



**SURFSIDE BEACH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 23, 2019  
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**Town Council Meeting – 6:30 p.m.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER.** Mayor Childs called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Childs, Mayor Pro Tempore Pellegrino, and Councilmembers Dietrich, Johnson, Ott, Scoles, and Stevens were in attendance. A quorum was present. Others present: Town Administrator Pieper; Town Clerk Herrmann; Finance Director King; Fire Chief Otte; Planning, Building & Zoning Director Morris; Police Chief Hofmann; Public Works Director Adair, and Events Supervisor Ellis.

Mayor Childs expressed condolences to the family of former mayor Roy Hyman, Jr. who passed away April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Hyman served the town as mayor from 2000 to 2008, and was on town council from 1986 to 2000.

**2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. A. Invocation:** Pastor Tim Harmon, Christian Support for Emergency Services gave the invocation. **B. Pledge of Allegiance:** Mayor Childs led the Pledge.

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

**4. MINUTES APPROVAL. April 9, April 11, and April 15, 2019.** Mr. Stevens moved to adopt the minutes for April 9, April 11, and April 15, 2019 as presented. Mr. Johnson second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**5. PUBLIC COMMENTS. Agenda Items Only.**

Ms. Ann Wescott, Cedar Drive North, said changing speakers' time to three minutes and having only one meeting a month limited the public's opportunity to comment and access to information.

**6. COMMUNICATIONS.**

**A. Department Reports.**

**i. Events.** Supervisor Ellis presented the written report, a copy of which is attached hereto. Mr. Johnson asked why the farmers market was only on Tuesday this year. Ms. Ellis explained that last year was a trial. Waccamaw Market Cooperative found there was not enough vendor participation to schedule a second day.

**ii. Finance.** Director King presented the written report, a copy of which is attached hereto.

**iii. Fire.** Chief Otte presented the written report, a copy of which is attached hereto.

**iv. Planning, Building & Zoning.** Director Morris presented the written report, a copy of which is attached hereto. A family-friendly Hurricane Preparedness Workshop is scheduled May 22 at 6:30 p.m. in the Civic Center. Mr. Ott asked how information received at the hazard mitigation conference affected CRS. Ms. Morris said the requirements to lower ratings would be more stringent. Proposed changes include the mapping process, repetitive loss, and not counting stormwater requirements and elevation certificates that are already required by NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program). We are working with the state coordinator to counteract the proposed changes before the manual is republished next year. Mr. Stevens asked when new flood maps would be ready. Ms. Morris said that FEMA (Federal Emergency

54 Management Agency) flood maps may not be ready for another year, because of the flooding problems in  
55 Horry County. Mr. Dietrich asked why the police department was not participating in the hurricane  
56 workshop. Ms. Morris said the police department was asked and will participate in future workshops, but  
57 this one is scheduled in the middle of Bike Fest.  
58

59 **v. Police.** Chief Hofmann presented the written report, a copy of which is attached hereto. Mr.  
60 Pellegrino asked if the town jail was closed. Chief Hoffman said it was closed, and operations are going  
61 well. Mr. Stevens thanked Chief Hofmann for keeping the town in South Carolina's top 6 percent of the  
62 safest towns during the last 10 years. Mr. Dietrich asked for an update on the body armor. Corporal Pinto  
63 demonstrated the outer vest armor that looks like a uniform shirt. That style is beneficial to the officers  
64 because it is easily removed so they cool off quickly during the summer. The plan is to equip all officers  
65 with a "Hardwire" product that is much cooler; three officers have been fitted.  
66

67 **vi. Public Works.** Director Adair presented the written report, a copy of which is attached  
68 hereto. Mr. Johnson asked how leaves piled on the roadside are handled. Mr. Adair said the resident is  
69 left an "Oops" message with details about bagging. Ms. Scoles asked about plastic bags being used and  
70 debris being left at vacant lots. Mr. Adair said the same "Oops" message is used. Resources aren't  
71 available to monitor illegal dumping; eventually staff will pick up the leaves. The messages work about 95  
72 percent of the time. Mr. Stevens asked when the summer trash schedule started. Mr. Adair said the  
73 second week of May.  
74

75 **C. Administrator's Report.** Administrator Pieper said

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- 77 • Safety committee and department directors meetings were held in April.
- 78 • Budget workshop was April 11<sup>th</sup> from which excellent feedback was received.
- 79 • Pier: related work continues; Army Corp of Engineers reconstruction permit and OCRM permits
- 80 were received; code issues will be finalized next week; bid specifications are being developed and
- 81 the pier should be let for bids soon. The projected timeline is ahead of schedule, because the
- 82 environmental assessment was originally projected for 18 months which would have been around
- 83 February 2020.
- 84 • Floral Clubhouse renovations are almost complete. There were rotten wood and foundation
- 85 problems. The public works crew did a good job on the repairs.
- 86 • Police department purchased a vehicle using drug fund money.  
87

88 Mayor Childs asked if the town was waiting on approval from FEMA for the pier. Mr. Pieper  
89 explained that FEMA appropriates the project; it does not issue permits. He was in daily contact with  
90 FEMA about outstanding items. Right now he was working with Marine Fisheries on a few issues. Mr.  
91 Johnson asked if local permits were necessary. Mr. Pieper said yes; code issues are being addressed now  
92 and the final permit should be issued next week. Mr. Ott thanked Mr. Pieper and staff for presenting a  
93 bare bones budget with no tax increase. Mr. Pellegrino thanked everyone for working to get the pier  
94 approvals so quickly.  
95

96 **7. BUSINESS.**

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98 **A. Second Reading Ordinance #19-0885, Accessory Structures, Director Morris.** Mr.  
99 Stevens moved to adopt second reading of Ordinance #19-0885 as presented. Ms. Scoles second. Ms.  
100 Morris presented the decision paper and ordinance, copies of which are on file. She noted the only  
101 change was to reduce the square footage to 120. Mr. Stevens asked to which zones this applied. Ms.  
102 Morris said R1, R2, R3, C1 and C2. It does not affect the entertainment district at all. All voted in favor.

103 **MOTION CARRIED.**

104

105 **B. First Reading Ordinance #19-0892, Chapter 2 Administration, Councilmember**  
106 **Dietrich.** Mr. Stevens moved to adopt first reading of Ordinance #19-0892 as presented. Mr. Dietrich

107 second. Mr. Dietrich said council discussed this at the last meeting and also in a workshop. In his opinion,  
108 it should be adopted. After discussion about meeting times, Mr. Johnson moved to amend the meeting  
109 start time to 6:00 p.m. Mr. Ott second. Mayor Childs and Councilmembers Dietrich, Johnson, Ott, Scoles  
110 and Stevens voted in favor. Mayor Pro Tempore Pellegrino voted against. **MOTION TO AMEND**  
111 **MEETING TIME TO 6:00 P.M. CARRIED.** Mayor Childs and Councilmembers Dietrich, Johnson, Ott,  
112 Scoles and Stevens voted in favor. Mayor Pro Tempore Pellegrino voted against. **MOTION CARRIED AS**  
113 **AMENDED.**

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115 **C. First Reading Ordinance #19-0893 Stormwater Utility Fee, Director Adair.** Mr.  
116 Stevens moved to adopt first reading of Ordinance #19-0893 as presented. Ms. Scoles second. Mr. Adair  
117 presented the decision paper and a PowerPoint presentation, copies of which are on file. The proposed  
118 utility fee (equivalent residential unit or ERU) is \$6.83 per month or \$82 per year for a single family  
119 house; multi-family and commercial properties have formulas to equitably distribute fees. The proposed  
120 ERU is in the middle range of area charges. Town Council has authority to approve projects  
121 recommended by staff and to adjust the ERU annually during the budgeting process. Mr. Johnson said  
122 years ago the drainage system on the south end of town was repaired, but the north end project has yet  
123 to be done. The town has stormwater issues. While he did not like fees or taxes, he said we need to act.  
124 Mr. Ott said the ordinance should include a sunset clause. Mr. Adair reiterated that council had authority  
125 to review the ERU annually and to adjust it based on the approved projects. Mr. Pieper said there would  
126 always be ongoing maintenance; once the capital projects were done, council has authority to evaluate or  
127 to eliminate the ERU. A lengthy discussion was held that included:

- 128
- 129 • Discussion of the previous 5 mils collected for stormwater;
- 130 • ERU revenue is specifically for stormwater projects;
- 131 • ERU represents a 16 percent tax increase for a single family residence;
- 132 • Many citizens are happy about the plan, because they dislike flooding more than they dislike
- 133 paying;
- 134 • ERU could be reduced now, but it would extend the time needed to accumulate funds for
- 135 projects
- 136 • Whether large fund balances on hand would impact grant awards, which it does not; however,
- 137 grants may require proof that a matching funds are available.
- 138

139 Mayor Childs and Councilmembers Dietrich, Johnson, Ott, Scoles and Stevens voted in favor.  
140 Mayor Pro Tempore Pellegrino voted against. **MOTION CARRIED**

141  
142 **D. First Reading Ordinance #19-0894 Amend FY18-19 Municipal Budget, Director**  
143 **King.** Mr. Stevens moved to adopt first reading of Ordinance #19-0894 as presented. Mr. Johnson  
144 second. Ms. King presented the decision paper, a copy of which is on file. Mr. Ott asked if the Ocean  
145 Boulevard underground wiring project could continue since the Highway 17 project was deferred. Ms.  
146 King said that was Town Council's decision; Santee Cooper is holding those funds for the town's use. All  
147 voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

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149 **E. Employee Increases, COLA (Cost of Living) vs Merit, Mayor Pro Tempore Pellegrino.**  
150 Mr. Pellegrino moved to change 3% COLA to 3% merit in the FY19-20 budget. Mr. Ott second. Mr.  
151 Pellegrino said a 3% COLA increase was proposed in the budget, but he believed that merit increases  
152 were a good tool to reward hard working employees, and motivate others to work harder. Mr. Ott agreed  
153 to an extent. COLA gives raises with no incentive for craftsmanship. Merit raises are based on  
154 performance, and it is up to the manager to judge. A discussion ensued regarding means by which  
155 performance is judged; splitting the percentage between COLA and merit, and how COLA helps  
156 employees account for increased cost for insurance, groceries, etc. Mayor Pro Tempore Pellegrino voted  
157 in favor. Mayor Childs and Councilmembers Dietrich, Johnson, Ott, Scoles and Stevens voted against.  
158 **MOTION FAILED.**

159

160 Mr. Johnson said COLA versus merit had been bantered around for many years. We need to look  
161 out for staff. If employees are not performing, then get rid of them. Mr. Johnson moved to approve a 3%  
162 COLA in the upcoming budget. Mr. Stevens second. Mayor Childs and Councilmembers Dietrich, Johnson,  
163 Ott, Scoles and Stevens voted in favor. Mayor Pro Tempore Pellegrino voted against. **MOTION**  
164 **CARRIED.** Mr. Pieper noted that the proposed budget will be presented with a 3% COLA for employees.  
165

166 **F. Establish Town Council *ad hoc* Committee to review Business related Ordinances,**  
167 **Mayor Childs.** Mayor Childs presented Mr. Pellegrino, Mr. Stevens, and Ms. Scoles to serve on the *ad*  
168 *hoc* committee to review business related ordinances. **Town Council CONCURRED.**  
169

170 **8. TOWN COUNCIL DISCUSSION.** Any matters of concern or information to be discussed.  
171

172 Mr. Ott said golf cart usage had increased significantly in the last five years, because the town is  
173 well suited for golf carts. He was concerned that young children and families were at risk in accidents. A  
174 car would cause severe damage to a golf cart on which there was little or no safety equipment. Mr.  
175 Dietrich asked if the town could adopt codes without state approval. Chief Hofmann said the town cannot  
176 adopt a code that opposes state law. The town's golf cart code is pretty good, and the town has a  
177 reputation for enforcement. The beach patrol officers will be told of council's concerns about golf cart  
178 traffic.  
179

180 Mr. Johnson said since public comments were being restricted to three minutes, I would like to  
181 limit council comments to three minutes in discussion and comments. Can I bring that back in an  
182 ordinance? Mayor Childs believed he would get support for that. Ms. Herrmann said if council desired, the  
183 second reading of Chapter 2 could include a time limit of three minutes for council discussion and  
184 comment. Several members agreed.  
185

186 **9. PUBLIC COMMENTS. General Comments.** There were no public comments.  
187

188 **10. TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS.**  
189

190 Mr. Dietrich thanked everyone for coming. We did a lot tonight. We are all accessible. We have  
191 phone numbers. All you have to do is call us. God bless. Have a safe trip home.  
192

193 Mr. Ott thanked everybody for coming, and for their comments tonight. See you next month.  
194

195 Ms. Scoles thanked everyone for coming out. Thank you to the town administrator, and  
196 department directors who stayed here this evening, and all of your employees. Please pass that along.  
197 We really appreciate how much you all are doing for this town.  
198

199 Mr. Johnson thanked everyone for coming out. God bless you. See you next time.  
200

201 Mr. Pellegrino said thanks for coming. Have a great night. See you in a couple of weeks.  
202

203 Mr. Stevens said the stormwater fee would affect him 6.8%. A second homeowner he talked to  
204 will pay 1.5% [sic]. I don't have any problem with limiting council comments to three minutes. Right  
205 now, I'm on about a minute. Thanks everybody for coming out. Have a good week, and God bless you.  
206

207 Mayor Childs said thanks to everybody for coming this evening.  
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209 **11. ADJOURNMENT.** Mr. Stevens moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Mr. Pellegrino  
210 second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**  
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Town Council Regular Meeting  
April 23, 2019

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Prepared and submitted by:

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Debra E. Herrmann, CMC, Town Clerk

Approved: May 14, 2019

**Surfside Beach Town Council**

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Robert F. Childs, III, Mayor

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David L. Pellegrino, Mayor Pro Tempore

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Bruce H. Dietrich, Town Council

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Mark L. Johnson, Town Council

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Ron Ott, Town Council

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Debbie Scoles, Town Council

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Randle M. Stevens, Town Council

Clerk's Note: This document constitutes summary minutes of the meeting that was digitally recorded, and is not intended to be a complete transcript. Appointments to hear recordings may be made with the town clerk; a free copy of the audio will be given to you provided you bring a new, unopened flash drive. 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](http://www.surfsidebeach.org) and the town's LED marquee.