



**SURFSIDE BEACH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING FEBRUARY 14, 2017 ♦ 6:30 P.M.
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

1. CALL TO ORDER.

Mayor Childs called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Childs, Mayor Pro Tempore Ott, and Councilmembers Courtney, Johnson, Pellegrino, Samples, and Stevens were in attendance. A quorum was present. Others present: Administrator Fellner, and Town Clerk Herrmann.

2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

A. Invocation: Mr. Tim Harmon, Christian Support for Emergency Services, Journey Church, gave the invocation.

B. Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Childs led the Pledge.

3. AGENDA APPROVAL. Mr. Johnson moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Mr. Stevens second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

4. MINUTES APPROVAL. (A) Sign Workshop, January 12, 2017; (B) Regular Meeting (and Executive Session) January 24, 2017, and (C) Vision Workshop January 26, 2017. Mr. Stevens moved to adopt the minutes of the January 12th sign workshop, the regular meeting (and executive session) of January 24th, and the vision workshop of January 26th as presented. Mr. Ott second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS – Agenda Items Only. (3-minutes per speaker) There were no public comments on agenda items.

6. COMMUNICATIONS - Administrator's Report. Ms. Fellner presented the written report, a copy of which is attached hereto.

Ms. Samples said for clarification that the town sent a \$1.3 million payment for beach renourishment; was recently refunded \$672,000, and the town will have to have to repay \$672,000 plus an additional \$22,000, which will make the total investment more than \$1.366 million, or thereabouts. Ms. Fellner said that was correct, and that the town would be reimbursed one half of the \$692,000.

Mr. Johnson asked if there was any update on the beach renourishment timeline. Ms. Fellner said the US Army Corp of Engineers (USAC) is hoping to let bids in early spring. However, there is a possibility that Reach 1, which is North Myrtle Beach, may be funded. If it is funded, then the USAC will want to bid the Reach 1 and Reach 2 together to save deployment costs. One deployment cost \$6 million. There is no assurance from the USAC that this will happen. Mr. Johnson believed the town was on the "short list," and asked if the priority position was lost. Ms. Fellner said the town was on the "shortest list." The town continues to have priority and the beaches will be renourished prior to any other Reach being renourished. Ms. Fellner reiterated since deployment cannot begin until the fall season, there is a possibility that the Reaches will be combined to save deployment cost.

Mr. Ott said we had to pay money, but we got it back. Now we have to give it back. Ms. Fellner said Horry County is a very strange area. In the past three years there have been a lot of cost anomalies. It's not just in the town when projects are bid the bids are often higher than expected. The USAC was very surprised the bid failed; bids were 25-percent higher than expected. Mr. Ott said to clarify the technical description of why council does not give direction to department heads that there are

54 seven councilmembers and they would be getting directions from all different angles. Town Council gives
55 the administrator instructions by consensus, then she directs the department directors. Thank you for
56 your report.
57

58 Mr. Stevens recalled that in 2012 the town collected 44 mils of which 39 mils went to the general
59 fund and 5 mils went to stormwater. After 2012, the stormwater was put into the general fund, but the
60 millage stayed the same. Ms. Fellner said millage actually went down. Mr. Stevens continued saying that
61 stormwater was 1 mil and then increased to 2 mils. Ms. Fellner said the millage allocated to stormwater
62 has remained at 2.
63

64 Ms. Courtney asked if there was any additional information regarding bids for the Reach 3
65 project. Ms. Fellner said no, it all depends on how confident the USAC feels that Reach 1 could be
66 included in the process. It would be a waste of time to proceed, if the Reaches could be combined. We
67 should have more information from USAC sometime in mid- to late-March. Mr. Courtney said beach
68 renourishment is desperately needed on our beach.
69

70 Mayor Childs said he and Ms. Fellner had met about this several times. Most everyone
71 understand when you deal with the Federal Government, its priorities are not the town's priorities.
72

73 Mr. Ott said the millage for stormwater was taken and put into the general fund. That is why we
74 have the problem we have today. The council did that. Stormwater monies need to be locked and
75 reserved only for stormwater uses. Putting the stormwater into the general fund was actually a tax
76 increase, because we didn't get anything from it. I hope the council today sees that and never lets that
77 happen again.
78

79 7. BUSINESS

80
81 **A. First Reading Ordinance#17-0837 Section 9-16 Parking Decals & Exemptions,**
82 **Councilmember Courtney, Parking Committee Liaison.** Mr. Courtney moved to adopt first reading
83 of Ordinance #17-0837 as presented. Mr. Ott second.
84

85 Mr. Courtney said the parking committee recommendations to change the fee for nonresident
86 decals to \$200, and to sell employee 30-day decals for businesses at the pier were discussed at the last
87 council meeting.
88

89 Mr. Johnson supported much of the ordinance, but did have an issue with the increase from \$100
90 to \$200 for the nonresident parking decals, because it was extreme. He would be willing to compromise
91 at \$150 for nonresident parking decals. Some say residents on the west side of Highway 17 don't spend
92 any money in Surfside Beach, but that is not true.
93

94 Mr. Courtney understood Mr. Johnson's comment, but the price should have been increased
95 before now. Our beach provide services like sanitation, water, it's parking for the whole season not just
96 one day. The amount charged is to provide upkeep, maintenance, and services.
97

98 Mr. Johnson said that no parking money is used for beach maintenance.
99

100 Ms. Samples supported charging \$200 and said from what I understand those who want to buy
101 the decals don't think twice about the cost. As a matter of fact, they buy as many as they are allowed to
102 buy. I don't have any problem with anything in the ordinance for first reading. She asked if the police
103 chief had reviewed the ordinance. Ms. Fellner said yes, he did not give any recommendations for
104 change. Ms. Samples said she was good with the ordinance.
105

106 Mr. Ott agreed with the \$200 fee. I understand Mr. Johnson's comments, but every resident in
107 this town pays taxes. We pay a lot more for our parking down here, if you really want to see what we
108 do. It is a great benefit that I have as a resident to have the parking decal.

109
110 Mr. Pellegrino said I think this ordinance was well done. There are a lot problems that this
111 solves. I agree with Mr. Johnson; jumping a 100-percent is a little steep all at once. I agree with the
112 rest of the points.

113
114 Mayor Childs called for a vote on the motion to adopt first reading of Ordinance #17-0837.
115 Mayor Childs, Mayor Pro Tempore Ott, and Councilmembers Courtney, Pellegrino, Samples, and Stevens
116 voted in favor. Councilmember Johnson voted against. **MOTION CARRIED.**

117 **B. Appointments**

118
119 Mr. Johnson called *point of order* and recused from Business Item B.ii. Business Committee
120 appointment, see attached recusal form.

121
122
123 **i. Municipal Judge Chris Arakas.** Mr. Ott moved that Judge Chris Arakas be reappointed as
124 the Municipal Judge for the Town of Surfside Beach for a four year term beginning March 21, 2017 and
125 ending March 21, 2021, under the terms of the on-going agreement dated March 26, 2014 with Horry
126 County Government, and as approved by Order of The Supreme Court of South Carolina, dated
127 November 7, 1996. Mr. Johnson and Mr. Stevens second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

128
129 **ii. Business Committee (1 vacancy) – Ms. Heather Sabin, GRITS Realty; Mr. Mikey**
130 **Pruitt, Pruitt Electric.** Mr. Ott moved to appoint Mr. Mikey Pruett to the business committee. Mr.
131 Stevens second. Mayor Childs, Mayor Pro Tempore Ott, and Councilmembers Courtney, Pellegrino,
132 Samples and Stevens voted in favor. Councilmember Johnson recused. **MOTION CARRIED.**

133
134 **iii. Construction Board of Appeals (1 vacancy) – Mr. John O'Brien; Mr. Shane Stewart.**
135 Mr. Ott moved to increase the membership of the Construction Board of Adjustment and Appeals from
136 five (5) to seven (7) members, and to appoint both Mr. Shane Stewart and Mr. John O'Brien for terms of
137 four years each. Mr. Stevens second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

138
139 Mayor Childs thanks Ms. Samples for the suggestion to increase the number of members on the
140 construction board of appeals. It worked out well, and we were able to reappoint Mr. Stewart who has
141 served the town well, and also appoint Mr. O'Brien. Everybody is happy. Mayor Childs asked the clerk to
142 advertise the remaining vacancy on the construction board of appeals.

143
144 **iv. Keep Surfside Beach Beautiful (open membership) – Ms. Ashley Stevens Hein.** Mr.
145 Ott moved to appoint Ms. Ashley Stevens Hein to the Keep Surfside Beach Beautiful committee. Mr.
146 Stevens second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

147
148 Mr. Stevens said, "I want to make sure everyone knows that [Ms. Hein] is not my daughter."

149 **8. TOWN COUNCIL DISCUSSION** – Any matters of concern or information to be discussed.

150
151
152 Mr. Courtney said he previously requested that council packages be delivered on Thursday. Now,
153 they are being delivered late Friday. I understand the work that is put into it, but I think all of council
154 agrees that our packages need to come a little bit earlier on Thursdays so we can go through them. I
155 know it's hard on you. Ms. Fellner said there are times when we simply can't do that. There's no way
156 that the clerk can even get them out. We do everything as quickly as we can, but sometimes we're
157 waiting for different items. These packets used to go out the day before the meeting. We try to get

158 them out as soon as possible. The clerk works right up until the minute. She's the one that puts the
159 packets together.
160

161 Mayor Childs agreed with Ms. Fellner's comments, and said I'm in there all the time. Ms. Fellner
162 is constantly in and out of the clerk's office. The clerk is constantly making changes and things come in
163 at the last minute. Believe me, there's nobody sitting around; it's Friday, let's get these things out.
164 They're working as fast as they can, and sometimes, I think maybe when we do get it early it's because
165 everything is cut and dry. But, there's so many last minute decisions that it's just one of those things. I
166 do understand Mr. Courtney's problem, but also the administrator's and the clerk's.
167

168 Mr. Ott suggested if it was possible that the director's reports be sent to councilmembers on
169 Wednesday, which would allow them to read through them. I spend a lot of time reading the directors
170 reports. Ms. Fellner said that shouldn't be a problem, at all.
171

172 Ms. Fellner said in response to Mr. Courtney's comment that when we have the information early
173 and can send the packages earlier, we absolutely will. The department reports can be sent earlier if that
174 would help council. Mr. Courtney said thank you.
175

176 **9. PUBLIC COMMENTS – General Comments.** (5-minutes per speaker)
177

178 Mr. Phil Doggett, North Dogwood Drive: I know we've got to get a new chief, but we've got a
179 great lieutenant, and I highly in any way, shape, or form [believe] that the lieutenant could be made
180 chief. I think that would be great. Thank you.
181

182 Mr. Dodge, 15th Avenue North: We suffered quite a tragedy here in town with the loss of our
183 police chief. It's really sad that this council had something to do with it. I'd like to read the definition of
184 a couple of words. Hypocrite, a person who presents, pretends to have virtues, moral or religious belief,
185 principles that he or she does not actually possess, especially a person whose actions belie their beliefs.
186 A person who feigns some desirable or publicly approved attitude. And another word, despicable,
187 deserving to be despised or regarded with distaste or disdain. Contemptible. You know who you are.
188

189 Ms. Patti Magliette, Harbor Lights Drive: I'd just like to say that we've got a number of people
190 who have been working in Surfside Beach for a long, good many years, and they've done us a very good
191 service. The police chief was one of them, as we all know. To sit 'em up here in a meeting and grill him
192 like that, I mean it may not have been meant to be rough, but I think it came across as overbearing, and
193 I'd just like to say that I don't think anybody needs to be put through that at the end of a long work day.
194 I think a lot of times we talk before we think. I think that if we're going to have people up here
195 answering questions for 20 minutes or so we should show them some benign respect for their profession,
196 and not be so rough on them. I'm sad to see him go, but in a way I'm happy for him, because nobody
197 deserves that. We've been doing police mutuality [sic] with the surrounding towns for many, many years
198 now. I think we all understand why, because up and down 17 you've got stuff coming from Florida up
199 north, and stuff coming from north down. I think we were a little too rough on this man. If our council
200 is going to continue to that in years to come, shame on them. I don't think it was called for and I hope
201 that it never happens again. Thank you.
202

203 **10. TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS**
204

205 Mr. Ott: I thank everybody for coming out. It's been a long day. Thank you.
206

207 Mr. Courtney: I'd like to thank everybody for coming out. Again, going back to the parking
208 decals, I don't enjoy raising rates. But, we all moved here because it's the Town of Surfside Beach. It's
209 the town we moved in and we all like it. We pay higher taxes here. I understand. I love when people
210 come and use our beaches and spend their money here. I think it's great. But, we needed an increase

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211 for the decals. If not, it comes back on us, on the taxpayers. So, we're not raising the decals for more
212 revenue, as far as that, but we're looking to cover what we're putting out. With the cost of inflation, this
213 is what we're going to have to do to continue on. As far as the question for directors, I'm not here to
214 beat up on anyone nor do I want to be beat up on. But, I'm sorry the; some of the questions we ask
215 directors, we don't mean to be harsh. There's nobody on council that wants to be. But, we just needed
216 some answers and that's why I brought up about getting the packages earlier. Because if we had more
217 time to read some of the stuff that was coming across us, we'd be careful about what we're signing.
218 Council in the past has signed stuff that has come back and haunted them. We don't want that
219 happening. So, again, we're not here to beat up on our directors. We're very proud of our staff and
220 what they do. They do a lot for our beach, and we appreciate where we live. I moved my family down
221 here, my wife and two kids, and we are pleased to be down here. We appreciate the services, and we
222 appreciate the staff and all the directors. It was never meant to beat up on anybody. So, thank you.
223 I'm sorry that if you took it the wrong way.

224
225 Mr. Johnson: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I would just like to say that I just came from Columbia a
226 couple of hours ago. I was at the Municipal Association Board of Directors meeting. We spent hours and
227 hours discussing the business license fee. To my dismay, this thing has been going on for two years.
228 The way it has been presented, it went out of committee. Now it's going to the House, and it's going to
229 be detrimental to not only the cities and the towns financially, it's really going to hurt the local mom and
230 pop businesses, because the equation they have proposed is incomprehensible. I mean, it makes no
231 sense at all. It is so detailed, it's like, you don't need an attorney to read it, you just need to have
232 somebody...there's so much involved that it's; I just pray to God that it doesn't go through the House. If
233 it does go through the House, I just pray to God that it does not go through the Senate. But, I'm telling
234 you, your taxes are going to increase if this Bill passes in every municipality in the state whether it's
235 Aynor or Loris or Surfside Beach or Myrtle Beach or North Myrtle Beach or Columbia. There is going to
236 be an extreme impact, and so I would urge you to contact your legislators and find out what is going on.
237 If you would like to email me (MarkJohnson@surfsidebeach.org) I will send you some information about
238 it. I'll be glad to do that. But, we're going to have a problem, folks. We are going to have a problem.
239 Thank you for coming out. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

240
241 Mr. Pellegrino: Thank you very much for coming out tonight. As far as fees in general, and I
242 mentioned this at the workshop yesterday, fees are like a disease. Once you have them, they grow.
243 Once you start accepting them, they multiply. The decals, as Mr. Johnson and I mentioned, I think that
244 was a hefty increase. There's some other stuff that needed to be done on those changes. But, the
245 stormwater fee that's a whole new tax. These are fees that we really need to watch out for, because you
246 add in a fee, and another fee, and another fee, and another fee, sooner or later, you're collecting money
247 and you lose all the incentive for business to come in, business to grow, people to move here, people to
248 buy rental properties here, and it's just... We just raised the fees on sanitation last year, and it's always
249 something. But that's something we really need to watch out for, because that just makes it more
250 expensive to live here, more expensive to do business here, and it's going to be a fee incentive at some
251 point. As far as our staff, I'd just like to recognize our staff, because the majority of our staff does a very
252 good job with the resources we have and putting everything in place so we can have a great place to live
253 and our tourists can have a great place to visit. So, we always have opportunities, but I've been involved
254 in this capacity for three years, and in most cases, staff steps up and does what has to be done so that
255 we can have a successful town, so thank you. Thank you very much for coming. Have a great night.

256
257 Ms. Samples: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Happy Valentine's Day, everyone. Hope you all have a
258 lovely evening. I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to the people who are willing to step up
259 and serve on our committees. We have got some great committees in town and if we can't get people to
260 volunteer on those committees, then there's a lot we cannot get done. We really do rely on their
261 recommendations and we're grateful for their service. Thank you so much. Have a lovely evening.
262 Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

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264 Mr. Stevens: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I want to thank everybody for coming out. I want to follow
265 up with what Mr. Pellegrino said about fees. Fees can always go up, and go up, and go up. Spending by
266 government keeps going, but they don't ever try to get the deal. I would encourage this council to put it
267 on the number one priority that we start getting the best deals for our money; we start getting bids for
268 every purchase that we make. We are spending way too much money for projects that we should not be
269 spending that type of money for. I spoke about this at the workshop where we spent basically three
270 times what I [as an independent contractor] bid to a private company, the town paid for the same
271 project after it became the responsibility of the town. I guarantee you there's not a lady out there who
272 buys groceries and does the shopping that doesn't know what I'm talking about. You've got to squeeze
273 your pennies and nickels and make them go as far as they can. We're spending way too much money
274 and we, as a council, need to cut back. Thank y'all, and have a good evening. I hope all of y'all had a
275 good Valentine's Day.

276
277 Mayor Childs: I would like to say regarding the agenda packages that Ms. Fellner and the clerk
278 work hard and diligently to get them delivered. Nothing was meant by the discussion that you are not
279 going fast enough. I think it's a lack of understanding of what you do, sometimes. You get this agenda
280 pulled together and I know the clerk works feverishly on it. I go up there all the time, and she'll tell me,
281 you'll have to come back, I'm too busy. So, it really does work and I think they're not holding anything
282 up to trip us up. They're doing what they can as fast as they can, and I appreciate it very much what
283 you do.

284
285 **11. ADJOURNMENT.** Mr. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 p.m. Mr.
286 Stevens second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

287
288 Prepared and submitted by,

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290 _____
291 Debra E. Herrmann, CMC, Town Clerk

292 Approved: February 28, 2017

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294 _____
295 Robert F. Childs, III, Mayor

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297 _____
298 Ron Ott, Mayor Pro Tempore

299 _____
300 Timothy T. Courtney, Town Council

301 _____
302 Mark L. Johnson, Town Council

303 _____
304 David L. Pellegrino, Town Council

305 _____
306 Julie M. Samples, Town Council

307 _____
308 Randle M. Stevens, Town Council

309 Clerk's Note: This document constitutes summary minutes of the meeting that was digitally recorded,
310 and not intended to be a complete transcript. Appointments to hear recordings may be made with the
311 town clerk; a free copy of the audio will be given to you provided you bring a new, unopened flash drive.
312 In accordance with FOIA §30-4-80(A) and (E), meeting notice and the agenda were distributed to local
media and interested parties via the town's email subscription list. The agenda was posted on the entry
door at Town Council Chambers. Meeting notice was also posted on the town website at
www.surfsidebeach.org and the marquee.