



**SURFSIDE BEACH TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING Civic Center, 115 US Highway  
17 North, Surfside Beach, SC 29575 [www.surfsidebeach.org](http://www.surfsidebeach.org) - ☎ (843) 913-6111  
📞 (843) 238-5432**

## **Town Council Meeting Minutes Tuesday, July 27, 2021**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Mayor Hellyer called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Mayor Hellyer, Mayor Pro Tempore Scoles, Councilmembers Drake, Holder, Keating, and Pellegrino were in attendance. Others present, Town Administrator Shanahan, Town Attorney Crosby, and Town Clerk Sheri Medina. Absent was Councilmember Dietrich.
2. **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
  - a. **Invocation:** Tom Cox of Surfside Christian Church performed the invocation
  - b. **Pledge of Allegiance:** Mayor Hellyer led in the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **PUBLIC HEARING** - None
4. **MOTIONS RELATING TO AGENDA** - None
5. **MINUTES APPROVAL** Councilmember Drake made a motion to approve July 13, 2021, Regular Meeting, and July 15, 2021, Special Meeting minutes as presented. Councilmember Holder second. All voted in favor. **Motion carried.**
6. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – Agenda Items Only (5 minutes per speaker)
  - a. **Steve Shore**, 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N, my comment is on the resolution. This resolution is confusing. Their original purpose was to beautify the Town. That is not happening except for a couple of hanging baskets and yard of the month. They are more into events than beautifying the Town. My biggest concern is engaging the community. A volunteer group of people with good intentions but no accountability. You cannot regulate a volunteer group. Turnover is a constant. This resolution gives them the ability to do whatever they want when they want. This could be very problematic. It would be better if you would clearly state your expectations of this committee.
  - b. **Julie Corbisiero**, 708 Sandburg Street, in regards to the Ordinance about filling the holes on the Beach. I represent Surfside Beach Turtle Team, on behalf of them, we wanted to thank all the parties involved for bringing this issue to the forefront. I wish to address some of the oppositions that have been voiced. Number one was the legality. I think that was the problem back in 2019. This is a moot point now with the fact that many of our neighboring towns have adopted this Ordinance already, including Myrtle Beach and North Myrtle Beach. The second was the negative effect on visitors and tourism. Again, you have to refer to the record-breaking numbers. In the towns mentioned, it doesn't seem to be an issue for families coming there, thinking that they can play on the Beach with their kids and dig into the sand. Number three is relying on lifeguards to monitor the depth and size of the holes. Their priority should always be water safety. The suggestions of the Department of Public Works, and maintenance, filling the holes after dark? I would think this probably wouldn't be cost-effective and be dangerous to beachgoers, both of these departments have much more to deal with. The fact is that our local beach was lucky enough to have the turtles stop there, we can try to let at least them nest safely. If a 200 plus pound turtle or even hatchling falls into a hole, that's the end of that. If anybody else wanted any information from our team, we could help out before the second reading, and I would be more than willing to meet with anyone. I would appreciate it. Thank you very much.
7. **COMMUNICATIONS**
  - a. **MYRTLE BEACH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENTATION**, President and CEO Karen Riordan presented the new marking campaign for the Grand Strand.
  - b. **FINANCIAL REPORT** – Director King gave the Financial Report for June 2021, and preliminary year-end financial performance.

Councilmember Pellegrino stated I want to thank Mrs. King for being on top of this. I talked to her and had five questions yesterday. She didn't even have to look, and she knew the answers right offhand, so she knows your material. So, thank you for staying on top of that.

Councilmember Mister Holder thanked Mrs. King for a great job.

**c. FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT** – Interim Fire Chief gave the Fire Department Report. Captain Carter stated that many hours go into training. It's changed over the years. Being a Firefighter requires much more training now. You can never get too much training, but we learn something new every day.

Mayor Hellyer asked how do you handle violations noted by the Fire Inspector that are not corrected.

Captain Carter stated depending on a category of life-threatening or not is on how many days you give to rectify.

## **8. BUSINESS**

**a. First reading Ordinance 21-0935 TO AMEND CHAPTER 12, SECTION 12-67, OBSTRUCTIONS ON THE BEACH, TO AMEND PARAGRAPH I TO LIMIT THE DIAMETER AND DEPTH OF HOLES ON THE PUBLIC BEACH TO TWO FEET.** Councilmember Keating made a motion that we approve the first reading of Ordinance 21-0935, making certain modifications to Section 12 - 67 of our code of ordinances. Mayor Hellyer seconded.

Chief Hofmann stated a hole no deeper than two feet can cause serious injury if someone accidentally steps in one, and a hole containing water poses a drowning hazard for small children. Sea turtles and other endangered species can get trapped in these holes, often resulting in deaths, especially for the hatchlings. Beach cleaning equipment and patrol vehicles can get bogged down in large holes, which can cause damage. The Ordinance states that holes will be permitted to be dug on the public Beach subject to the following:

1. Holes may be no deeper than two feet.
  2. All holes dug, regardless of diameter or depth, shall be filled in before the individual who created the whole, leaving the Beach.
  3. Recreational digging of holes using metal shovels will be prohibited except as used in metal detecting.
- Any violation of this would fall under the current penalty code as a misdemeanor.

One change that I made to the Ordinance from when it was presented in 2019 was adding the prohibition of using metal shovels on the Beach for digging for recreational digging purposes. My professional opinion is that not having those metal shovels down there will probably cut back on 95% of the holes that are being dug. We certainly don't want to prevent children from coming down and having some fun on the Beach. What we're seeing is that these are adults that are spending their entire day on the Beach, digging giant holes using five-gallon buckets to get all the sand out of the holes. However, I did check with some sources at the city of Myrtle Beach about how their Ordinance is going. They did find that they got a little bit of pushback from some of the folks that are just doing metal detecting on the Beach.

I certainly do not intend to form a hole patrol. I don't think that's a good use of your police resources or your beach services. We have our beach ambassador officers dealing with tents primarily during the summer. They're dealing with alcohol violations, glass bottles, smoking, but they do presently also keep an eye on the holes for you as well. They carry some small camping shovels and try to help when they see some of these holes are pretty big. I don't think that we will have to write tickets for this. In the event someone wanted to dig a large, hole and leave it unattended, we would at least have a strategy to go back if we can track that person down and issue a summons. A citation is the last resort.

Councilmember Keating asked if it is the material or size of the shovel that is the issue.

Chief Hofmann stated I think we need to focus on the shovel's material, and also the size of the shovel that they can bring to the Beach to make their Sandcastles and sculptures.

Councilmember Pellegrino stated, and I disagree with it. I think it's just government overreach; we've had one incident over the last many years. I understand there could be a risk. I don't see the need.

Councilmember Drake stated I think we have too many ordinances, and we are constantly adding to them. If you go onto the Beach at night, carry a flashlight.

Mayor Hellyer stated I am for this. I don't know how you would enforce it, but I think that we need something in place as a policy to let people know what the rules are.

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

**b. SECOND READING ORDINANCE 21-0934 TO AMEND CHAPTER 9 MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC, SECTION 17.** Councilmember Scoles made a motion to accept the second reading of ordinance number 21 -0934. Councilmember Holder second.

Chief Hofmann stated the first reading was approved back on July 13. There have been no modifications to the Ordinance. This section is the penalty section of Chapter nine. We'll be having a workshop on Thursday to discuss the remaining portions of Chapter 9 and putting together the last of the information for you. This will address what we found was a flaw in the penalty section through some prior editing. Until we pass the full version of Chapter nine, this will allow us to get back to proper enforcement of the other things in Chapter 9.

All voted in favor. **Motion carried.**

**c. DECISION PAPER – COOPERATIVE PURCHASING AGREEMENTS** Director Adair stated I wish to get the ratification from the Council on our use of our cooperative purchasing networks that we have used in the past and continue to use. These are equivalent to a State contract. You can participate in any of those contracts, and the benefit is that they do all the advertising, and the procurement is all done for you ahead of time. The cooperative purchasing networks are very similar in that, but they're not run by the state. We'll check some of these cooperative purchasing networks, and sometimes you'll get a better price than a state contract. We have saved thousands of dollars. These networks are a great tool to use to save time and money for the Town.

Councilmember Keating stated, I'm just trying to figure out if we're adding value approaching Council to ratify the list or if that's something maybe we should have addressed when we reviewed the chapter 2.

Director Adair stated you don't want to codify the list of names because it does change.

All voted in favor of ratifying the list of Cooperative Purchasing Agreement networks.

**d. RESOLUTION 21-0138 CHARTER FOR KEEP SURFSIDE BEACH BEAUTIFUL-** Mr. Shanahan stated we briefed you on this at the last Council meeting. Number 1 - to change the name, and Number 2 - to change the mission.

The first thing they wanted to change is the name. The current name is Keeps Surfside Beach Beautiful, Town Beautification Committee. They would like to change it to Keep Surfside Beach Beautiful, Town Beautification and Engagement Committee.

The second thing they wanted to change was the mission. The mission currently is the Keep Surfside Beach Beautiful Committee, Town Beautification is ad hoc. Its purpose is working toward the improvement and the esthetics of the Town. Its overall appearance is cleanliness and preservation and enhancement of public and private property values. They would like to change it to the Keep Surfside Beach Beautiful Committee, Town Beautification and Engagement is ad hoc. It acts as a community engagement organization designed to serve Surfside Beach by promoting and enhancing the beauty and the spirit of the Town by identifying areas of improvement and engaging community partners while educating, encouraging, and motivating our citizens to become better stewards of natural resources.

Mayor Hellyer stated all of the committees that we have are there to make suggestions. Council is the one that makes the decision.

Mr. Shanahan stated everything would be put before Council. I've got to tell you, July 4 would not be what it was without them. With the change in mission, No, there's no extra authority, as they do keep us in the loop of what they're doing and why they do it.

Councilmember Holder made a motion to accept Resolution 21-0138, Charter for Keep Surfside Beach Beautiful. Councilmember Keating second. All voted in favor. **Motion carried.**

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

**a. Tom Dodge**, 8th Avenue, South. I wanted to make you aware of a house on 4<sup>th</sup> Ave N. Debris is piled up on the lawn in front of the house. There are four vehicles parked in front of the house that probably do not work, and by Ordinance, should be covered up by a tarp. There is a travel trailer that needs a tarp and an unmowed lawn. Who knows what else, or what does the backyard look like? This mess has been there, in my opinion, for months. We have a police department patrolling the streets. We have a public works department patrolling the streets. We have a zoning department that should be out there traveling the streets. Apparently, no one connected to town hall saw this filthy mess. This is shameful. It took an 87-year-old codger on the south end of Town to tell you about it 12 days ago; shame on all of you.

**b. Tabitha Mull**, 13th Avenue North, Chairman for Keep Surfside Beach Beautiful. I just really wanted to thank you guys for approving our charter. We've worked so hard on it, and we're so excited about it, so thank you very much. We appreciate all of your support. And then finally I would just like to invite everyone to the Labor Day Weekend Golf Cart Parade, which is the Sunday before Labor Day, at 10:00 am lineups at 9 30 on 16<sup>th</sup> Ave S. Thank you very much.

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

**a. Councilmember Scoles**, I'd like to thank everyone for coming and appreciate all the resident's comments. Most importantly, I want to thank the staff. You're doing a great great job, and it's appreciated, and you need to be recognized for it. I greatly appreciate everything you do for this Town. I hope everyone has a safe trip home, and we will see you in a couple of weeks.

**b. Councilmember Holder**, thank you all for coming out tonight and for listening online. I was at the MASC Convention last week and learned a lot of good things. It was a good learning experience, and I enjoyed the time. There were probably around 600 people there. Surfside was given an award for a project we did. Thank you for all the presentations tonight. I'm amazed at the fire department; I'm sitting here thinking about the hours it takes. Thank you.

**c. Councilmember Keating**. I want to thank everybody for coming out tonight, and if anybody's tuning in on the live stream or the audio. I'm very pleased with how things went tonight. I think we've made some great project progress. I truly appreciate that Keeps Surfside Beach Beautiful has embraced the Town's directive to establish goals and objectives that apply to our departments, our employees and our volunteer committees. We're all here to work toward a better Surfside Beach. I appreciate the work they've put forward. I look forward to what the other committees that we have may put forward. I also want to thank, Keep Surfside Beach Beautiful for working with the Town and establishing our first-ever Labor Day Golf Cart Parade. I look forward to that. I'm also looking forward to the workshops that we have scheduled for Thursday morning to discuss the balance of Chapter 9. One of the things we've all talked about repeatedly, we've heard Chief Hoffman mention it as well, is stepping through our code of ordinances and updating them, cleaning them up. We recently saw the tree ordinance, and I think, in my personal opinion, we missed a significant opportunity to clean that one up. We've got a lot of inconsistencies and conflicting requirements in that Ordinance that doesn't make sense. I think there's a lot of opportunities that we can do better on that one. I've also talked to the Chief, next step is to get through chapter 9. I think chapter 8 is probably next on the docket. That one will probably be just as contentious as a few others. It will be a little more complicated and certainly more labor-intensive for our police force to review and update. Because that is totally within their bailiwick. Chief, I appreciate you being on it. I want to, again, thank everybody for coming out. Thanks for all your support. Thanks for all your questions and constructive comments on Facebook; I appreciate the engagement that I'm seeing in our Town improving over the years. I think we're all headed in the right direction. Thank you very much, travel safe, Have a good night.

**d. Councilmember Pellegrino**, Thanks for coming tonight. I'd also like to thank all of our volunteers on our committees. We have many committees for this Town, and they're volunteering their time, their effort, and you can see the energy they have to make our Town better. I do appreciate all our volunteers on our committees. It's a small town. We had a situation where we had citizens who were concerned about holes on the Beach. We talked about it. We voted on it, and we made a decision. And that's positive. We're slow with a lot of things too. But in a matter of months, you can go from citizens perceiving problems to resolving them. I disagree with the decision, but it is what it is. That's very positive about our Town because we're a small, close-knit town where we can make

things happen. Councilmember Holder mentioned our award from the Municipal Association of South Carolina for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Promande project. I'd be lying if I said I had a lot to do with this project, I voted to do it, so I was involved, but two people made this happen. Its previous Mayor Bob Childs and John Adair. Mayor Bob Childs brought it forward many times, and then John did his thing and got the grant and managed it from that point on, and it did turn out well. It looks a thousand times better than it did before, and it's nice, so we need to thank Bob Childs and John Adair for that. They were the two key players. Thanks, and have a great night.

**e. Councilmember Drake,** I would like to thank everybody for coming out tonight and thank KSBB for all they do, and are cheerleaders for our Town. They go the extra mile, and I never hear them complain. I applaud them. They do the job and see you all next week.

**f. Mayor Hellyer,** It's great to see people coming to the town council meeting again and to have more people here. I will address a couple of things. The first one is Mr. Dodge talking about the 4<sup>th</sup> Ave north. I will let you know that the Town is all over that and that we have spoken to the residents. We've had her son come in and meet with us, and they are handling that. Second, about the MASC Award, when this award was presented and I accepted the award for the Town at the Municipal Association, there was also a video that went with it that was prepared by the Municipal Association with interviews and pictures of Surfside Beach and the Third Street Promenade. We will post that on our webpage. We have a lot of stuff going on right now. As far as the golf cart parade, we're excited about it On Labor Day. We're working aggressively on the building across the street to get our employees moved over there and to get them in a safe place. Thank you for coming, and have a good evening.

- 13. ADJOURNMENT** Councilmember Holder made a motion to adjourn at 7:56 pm. Councilmember Keating second. All voted in favor. **Motion carried.**

**Surfside Beach Town Council**

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Robert Hellyer, Mayor

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David L. Pellegrino, Town Council

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Bruce H. Dietrich, Town Council

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Cindy Keating, Town Council

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Michael Drake, Town Council

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Debbie Scoles, Mayor Pro Tempore

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Paul Holder, Town Council

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Sheri L Medina, Town Clerk

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