From the Mayor...

Dear Citizens:

Congratulations to our new Mayor and Council Members. It was an exciting election and you turned out in record numbers to cast your votes. Welcome to your newly elected Mayor, Roy Hyman, Jr., and re-elected Council Members, Judy Tuttle and P.L. Mabry. Allen Deaton was successful in his bid for the seat vacated by Mayor Pro Tempore Judy Lowe.

Michael Kovacs, Town Administrator and Michael Grigg, Police Chief, were introduced at a welcome reception on March 26th. Around 100 residents and guests attended the reception to welcome these fine gentlemen to the Town.

The Town has several employees celebrating milestone anniversaries. Public Works has three employees receiving pins. Mickey Ferguson received a pin for five years of service. Dabney Brown and Neal Johnson each received 15-year pins. Janet M. Lewis, Executive Assistant, received a 10-year service pin. We are very proud of our staff and especially of these employees.

Thank you once again for your support and cooperation during my terms of office. I look forward to seeing you all around Town!

God bless you all,

Sincerely,
Dick M. Johnson
Mayor

From the Administrator....

Hello, my name is Michael Kovacs and the Town Council has selected me as your new Town Administrator. I am 27 years old and have been married to my wonderful wife, Sonya, for 4 years. We have two children, Matthew who is 3, and Richard who is nearly 1. We come to you from Presidio in west Texas where I was the City Administrator for two years. I lived in Corpus Christi, Texas, before moving to Presidio, although I am originally from Canada. My wife and I are Christians and are eager to settle in a local church. Our main hobbies are taking the boys to the beach and parks and playing with our computer. Sonya loves the library and I enjoy athletics. I hold an MPA and BA from Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi and have experience as a small town city administrator. I have also served in the areas of police administration, criminal psychology, and hurricane/disaster planning during my graduate and post-graduate tenure. I believe in strong yet limited local government, professionalism in all areas of municipal service, reasonable tax and user fee rates, and minimizing and repaying public debts. I look forward to serving you and enjoying life in our beautiful Town of Surfside Beach.

PUBLIC WORKS

SANITATION DEPARTMENT

Even though we are still into the winter season, Sanitation works long days and weeks in all kinds of weather, even snow, to accomplish all of the on-going preparations needed for the up-coming days, weeks, months, and seasons. In addition to the weekly residential and commercial routes, litter crews have worked Highway 17 Business North and South to keep up an attractive presentation for our out-of-town visitors as well as our own citizens.

Occasionally we get reports of your Moby carts not being emptied. You might need to take a look inside to see what is in the cart. Only household items that are not recyclable should be placed in the carts. Items such as empty paint cans and other non-garbage debris will not be emptied. Please call Town Hall at 913-6111 to find out acceptable ways to dispose of bagged yard debris, empty paint cans, mattresses, appliances, etc. Pick-up days vary depending on your address. Moby carts should be placed at curbside by 6 a.m. on your pick-up day and put away by 11 p.m. the same day. The crews begin picking up as early as 6 a.m.

In February the Department extended the North side route (Monday pick-up) to include 3rd Avenue South. This was due to increased growth. Residents South of Surfside Drive to 3rd Ave. South now have their carts picked up on Monday instead of Tuesday. Everyone seems to be acclimated to the new schedule very well.
Collection Days

Monday - North End to 3rd Ave. South - Household Garbage
Tuesday - South End - Household Garbage
Wednesday - Yard and Brush Debris
Thursday - North End Recyclable and Entire Town other Debris
Friday - South End Recyclable

During the winter months the Sanitation crew collected an average of 965 tons of garbage waste and 140 tons of yard debris. Over 60 tons of recyclables were also collected.

The Sanitation Department has added a new, much needed storage building at the Public Works Sandy Lane location. New Moby carts as well as sanitation equipment are now being stored inside and are protected from the weather.

MAINTENANCE

The Maintenance Crew kept busy servicing some 120 pieces of equipment and vehicles during the winter months. These services included lubes, oil and filter changes on police, recreation, administration, fire, street, and sanitation vehicles. They have also continued to be involved in reviewing and comparing new computer software that can be used in updating and servicing all areas of maintenance operations more efficiently.

STREET DEPARTMENT

During the winter months the landscape crew mulched trees, flower beds, and planted bulbs around town in preparation for a beautiful spring showing. Fences were mended, broken parking blocks replaced, downed directional signs replaced, and potholes repaired.

The 50/50 program is still underway after a much slower beginning this year due to last season’s storms. Briefly, the 50/50 project involves the property owner paying for material costs to fill in a ditch and the town providing labor. The property owner saves approximately 50% of the actual cost to close in the ditch. If you would like more information regarding this program, please call Brenda Alverson at Town Hall, 913-6111.

Residents may pick up recycle bags
at Town Hall
Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

BUILDING/ZONING DEPARTMENT

The Building and Zoning Department did not experience a lull in new construction during the winter. New residential construction continued and there was an increase in new commercial projects. A building was recently completed on 16th Avenue NW that contains a dance studio and accountant office. Additions are being constructed to an existing office building on the corner of Surfside Drive and Business 17. The beachwear store at the corner of 10th Avenue North and Business 17 underwent major renovation; a Chinese restaurant will open soon on Business 17 near Glenns Bay Road; a weight loss company will occupy space adjacent to the Bi-Lo supermarket; and a Japanese restaurant recently opened.

As warmer weather approaches many property owners will be hiring contractors to perform maintenance, repairs, and additions to their homes. Please note that not all ordinary minor repairs require a contractor. Please call our office if you have any questions regarding when a contractor is required. The following is a list of DOs and DON'Ts that may help you with your contractor selections:
• DO get referrals
• DO find a contractor with whom you can communicate
• DO visit job sites to look at recent work
• DO allow flexibility in your construction schedule (some times the most reputable contractors are in great demand)
• DO make sure the contractor is properly licensed and has a permit
• DO follow your instinct
• DON'T GIVE ANY “UP FRONT” MONEY
• DON'T BE RELUCTANT TO ASK QUESTIONS
• DON'T HIRE A CONTRACTOR WITH WHOM YOU ARE NOT COMFORTABLE
• DON'T HIRE A CONTRACTOR JUST BECAUSE “HE’S IN THE YELLOW PAGES!”

As always, the Building Department is available if you have any questions about contractors, permits, property setbacks or zoning. Don’t hesitate to call us at 913-6365.

Business owners are reminded that special events require a Zoning Compliance Permit if you plan to advertise a special event with banners or portable signs or if you will use a tent. A Zoning Compliance Permit can be obtained from the Building Department Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

AROUND THE FIREHOUSE

Good Weather Safety

The weather has been improving lately and it’s time to work in the yards, enjoy cookouts, etc. But, let’s not forget safety while we’re enjoying ourselves.

Burning of leaves is permitted, provided you contact the Fire Department first and follow the safety regulations. These
include burning at least 50 feet away from any structure, burn no construction materials, attend the fire constantly and keep a garden hose readily available. Also, please be considerate of your neighbors who may suffer from pulmonary diseases. If any complaints are received about the fire or smoke, then the fire will have to be extinguished.

Cookouts are fun and safe when done properly. Grills should be used only on non-combustible surfaces, and should be kept a minimum of 36 inches from combustible walls, etc. They should not be used at all under combustible ceilings. For those who live in condos or apartments, the use of grills above the ground floor is unsafe and illegal.

While you’re at it, why not go ahead and check your smoke detectors for proper operation. Although most homes now have smoke detectors, 30% of them do not work because batteries are dead or have been removed. Do a complete home fire safety inspection. If you need information, contact the Fire Department at 913-6369. If you need help doing the inspection, call us also.

2000 Hurricane Seminar
Plan now to attend the next Surfside Beach Fire Department Hurricane Preparedness Seminar. It is scheduled for June 15th. The agenda is not set as of yet, but rest assured that there will be some good information disseminated. Watch the papers for further information on this.

Aluminum Cans for Burned Children
We would like to remind everyone that we have an aluminum can recycling trailer located across the street from the Fire Station on First Avenue North. All cans collected are sold and the proceeds go to the Medical University of South Carolina to assist burned children. Please help us to help them.

POLICE DEPARTMENT
A common thread of life that seems to be present in the “make-up” of every individual is the memory of a past experience with a police officer. Within some people, it is the stress relieving comfort of the finding of a lost child. In other individuals it is the instantaneous feeling of security and safety the moment a police officer firmly steps between the victim and the “significant other” within a dangerous domestic violence encounter. And unfortunately, it could also be the long recalled displeasure of receiving a traffic summons for traveling 10 miles per hour over the posted speed limit. The ultimate and experienced feelings for each of us vary according to the facts and circumstances of our lives and the reasons the officer must interact with us.

Clear and simple, policing is an unusual profession. To some people this may be difficult to realize and even more challenging to admit to. However, when reduced to the simplest concept, policing is the only occupation in which a structured and organized society permits the use of “deadly force” on a daily basis. That is an awesome daily responsibility and heavy burden to every Law Enforcement Officer in the United States. An officer is compelled to train and prepare for a possible event each and every day of his or her career. The after effects of an error are not reversible and may be catastrophic. In ancient Sparta, mothers would admonish their warrior sons who were going into battle to “bring their shields back or be brought back upon them.” Police Supervisors literally provide an identical order to their subordinates at roll call when they describe the physical characteristics and description of a wanted person or when their subordinates leave in a radio car to start a patrol tour of duty. It is a fact of police life that an officer may never return for the next roll call!! Seldom, if ever, do most people realize that many police officers (who are also husbands/wives, fathers/mothers, sons/daughters, and brothers/sisters) fail to return home following a tour of duty. Many do return home but are certainly not the same person who departed 10-12 hours prior.

In a multitude of manners, a Police Officer is in fact returned home on his/her shield due to mental or emotional trauma. But nevertheless, they continue to serve despite the accumulation of these less than visible “wounds.” Consider this - who is this “person” who has faithfully served the public for 10-15-20-25 years of service. How have “they” changed? Was the change “good” for the individual and the family? Would or does the “significant other” feel the benefits that were realized and accrued by society, outweigh the broken marriage or the “distance” between the officer and the “significant other”/the child or children/or the parent or sibling?

The salient point to remember is that policing is not only a profession, but also a very lonely occupation characterized by a multitude of less than visible wounds. Policing is not a “job,” but a way of life. Anyone who feels or believes otherwise is less than knowledgeable. For a plumber, real estate salesperson, or an accountant to make a mistake due to a “bad night at home” it is seldom fatal. In most instances where an officer may be distracted or aloof resulting from a family disagreement, the final result may be death or a debilitating serious bodily injury.

The Surfside Beach Police Department consists of 14 Officers and six Communications Specialists. Each and every member of the staff is professional and is dedicated to excellence in service. Their motivation is individualized - they need little management or incentive to realize their purpose and the mission to the residents and visitors. Certainly they are neither “overpaid,” nor do they perform their daily dedicated ritual to Public Safety because of societal popularity. Their reasons for dedicated service are as diverse as their personal reasons for choosing their profession. During the course of the next two years, you will be able to observe the successful entry of YOUR Police Department into the 21st century. You may very well ask how this may reasonably be accomplished?

The plan follows; it is neither complicated nor unusual. It is characteristic of professional and accepted modern law enforcement management ...
1. The individual talents and special skills of each staff member shall be impartially identified and carefully evaluated. “Round pegs” shall be placed in “round holes” for organizational assignments and responsibilities. The “best man or woman” who is capable of the highest quality of excellence or service shall be placed in a particular assignment. To do otherwise would be to assign duties based upon popularity or personal preference. Such an egregious course of action would represent a profound disservice to the citizens of Surfside Beach...

In conjunction with their everyday patrol responsibilities, personnel shall also possess specialist duties. As a result of this evaluation, all members of the patrol staff shall be considered as generalists: that is, the ability to successfully address any and all law enforcement duties, but with the added feature of a particular expertise or specialty. As a result, the citizens of Surfside Beach shall possess two officers for “every one.” These concepts are normally referred to as “job enrichment” and “job management.” As professionals, personnel are continuously increasing their technical proficiency, as well as their personal sense of responsibility and commitment to the Town of Surfside Beach.

2. To competently serve the community various members of staff shall attend the following specialized courses of instruction: Basic, Advanced and Fatal Accident Investigation; Basic and Advanced Crime Scene Investigation; Homicide Investigation; Incident Command System Course; Basic and Advanced Narcotics Investigations; and of course, various crime prevention courses so very valuable to a residential community.

The most important resources or assets of any professional Police Department that is all too frequently overlooked are the residents of the community. An enlightened and highly responsible citizen is a perfect companion to a professional officer. Chief Daryl Gates of the Los Angeles Police Department once referred to the citizens as his “eyes and ears”.

The “war against crime” is not merely a battle between the police and the offenders - predators, if you will. It is actually a complex “system” that must involve all of the elements within a community. Neighborhood associations, Crime Watchers etc. are not sufficient. The individual commitment, initiative, and the feeling of civic pride of all residents (youth and seniors) are absolutely required. The cost of calling 911 is nothing; the reporting of a suspicious act or person to the Police Department and the dispatching of a unit to “check it out” is without cost. This is the purpose of the Police Department. In most acts of crime, the case is not solved by a detective, but by a vigilant citizen/witness who took the time to initiate a telephone call or to provide a “piece of information.”

While it is unequivocally dangerous and unacceptable for a citizen to “go out and patrol the street” with the purpose of ferreting out crime, it is more than appropriate to telephone or record the information that piques your interest. If in doubt, telephone the Police, and remember - just as a police officer rarely knows whom he or she is stopping in a traffic infraction, the average citizen knows even less about the person that they are attempting to follow. Law Enforcement is a profession that trains for the “unanticipated.”

In paragraph 2, I referred to the displeasure that many residents possess concerning the receipt of a summons for traffic offense. Officers issue these summons for one primary objective - to preserve life and property. All too frequently the individual vehicle operator simply forgets this fact and seems to focus only upon the inconvenience of court attendance or the monetary fine. In response to this, I merely wish to relate to you the fact that the most heinous terrorist on American soil is Timothy McVeigh. He was responsible for the bombing of the Federal Building. A professional law enforcement officer - an Oklahoma State Trooper - arrested the suspect. The arrest resulted from:

- a traffic stop where the only violation was a minor vehicle equipment infraction [and]
- the traffic stop escalated to probable cause for illegal possession and concealment of weapons [and]
- the arrest for the terrorist act resulted from the Trooper’s viewing on television the citizen generated composite that just happened to match his particular prisoner. But ... it was only a minor traffic violation !!!!!

A professional law enforcement officer ... a professional and responsible public ... an arrest. A “dream team” that cannot possibly be defeated.

About 30 years ago Joseph Wambaugh aptly coined the phrase “the thin blue line” in his best seller describing the mission of the police. Whether the “thin blue line” is in Los Angeles, Charleston, Myrtle Beach, Atlantic City or even our own Surfside Beach, the “thin blue line” shall neither falter nor fail - it shall “hold.” The Surfside Beach Police Department is “alive and well.” True, the past has made it somewhat fragile but its strength increases day by day.

Rest assured the men and women of this department will successfully match the professionalism of any department. I ask that each and every one of you please give them time - individually and collectively. They shall prove to each and every resident of this Town that “smaller is better.”

Stay safe ... Know your limitations ... and trust in your Police Department ...
MUNICIPAL COURT & VICTIM ADVOCATE DEPARTMENT

The Victim/Witness Advocate is here to assist you through the criminal justice process and, if needed, help you receive assistance through other agencies. If you are a victim of a criminal offense that occurred with the town limits of Surfside Beach, you have certain rights and responsibilities as defined under South Carolina Law §16-3-1510(3). This law only applies to individuals, not businesses. To ensure you receive assistance, inform the Victim’s Advocate at 913-6338 if your legal name, address, phone or page number changes. Promptly submit a Victim Impact Statement and give full details of how the crime has impacted you, financially and emotionally. Inform the Victim’s Advocate if you choose to speak at hearings. REMEMBER that your full cooperation is necessary to ensure your rights are protected.

Thanks to all the jurors who participated during our March session of jury trials. Out of 30 cases scheduled, 13 cases were continued; 3 cases went to trial with a mistrial; 3 cases were dismissed; 7 cases were plea bargained; 1 case forfeited bond; and 3 cases were  nol prosequi (no prosecution.) Our next session of jury trials is scheduled for the week of June 26th through 30th. Please do not park in the People’s Federal Savings and Loan parking lot. We will try and remedy the parking problem before our next term of jury trials.

During each term of jury trials, the court randomly pulls 300 names given by Voter Registration of residents who live within the town limits of Surfside Beach. Out of 300 summons the Court averages approximately 60 to 80 juror responses. If you are the primary caretaker of a child/children under the age of 7, you may be excused form service during this term. A student or school employee may request a postponement to a date that does not conflict with the school term. No person is exempt from service as a juror in any court of this State except men and women over 65 years of age. The Court welcomes all senior citizens to participate when summoned. If you move out of town, we encourage you to contact the Voter Registration Office in Conway at 248-1382. That office will update your voter registration information, change your precinct, and mail a new card to you.

DICK M. JOHNSON CIVIC CENTER

We would like to introduce the new Programs Supervisor, Debbie Ellis, who took over the position in January. Debbie has worked for the Recreation Department for the last 15 years. Please feel free to call her with any questions you may have concerning the Civic Center and its programs.

The Town of Surfside Beach has designated the Civic Center as a Questionnaire Assistance Center for the Census 2000. Staff is available on Mondays from 9:00 a.m. until noon and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. to answer any questions you may have concerning the census form.

New classes have begun at the Civic Center after the long, snowy winter. Shag classes were held in March for a five week session with a great turnout. Oil painting classes are ongoing on Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Aerobics/kickboxing classes are held on Tuesdays from 6:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. and Sundays from 3:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. Preparations are under way to start line dancing, tumbling classes and a new yoga class in the summer.

Regular on-going classes are Aerobics, Seniorcise, Karate, Square Dancing, and Round Dance. Bridge and Canasta are continuing and everyone is invited to participate.

The Welcome Reception for Can-Am Days was held in March with the biggest turnout so far. A good time was had by all with Bud Lanning and his band performing. Elvis and Garth Brooks from “Legends in Concert” also made an appearance.

American Red Cross Babysitting classes have started for the year. The first session was held March 21-23. There were 12 participants. Another session will be scheduled in a couple of months. Please call to register your child.

The American Red Cross held a blood drive on March 28th at the Civic Center and we had 14 donors. The next drive is scheduled for Wednesday, June 28th at 2:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Please come out and donate the gift of life!

Tennis lessons are offered at the new tennis courts on Surfside Drive at Fuller Park on Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Participation in this class has really grown in the last month. Free tennis lessons will be offered on Saturday, May 20th, starting at 10:00 a.m. at Fuller Park through the program “Tennis Across America.” Call for more information.

Several special events are coming up in the next few months. Sun Fun Super Sunday will be held on Sunday, June 4th with volleyball, horseshoes, bocce ball, sand sculpting, sun tan contest, water bucket relay and crab race. Come out for a great day at the beach. Also on Saturday, August 26th at 9:00 a.m. we will hold the 2nd Alpo Canine Frisbee Competition. We had great participation last year and hope everyone will come out and participate or just to watch!

Again, all activities are open to the public. Activities are listed in the Neighbors section of the Sun News every Thursday. If you have any questions, please call 913-6339. Thank you for your support of the Civic Center and the Recreation Department.

BASEBALL REGISTRATION

Huckabee Complex

May 13th, 11:00 a.m.
T-Ball -- Boys & Girls Ages 6-7
8 - Year Old Ball - Boys & Girls Age 8

May 15th, 4:00 p.m.
Pre-Majors -- Ages 15-16
Majors -- Ages 17-18
TOWN DIRECTORY

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

FIRE / POLICE / RESCUE SQUAD ........................................... 911
Police Non-Emergency & Animal Control ......................... 913-6368
Fire Non-Emergency ............................................................. 913-6369
Grand Strand Water & Sewer Authority ......................... 448-1686
Santee Cooper Power Company Emergency ..................... 448-3070
Town Hall ........................................................................... 913-6111
Public Works ....................................................................... 913-6360
Recreation Complex - Glencoe Bay Road ....................... 650-4131
Time Warner Cable - Trouble Line ............................... 651-6699
Town Hall Facsimile (FAX) .............................................. 238-5432

TOWN HALL MEETING SCHEDULES

• Town Council, 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month, 6:30 pm
• Planning and Zoning Commission, 2nd Tuesday of each month, 3:00 pm
• Zoning Board of Appeals, 1st Thursday of each month, 2:00 pm
  • Municipal Court, 5:00 pm Wednesdays

All meetings are held in the Town Council / Court Chambers located on the South end of Town Hall and are open to the public.
All interested residents are welcomed to attend.