and loose with many of our own rules and so forth. I had a resident call me this afternoon; he was fairly angry and didn't say he was the recipient of a ticket, but a friend got a ticket because they were within 15 or 20 feet of the intersection. I told him that you can't park within 30 feet of an intersection. That's pretty much common knowledge everywhere. We've got nice yellow paint on most intersections around the E-district indicating no parking. As a result, I reached out to Director J. Adair to say that maybe the yellow lines at our intersections need to be beefed up and repainted. Fortunately, our public Works Director has addressed this with our parking contractor, and they're willing to remediate some of those situations in those areas. Just like Mr. Kohlmann's suggestion that we have these events where there's a little bit more parking close to where the center of the event will be, that's a valid point. The budget is always a hot issue. If we get creative and start looking at it, what are our best options on what we can do with the money we have available? We keep talking about expanding the police department and a new municipal complex. Two years ago, we had a fiscally responsible plan. For whatever reason, if it's never implemented. As I said during the meeting, I have not been convinced that we need a property tax increase at this time. We have other revenue available that we have realized over the past couple of years, I think, it's not necessary this year. With that, again, everyone stay safe, stay healthy. Thanks for all your comments and feedback and those that reach out via emails and phone calls; I appreciate everybody's opinions and perspectives. Have a good night, and we'll see you in a couple of weeks.

**E. Councilmember Holder,** I would like to thank everyone for coming out tonight. It's great that we have paramedics on every fire truck. When I fell in Rehobeth Beach, they did not have paramedics on their fire trucks. I had to wait four and a half hours for treatment. We are very fortunate. Thank you

**F. Mayor Hellyer,** I would like to thank the fire department for all they do and also the police department for all they do. Mr. Vincent, you've done a remarkable job in the last week. I know that everybody's been pounding on you. We appreciate all you do too.

So, with that, I don't know why the Hula show was moved, other than somebody said that, they just wanted to move it, but it's always been at 3<sup>rd</sup> South. With that, I thank everybody who came tonight, we still have work to do on the budget, and we're going to get it done for a second reading at the next meeting.

- 11. EXECUTIVE SESSION** - Motion to adjourn Regular Meeting and enter Executive Session pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act Section 30-4-70(a)(1) Discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee. (Communications Coordinator) Section 30-4-70(a)(2) Discussions of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements. (Farrell Insights)

Councilmember Keating made a motion to enter into executive session at 7:51 pm . Councilmember Drake second. All voted in favor. **Motion carried.**

Mayor Hellyer called the regular session back in order.

- 12. MOTIONS MADE FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mayor Hellyer stated there were no motions related to Executive Session.

- 13. ADJOURNMENT** Councilmember Drake made a motion to adjourn at 8:36 pm. Councilmember Keating second. All voted in favor. **Motion carried.**

**Surfside Beach Town Council**

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Robert Hellyer, Mayor

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Cindy Keating, Mayor Pro Tempore

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Chris Stamey, Town Council

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LaVerne Kreklau, Town Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Drake, Town Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
William Kinken, Town Council

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Paul Holder, Town Council

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sheri L Medina, Town Clerk

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