

# TOWN OF SURFSIDE BEACH ♦ TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS August 11, 2009 ♦ 6:30 P.M.

## TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Deaton called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Deaton, Mayor Pro Tem Truett and Councilmembers Blair, Johnson, Martin, Samples and Childs were present. A quorum was present. Staff present: Administrator Booth; Clerk Pinnell, Police Chief Christenson and Building Director Donevant. Attorney Mr. Smith was also present.

#### 2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

Pastor Benji Simmons, Glenns Bay Baptist Church gave the invocation. Mayor Deaton led the pledge of allegiance.

#### 3. AGENDA APPROVAL

Mr. Truett made a motion to add two items to the agenda. Public Comments was added after Minutes Approval and under Communications a Census Presentation given by Vermelle Simmons was added. Mr. Childs seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the approval of the agenda as submitted with additions. MOTION CARRIED.

#### 4. MINUTES APPROVAL

Mr. Samples made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 28, 2009 meeting as submitted. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

5. <u>PUBLIC COMMENTS – Agenda Items only</u> – 3 minutes per speaker There were no public comments.

#### 6. **COMMUNICATIONS**

a. Census Presentation: Vermelle Simmons, Partnerships Specialist for US Census Bureau: Ms. Simmons presented a short DVD presentation and then gave a verbal presentation on the importance of the Census and the municipalities' part in assuring the Census information is submitted. Information is confidential and the upcoming census will be short this time around with only 10 questions to answer. In 2000 there were two different forms; one was a long form and the other was a short form and this time around there will only be one form. No income or social security numbers will be given. The Census helps the schools, hospitals, transportation and finishes the roads. In 2000 South Carolina came in number 49 out of 50 with Alaska being number 50. The State must do better and the way to do better is to encourage everyone to mail back their responses. The forms will come out March 2010 and they are to be mailed back. April 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 is Census Day. All members of the Census Bureau wear a badge with an oath on the back that states that if any member divulges any information they run the risk of 5 years of imprisonment or a fine of \$250,000 or both. The Census forms are sealed for 72 years; December 2010 the numbers are given on how many people reside in the various counties and funds are allocated accordingly. If everyone is not counted then funds are lost.

Mayor Deaton stated that it is very important the an accurate count is given; one example with the stimulus money coming from the county alone was per capita and we only qualified for \$45,000; if the numbers were more accurate the town and county would have qualified for more funding.

#### Administrator Information

Mr. Booth reported that the town Dixie Youth team is currently playing in the World Series representing South Carolina and they have helped put Surfside Beach on the map. There was applause in the audience. Mr. Booth stated that there has been a lot of recent publicity for the town. Mr. Booth reported that the town will be having its first Ocean Expo this coming weekend.

#### b. Building, Planning & Zoning Report

Mr. Booth reported that the building department permits are up a little. A decision paper will be given to council at the next meeting for a code enforcement officer. Mr. Booth stated that after reviewing the figures coming in the position can now be funded. The code enforcement officer would be connected more to the building department than the police; the position would look for violations of signs, trees, etc.

#### c. Public Safety Report

Mr. Booth reported that he is concerned with the accident rate on Business 17; there have been 45 accidents in the last month. Mr. Booth reported that he feels that part of the reason for the accidents on 17 is due to how the highway is set up with the crossovers and he plans on presenting the transportation plan to council at the next meeting. He will give it to council to work on for two weeks; it will include more than where the town is putting its streets and sidewalks but it also involves 17 Business.

Chief Christenson presented three declarations of recognition to Sergeant Rodney Keziah, Corporal Chris King and Officer Mike Frederick. The recognition was for apprehending subjects who were suspects in various town burglaries and car break-ins.

Mr. Johnson had a question regarding the beach wheelchairs; where they are located and how can resident/visitors access them. Mr. Booth stated that the beach wheelchairs are located at the police department and individuals would just need to request them. It was confirmed that Beach Services will be made aware of this service. Mr. Johnsons requested for council to have a copy of the Beach Services contract by the next council meeting.

#### d. Administrators Report

#### i. Town Strategic Education Alliances

Mr. Booth presented a PowerPoint on various alliances the town has with students and schools in the area. Mr. Booth stated that the town is always looking at new ways to partner up with local schools.

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#### ii. EPA Report

Mr. Booth reported that there had been some controversy over the EPA studies and added that he did not understand why. The studies were for the benefit of the town and other communities. The study was to enhance the quality of future testing by creating a much more effective type of test. Mr. Booth reported that recently the Surfside Beaches were in the news for water quality problems and this was due to problems with communication and the town has since worked this out. Surfside Beach ratings were no different than other areas it was just that Surfside Beach hit the newspapers. Tests used were outdated and this report was questioned by the town. The EPA is a positive study and not Mayor Deaton added that the EPA is creating a negative one. innovative ways to test water and these futures tests will help the entire world and not just Surfside Beach. Mayor Deaton stated that the town is a Blue Wave designated beach; the town has a strict criteria for beach operations.

Mr. Johnson asked if the EPA will be coming back with their findings once they have completed their studies here. Mr. Booth stated that they would not be coming back with findings; the findings were not indications for Surfside Beach the findings will be going into a model to enhance future testing.

Mr. Samples asked where the town stands with the 11 million dollars which was appropriated for the Surfside area which is controlled by the Corp of Engineers. Mr. Booth stated that being in the Clean Water Act is what got the town authorized for the funds; \$200,000 was received across the board to do some of the designs. The plan design was then placed on the shelf and since then the Corp of Engineers received many billions of dollars of stimulus funds and they are now overwhelmed. The Corp of Engineers would love to do this project and they are fighting to do it but currently some of the money is going to places like Louisiana and Los Angeles who have enough political pull to get the money pushed. The Corp of Engineers believes that the surfside Beach project is a good project and there is still a good chance of them getting this money to perform the project. The town gets the funding and then the Corp of Engineers executes the project. Mayor Deaton stated that this is on the front burner with Lindsay Graham and Henry Brown and Congressman Clyburn; they are well aware of these needs and the sense of urgency.

#### iii. Yaupon Parking Lot

Mr. Booth reported that council has received all of the information concerning Yaupon Parking lot and added that the town went out for bid. The funding for the lot came from the parking meter funds. The Yaupon lot was a lot where no one used to park and it is now always full. Mr. Booth stated that the lot will pay for itself within two years adding that it stands out as being the nicest lot on the Grand Strand and

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more than likely up and down South Carolina. Mr. Samples asked Mr. Booth for the list of those who bid and the bid prices. Mr. Booth stated that the town had bid out another project and added this project to it and will provide council with those bids.

Mr. Johnson asked if signage could be placed at Yaupon to indicate where "golf cart only" parking is located adding that busses and cars have been parking in those spots. Mr. Booth stated that the busses are another issue he is currently addressing with the police department and would make sure signs went up in the lot.

Mr. Samples asked how much of the \$187,000 regarding the Yaupon lot listed on the spreadsheet was contributable to the current fiscal year. Mr. Booth stated that the project was started in the previous year and finished in the current year and believes that it was all paid out of the Mayor Deaton added that funds were taken from hospitality funds. Mr. Samples stated that the primary use budgeted from the hospitality fund was for the fire station recognizing that the town would earn revenues. Mr. Booth stated that they were funds that were fenced and the funds were taken out of the fenced money for the parking. Mr. Samples stated that whatever the balance was in the adopted budget for hospitality in March, presuming revenue projections are close, would be \$187,000 less. Mr. Booth stated that he believes this is correct but if it is not he will get back to Mr. Samples with the correct answer.

#### 7. BUSINESS

#### A. Second Reading Ordinance #09-0676: Publication of Town Financial Information

Mr. Samples made a motion to adopt the ordinance as presented. Mr. Childs seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

### B. Decision Paper: Contract Award for Pier Maintenance

This decision paper was to contract the repair and maintenance on the pier pilings and some cross braces. The second lowest bid was recommended. The lowest bid was so low and it was found that the contractor did not have a license in the State of South Carolina therefore it went to the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest bidder. This repair will come out of the enterprise fund. Mr. Booth stated that the enterprise fund should be able to pay for the repairs in addition to paying the 160 some odd thousand dollars to the general fund. Mayor Deaton stated that the enterprise fund is a business within the corporate boundaries; the town has the sanitation enterprise fund and the pier as an enterprise fund. Mr. Childs asked for confirmation that the town has an engineering report for the pier that confirms that the town will not have to move the pilings to do any kind of underpinning. Mr. Booth confirmed that the town did have the direction it needed and they had divers check all of the pilings; the town should be good for another 10 years after these repairs. Mr. Truett made a motion to award the bid to Carolina Marine Construction of Conway. Mr. Samples seconded the motion. Mr. Childs stated that currently some of the nails are not adhering to any material

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underneath. Mr. Booth stated that they were aware of this and they would not have to move any pilings to repair this. Mr. Booth stated they will begin the project at the pier after the season is over.

Mr. Booth confirmed that the work council is awarding is for the replacement of the pilings and some cross braces. Mayor Deaton clarified that the pilings were damaged by a marine boring animal/worm that is common in the area. Mr. Johnson stated for the public record that the bid on the table was for \$68,000; the highest bid came in at \$189,000 and the lowest bid came in at \$24,000. All voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

#### 8. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Abdul Mustafa, President Human Rights Organization Horry County, President Voter Education Project in Columbia: "The organization has been talking with several county councilmen in regards to public projects in Horry County. As we know unemployment is at an all time low. We are getting many public projects here in Horry County and I asked the question in regards to contracts being awarded. One of the things one of the councilmen told me was, once a contract has been awarded, the labor force that the contractor brings in can hire whoever they want. One of the things that we try to convince the county council and the political bodies is, if nothing else, make sure our local people work; be a labor force. My question to the council body, you have a fire station going up here, have you guys put something in place in regards to the contractors making sure that the local people, your local constituency receives the jobs? That's my question, that's why I'm here."

Mayor Deaton referred Mr. Mustafa to set up a meeting with the town administrator.

*Mr. Mustafa*: "That's really why I'm here today because, again, we as an organization believe that our local community should come first and foremost. Thank you very much."

Michael Visnich, South Carolina resident, Member of South Carolina State Guard, Member of Minutemen Civil Defense Corp: "As a member of the Minutemen Civil Defense Corp I take this job very seriously of being a United States citizen. It is my responsibility as a citizen, as would a veteran to protect his country to protect his homeland and to protect his family. I take very seriously my job as a parent to protect my family and my friends and my fellow citizens and that is why I'm here tonight. There's a lot of concern locally, across the state and across the country about illegal immigration and South Carolina is projected to have over 500,000 illegal aliens in our state alone. As Mr. Mustafa just presented, our unemployment rate in this state is simply unacceptable. The people in this county are in a whirlwind, they are losing their homes; losing their families; losing their livelihoods, daily. I'm sure everyone here on council, as well as everyone in this room, knows someone personally affected by the economy. This economy, ladies and gentlemen, is something that I've been following very closely for 11 years. A large part of the reason for this downfall is illegal aliens. Bank of America alone, based out of North Carolina, one of the largest illegal alien numbers of states in the country, Bank of America is based out of Raleigh, I believe, Bank of America has recently been identified as one of the leading causes of our economic collapse. They would loan monies to illegal aliens who would then buy a house with

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this money and then take equity loans and Bank of America would happily give them an equity loan on this property to where it was mortgaged beyond its possible worth and then they leave; they go to another city and they do the same thing. It's money laundering, ladies and gentlemen; it's a RICO violation, and Bank of America has been doing this across the country. This in itself, our national organization has disclosed, is one of the main causes of the economic collapse; main contributors if not a cause. It's happening in South Carolina as well. This is a very serious issue. When we see job sites that are hiring people by race, by creed, by color, that violates the law, the federal law. Each of us stood here tonight and took a pledge of allegiance to that flag; to this country to which is our home. I took that pledge and I say that pledge as often as I can because I'm an American citizen and I'm proud of it. As an American citizen I have an oath to my country to protect it and to abide by its laws. Illegal aliens are called illegal aliens because they are criminals; they have entered this country illegally; against the law: illegally, it means against the law. They are criminals by violating our laws. When we go to jobsites as a national organization we have field ops set up across the country; we have numerous field ops, members constantly investigating reports of sightings of illegal aliens in South Carolina which I'm aware of as State Director. We watch the jobsites and when we see possible illegal aliens or violations of Title VII we report it to all of the applicable agencies, be it the FBI, the IRS, whatever, ICE, we meet with ICE regularly. We've recently seen under a job site here at the new fire station, which I congratulate all of you for; it's going to be a beautiful building and quite a help to the community and I commend you all for this, but it concerns me as a citizen that our people locally may not have had work here; that people from other states; people possibly from other countries be it Mexico, Russia, Bulgaria, wherever, are working possibly this job site without citizenship. South Carolina has H4400 signed into law June 6<sup>th</sup> of last year by Governor Sanford. It is now a law, a state law, that entities such as yourselves are to police these people and their hiring practices. I've spoken to a few members of Surfside Beach in the last few days and each of you that I've spoken with has been very, very cordial and assured me that you have the same concerns that I do as a citizen and I appreciate that. Thursday from 9 to 4 we plan a brief protest or an informational picket at the site of the fire station and it will be simply to advise the public of the effects of illegal immigration and I thank you all very much."

Tom Dodge, 15th Avenue North: "I would like to remind councilmembers that this town operates on a strong council, weak mayor form of government. This is not the way things are now being handled. I would also like to remind them that the town administrator works for them, not as things seem to be done now. In the July 24th issue of the Herald the Mayor said in regards to the 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue south parking lot, they wasted \$300,000 of taxpayer money and the parking lot is not used today. I agree that the lot is not used much but there is not much signage. I would like to respond that the property is well worth the price paid. Also some of that cost was paid with a grant. I think it was wise of that council to purchase that lot which is only one half block from Ocean Blvd. In that same July 24<sup>th</sup> issue of the Herald the Mayor said he has extensive knowledge in the planning process, if that is true, why didn't he tweak the parking plan that the town paid for a few years ago and save the town the ridiculous amount of \$48,500 being paid for yet another plan. If the Mayor wants to talk waste let's look at the \$97,470 spent on sidewalks this year. Most of this was subbed to outside contractors. This work used to be done by town employees in the off season saving considerable money, or we can talk about the \$61,356 spent to dredge Palmetto Lake; the job, in my opinion and that of

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many other residents was not completed. Look at that lake on the 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue north end: it's clear and clean, then go to the other end of the lake at 10th Avenue North; it is quite obvious that the job was not done yet the administrator said, although delayed, the dredging has been completed. The project was paid in full. I suggest the residents go, look for yourselves. Then we can talk about the Yaupon Drive parking lot that cost a total of \$203,007. I talked to two contractors who said they could have done this lot for \$50,000, or we could talk about the \$20,000 or \$25,000 spent for 20 minutes of fireworks on July the 4<sup>th</sup>. On any 4<sup>th</sup> of July anyone can sit on the beach for hours and see constant fireworks as far as the eye can see and it doesn't cost the town anything. These items, Mr. Mayor, in my opinion are waste. By the way, my figures come from town hall; as you already know I was billed to obtain them but the bill has since been cancelled thanks to Mr. Childs, Mr. Samples. The music and refreshments and other activities at the pier on July the 4<sup>th</sup> was great. Also thanks to Houndog Hanson and the wonderful music at the pier Sunday afternoons. Thanks to the beautification committee for the plantings in the town sign and the north end of Eagles on Ocean Blvd and the pier and the west end of Surfside Drive. Also thanks to Beth and Harry Kohlman for the flowers at the 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue walkover; we appreciate them and Brian Newell, Shelby Smith has done a great job. Thank you."

Chris Pinos: "I'd like to ask the members of the council when this, has the contract been awarded to build the fire department and if so, first of all, has it been awarded, Mr. administrator? It has. In the contract did it state that the contractor would have to come up with e-verify? That all his employees are legal? As I travel throughout this county I find that restaurants like Bojangles and others have put up signs, we verify all applicants, usually in the e-verify out of Washington and my question would be to the administrator. If you didn't do it, why didn't you do it and why wasn't it put in the contract? Mr. contractor, I would like e-verify on all of the employees. That's all I'm asking."

Beth Kohlman, 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue South: "I had no idea about this community alliance program but I wanted to say it's a great, great thing they're doing. We have children in three of the schools in the county and I was just wondering when you present things like this, I just want to ask you, if, even if you brought the kids in, I think that would be great for them, but it helps a little bit more, like you were saving, there was a landscaping project, just bring us up to speed a little bit more. What did they do? They submitted a plan but now who completes that plan or is this just something that's going to go and sit someplace and not get done because I know for a fact there are a lot of people that live in this town that want it to look nice and I know that because they're out there and I'm sure you've all seen them out there. They're moving rocks: they're planting grass; they're just doing it and it's a really good thing and also I know I'm not supposed to make this personal but, and you can stop me, but I requested a ride along which I know that, I've since found out, Sharon had e-mailed me back, I e-mailed Mr. Booth about doing a possible ride along program which is something that is done all over the place and what it does is, I sit on the Recreation Committee and we discuss things and it's really important and I would like to be able to support the people that are doing their job in the Recreation Department but at the same time I can't support them fully if I don't know what they do. So my request is simply can I ride along with them to see what they do and I was denied that and I don't see why, I mean, police departments do ride-alongs all over the place. I mean they're getting shot at, this is just to go ride along to see what's going on, you know, and I think that that's a really good thing and if you have people 342 and you do, that are willing to do that, it's my time, you know, it's important. I want to 343 know what's going on so that I can be fully informed so when I sit up there and they ask 344 my opinion and we vote on things that I can make the right decisions for the kids in this 345 town and I'm not forgetting the skate park Mr. Booth, as a matter of fact, I'm going to 346 request another meeting with you, if I can get some time from you and I'm going to hold 347 your feet to the fire this time. Thank you." 348 349

#### 9. COUNCIL COMMENTS

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389 390 Ms. Blair: "Thank you all for coming tonight. A week ago on Saturday it was Surfside Community Night with the Pelicans at the ballpark and we, Mr. Mayor Deaton was chosen to go out with the first pitch and I just wanted to throw out kudos because our Dixie Major All Stars are in Mississippi and they are playing and they've won three and they only need to win six and it's been great. This is the first time an Horry County team has won the state title since 1969 so it's really great, but I just wanted to give another little kudos because it was also Star Wars night at the ballpark and Princess Lea was going to throw out the pitch right before the Mayor and because he met with our Dixie All Stars, and they coached him, he was not shown up by Princess Lea.

Just one quick thing I want to share with you, too. I was privileged part of last week to be able to attend the annual Municipal Association summer meeting and I was able to listen to a well round speaker who I actually got a chance to listen to and hear this past February at the Winter meeting; his name is Dr. Bruce Yandle; he's a wiz on numbers and budgets and actually made some very upbeat and good predictions; I think most of us walked out of that presentation feeling a little bit better and a little bit more positive but he ended his talk by telling a little story about being asked to provide his favorite book for what was going to be a display of professors favorites books and when he put in his request he got a note back that the library didn't have that book and perhaps Dr. Yandle would have an extra copy that he could provide to them to put on display as his favorite book. When he revealed to us what his favorite book was and he replied that indeed he did have another copy and he would share it with them. I was surprised to see that that book was also on my top ten list and stays in my office with me all the time. I remembered to bring it with me so I could share it with you today and his favorite book, which the library did not have a copy of, was the 'The Little Engine That Could' and the reason I like it so much and the reason it means more to me in my first year as council is that I think it's a great mahantra and a great credo and a great prayer for Surfside in that when we face the challenges that we faced over the last years and when we face budget restraints and we face employee issues or anything that comes before us and we want it to be as positive as the last year has been, I think that if we all just take a deep breath and sit back and together we all say, I think I can, I think I can, I think I can, maybe we can all get to the goal that we're all hoping for. Thank you very much for coming tonight."

Mr. Johnson: "Thank you for coming out. This is your town. Call us with any concerns, comments, complaints, as many of you do and we appreciate that. I would like to congratulate the Mayor for getting the ball over the plate, the first time, at the Pelicans game and thank you and I'll see you in a couple of weeks."

Mr. Martin: "I'll add my thanks for coming out and, I think I can."

 Mr. Truett: "I lost a small wager when the Mayor got it across the plate too. Anybody who is interested, Debbie Ellis has, you can go on line and watch or 11 and 12 year old kids play on-line, she has the link and if you want to contact them; they'll be playing at 8 o'clock tonight and they'll have probably at least a game tomorrow so if anybody is interested in watching, call her, she's got the password that you can log on and again I appreciate you guys coming and be careful going home."

Mr. Samples: "Thanks for coming out. You know it's always nice to see whoever wants to come out but I really like to see the people who live in town come out. With respect to the picketing, you know, this is America, great, go enjoy yourself but rest assured that we have been assured by the contractor that they are in full compliance and that, in fact, they, Mashburn does use e-verify and I'm sure the administrator will pass on that information to you. I think it's certainly a worthy ideal that we strive to hire local people but we are also constrained by trying to get the best bang for the buck for the taxpayers in this town and so sometimes there's a, the fact is, if we limited to contractors in Surfside Beach I've got a feeling we'd be paying a whole lot more than the deal that we got in a very keenly competitive contract awarded for the fire station which this town needs and is soon going to be able to celebrate, but thank you all for coming out. As councilman Johnson said keep calling me and e-mailing me with complaints. We don't need to hear good news, we're paid to hear the bad news. Thank you."

*Mr. Childs*: "This is the pitfall of being last, all of the good speeches have already been taken. I did go to the same conference Mrs. Blair went to and in fact she took my entire speech."

Mayor Deaton: "Did you bring a book?"

*Mr. Childs*: "No, she has my copy, but I would like to congratulate our ball team and look forward to seeing them come back in town. Thank you."

**Mayor Deaton**: "At this time we're not going to recess this meeting but we're going to go into an executive session; we're going to take a five minute break and we may, if nothing is done in the executive session, we may recess form there so you're welcome to stay if you want to. I have no idea how long we're going to be in there. The reason is for contract negotiation discussion of Jamin' Leather."

Mr. Truett made a motion to go into executive session. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

10. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**: Jamin Leather Contract Negotiation

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11. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Childs made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Samples seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Approved: August 25, 2009

K. Allen Deaton, Mayor

Sharon Pinnell, Town Clerk

P. Martin, Town Council

Truett, Mayor Pro Tem

Mark L Johnson, Town Council

Robert F. Childs, III, Town Council

Douglas F. Samples, Town C

Town Council

Clerk's Note: This document constitutes minutes of the meeting, which was audio taped. In accordance with FOIA, meeting notice and the agenda were faxed and/or emailed to local media and interested parties. A complete list is on file in the clerk's office. The agenda was posted on bulletin boards outside Council chambers and in the town hall reception area. Meeting notice was also posted on the town marquee.