



**Town of Hilton Head Island
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, August 20, 2024, 3:00 PM
Minutes**

Call to Order

Mayor Perry called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Council Members present: Alan Perry, Mayor, David Ames, Ward 3, Mayor Pro-Tempore; Alex Brown, Ward 1; Patsy Brison, Ward 2; Tammy Becker, Ward 4; Steve Alfred, Ward 5; Glenn Stanford, Ward 6 (via Microsoft Teams)

Also present: Marc Orlando, Town Manager; Curtis Coltrane, Town Attorney; Kimberly Gammon, Town Clerk

Invocation – Rabbi Brad Bloom, Congregation Beth Yam

Rabbi Bloom delivered the invocation.

Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Alfred moved to approve. Ms. Becker seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Approval of the Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes of June 18, 2024

Regular Meeting Minutes of July 23, 2024

Emergency Meeting Minutes of August 6, 2024

Mr. Ames moved to approve the above referenced minutes. Mr. Alfred seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Report of the Town Manager

Mr. Orlando provided a synopsis and after-action report regarding the recent tropical storm Debby. He extended his appreciation to Town Council, the Community and Town staff for their efforts during the storm.

Mr. Orlando stated that beginning on August 2, staff initiated communication with private communities, golf courses, property management agencies to warn them of the potential risks associated with Debby and urged them to lower water surface elevations and lagoon systems to maximize storm water storage capacity and to clean all drainage system intakes. The Town inspected critical components of the Town's drainage infrastructure, including the four pump stations, major controls structures and primary channels and outfalls. Staff cleared the beach of items that would cause problems and stabilized Town facilities and parks.

Tropical storm Debbie began affecting Hilton Head on the evening of August 4 and the Town was warned that a total of 30 inches of rain was anticipated for our area. While the storm did not bring 30 inches of rain to us, Hilton Head Island received 10 inches of rainfall from Sunday to Wednesday and two feet of storm surge in and around the same time at high tide.

Palmetto Electric reported three outages which resulted in 5700 customers without service. They returned power quickly. Mr. Orlando referenced the mobile application MyHHI that is available to residents for reporting issues during these events. He stated there were close to 30 requests through the MyHHI applications which were addressed before the Emergency Operations Center closed. Through a request by the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhood Development Corporation, as well as Fire Rescue Staff several wellness checks were conducted. Staff responded to several reports of flooding across the Island and staff responded as quickly as possible to verify, assess, document and help with the situation. He referenced two of the areas affected by flooding which were Helmsman Way and Sea Olive Road in Point Comfort. Staff and a team from SCDOT were able to restore flow to the drainage structure on Helmsman Way and the Sea Olive Road blockage was cleared with assistance from the Department of Transportation Beaufort Maintenance Office.

Mr. Orlando reported that the pump stations (Lawton, Jarvis Creek and Wexford) pumped over four hundred and forty-one million gallons of water within 161 hours. He stated there were a total of seven damaged structures (5 residential and 2 commercial), mostly due to flooding issues.

Mr. Orlando stated that there are over 75 after-action items from staff which will be used for future preparation and response to these types of disasters. An example for future preparation is the need for sandbags to be dropped on Hilton Head Island. It was learned that Beaufort County did provide them to Bluffton and the northern part of the County but due to limited staff, they could not include Hilton Head Island. He stated that if we need sandbags in the future, a partnership will need to be formed with the County going forward. Staff coordinated with the County regarding ditch maintenance issues, and they are working on improvements. The Emergency Management Dashboard will be improved for staff, Council, and community access, along with a daily situation report which will be distributed to Council and shared with the community as a whole.

Mr. Orlando stated the need to assess options to position a Jet Vac truck to provide timely responses during future incidents. He expressed appreciation to the SCDOT for having a Jet Vac truck close by and to Beaufort County for mobilizing with the Town.

Mr. Orlando stated that Jarvis Creek, Lawton, Wexford pump stations and the Shipyard booster-pump station are key in the line of defense against flooding. He explained Jarvis Creek pumps water from 1000 acres into Jarvis Creek, Lawton Station protects 2000 acres by pumping to Lawton Creek and Wexford manages water flow into Broad Creek that services a 1500-acre watershed. He noted these pump stations are not just for immediate areas but for significant surrounding areas and are designed to operate during these extreme events demonstrating resilience and preparedness for our community.

Mr. Orlando expressed his appreciation to the leadership and staff for a job well done.

Hilton Head Island Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) Quarterly Report -
Angie Stone, Assistant Town Manager

Ms. Stone addressed Council stating that staff has worked closely with the Designated Marketing Organization (DMO) to ensure alignment of their efforts on the Town's behalf with the destination values Council has articulated. The report not only provides an insight into the activities the DMO is taking on the Town's behalf, but also gives Council an opportunity to ask questions of the DMO Leadership. She introduced Ariana Pernice, Vice President of the Visitors and Convention Bureau.

Ms. Pernice noted the report encompasses April, May and June of 2024. She informed Council that the New York Times highlighted Andrew Carmine's efforts surrounding mariculture and how he brings that forward through his efforts. The article touches on our ecotourism. She emphasized the importance of the article highlighting the destination which is Hilton Head Island. She noted the results of the article with an outreach of 366,783 in print circulation, and 143 million in UVPM/Digital audience.

In terms of paid media partnerships, the DMO is working closely with Kingdom Magazine. There was piece which was a three-page run that was in the magazine from April through July. The distribution was over 205,000 and the readership is over 780,00. More importantly the piece speaks to that high end consumer.

The Smithsonian is another paid media partnership which uncovers the surprising history of Hilton Head Island's 16th Century Capital. The native article drives awareness of Hilton Head Island and highlights partners in the arts, culture and history sectors, combined with a digital campaign. Full performance results will be finalized at the conclusion of the campaign which runs from May through August 2024 and published in the next report. She stated the piece has over one million impressions to date.

Ms. Pernice stated that during Covid and post Covid a focus was on the domestic traveler but since Covid international focus is an important piece to the conversation of travel and tourism. She referenced the international relationships regarding paid media one of which is Wallpaper Magazine – The Travel Issue. Wallpaper is an international publication focused on design and architecture, fashion, travel, art, and lifestyle. She noted a 1.7 million digital audience and over 100 thousand print distribution. Conde' Nast Traveler campaign with dates from October 2023- June 2024. She reviewed results of the media partnership which resulted in 21.5 million impressions, 1.9 million views of the video and 214,000 TikTok views that viewed the video in its entirety.

Ms. Pernice noted the importance of the Hilton Head Island Official Vacation Planner. The Vacation Planner brings our destination into the homes of our visitors, further instilling our core values and key attributes while serving as a planning tool for those looking to travel to Hilton Head Island. The distribution

consists of online requests, phone inquiries, Savannah Airport, Hilton Head Island Airport, South Carolina Welcome Centers, AAA offices nationwide, hotel partners and tradeshow events. There is a total of 85,000 printed with a quarterly distribution of 13,050. She informed Council the Vacation Planner has been recognized for the best in the country which is very exciting.

Destination website and social media resulted in the following: The combination of website analytics and social media insights empowers data-driven decision-making, ensuring adaptability and responsiveness to digital out-marketing efforts. There was a total of 986 thousand visits/sessions, 789,000 users and 400,000 partner referrals. Top pages visited included the Homepage, Things to Do, Dining and Offers. Based on available data women made up the largest percentage of visitation, while users within the 55-64 age range visited the website most frequently.

The DMO has started capturing how many posts are made regarding Wellness, Recreation, Arts & Culture, Ecotourism and History. She reported the top three posts for the fourth quarter were regarding the Sea Turtles.

A review of the data regarding hotels, home and villa rentals the fourth quarter was down 8%, with ADR up 2% and Rev PAR was down 6%. She noted this is being monitored and they are working with hoteliers. They have made adjustments with content and are tracking, articulating and communicating with partners in the community regarding efforts the DMO can do to adjust as well as what they can do to help support the needs in the marketplace.

Members of Council asked questions, made comments and held discussion regarding: appreciation that the DMO is highlighting community values; inquiry as to the efforts regarding shoulder travel versus summer travel; confirmation that the DMO does not focus is on bringing visitors to the Island during the summer time frame but focus is on off-season and early spring time frame to ensure that brand awareness efforts are working; a request to see how the DMO is doing the focus of attracting visitors in those time frames; inquiry as to whether the decline in occupancy is industry wide; confirmation the decline is national; confirmation the statistics being presented are specifically for the 4th quarter report versus the 4th quarter report of the previous year; inquiry regarding pre-Covid comparisons; a request to separate input from residents and visitors; inquiry regarding social media posts regarding the community values; confirmation posts are a combination of both user generated and DMO assets; a suggestion to draw them evenly or focus on the ones that don't have as many posts; the need for itinerary focused suggestions for the five Community Values; the need for a return on investment regarding the Community Values; and an inquiry into the forecasts for future months and the need to have that information going forward on a regular basis.

General Reports from Town Council

Ms. Brison congratulated Fire Chief Joheida Fister for receiving the 2024

Presidential Award from APCO which is a 911 Communications Council.

Mayor Perry noted the following upcoming workshops:

September 16 – Priority Amendments of the LMO

September 24 – District Plans

October 8 – Major Thoroughfares Plan/Adaptive Signals

October 22 – Beach Renourishment Resiliency Update/Stormwater Utility Update

He noted Senator Davis was in attendance at tonight's meeting and thanked him for his presence.

Report of the Lowcountry Area Transportation Study – Glenn Stanford

Mr. Stanford reported that at a recent meeting there was a review of long-term plans. He stated they are seeking input on public transportation issued and encouraged all to go to the website and complete the survey. He stated that there was an emphasis on what is going on with the expansion and widening of I-95. He said there are plans to widen I-95 from the border up to Exit 8 which is the Hilton Head Island exit and it is projected to be completed in six years.

Report of the Lowcountry Council of Governments – Tammy Becker

No report.

Report of the Beaufort County Airports Board – David Ames

No report.

Report of the Southern Lowcountry Regional Board – Glenn Stanford

No report.

Report of the Island Recreation Association Board – Alex Brown

Mr. Brown reported the Board and staff members met for an Annual Planning Session with discussion regarding short- and long-term goals resulting in a change regarding working committees. He stated the Island Recreation Center website is now in English and Spanish.

Report of the Community Services and Public Safety Committee – Tammy Becker

Ms. Becker reported the Committee met on August 19 to discuss a parking fee implementation. After a presentation by Mr. Gruber, the Committee held discussion and heard public comments regarding the item and voted in favor of moving the recommendation forward to Town Council for review and consideration.

Report of the Public Planning Committee – David Ames

Mr. Ames reported the Committee met on July 22 and heard a report from the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority regarding the Palmetto Breeze Annual Service Plan. The report included updates regarding the trolley service, beach shuttle service and the future capital and systems improvements. Following the report the Committee voted to request the Town Manager investigate alternative strategies to address transportation challenges and opportunities for regional and Island services

with the goal of increasing ridership.

Report of the Finance and Administrative Committee – Alex Brown

No report.

Unfinished Business

Consideration of an Ordinance of the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of Easements to the Hilton Head Public Service District Encumbering Real Estate Owned by the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina Under the Authority of S.C. Code Ann. Section 5-7-40 and Section 2- 7-20, Municipal Code of the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, and Providing for Severability and an Effective Date - Second and Final Reading - Josh Gruber, Deputy Town Manager

Mayor Perry noted this item was approved unanimously at the first reading held on July 23rd. He asked if members of Council felt the need for a presentation at this time. All were in agreement there was no need for a presentation.

Mr. Ames moved to approve. Mr. Alfred seconded.

There were no requests for public comment.

Motion carried 7-0.

New Business

Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing the Town Manager to Execute an Intergovernmental Agreement with Beaufort County for the William Hilton Parkway Safety and Pedestrian Improvements from Beach City Road to Dillon Road and along Palmetto Bay Road - Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager

Mr. Colin stated this is an execution step in a project Town Council has supported. He proceeded to conduct a presentation.

In January 2024, Town Staff and Beaufort County began discussions relating to potential funding available for projects on Hilton Head Island. Beaufort County advised that County Impact Fee funding was available for projects that improve safety or improve capacity on William Hilton Parkway and Palmetto Bay Road with the intent that they be completed by October 2024.

The two projects recommended by Staff are projects that meet the criteria and can be accomplished by the October 2024 deadline:

- William Hilton Parkway - Northridge Area Segment 3 Safety Improvements

This project will update crosswalk pavement markings and replace existing pedestrian crossing signs with a push button rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB).

- William Hilton Parkway and Palmetto Bay Road Intersection Safety Improvements, Signage and Pavement Marking

This project will update pavement markings, street signs, and make safety

improvements to intersections. The IGA is in the amount of \$600,000 and was unanimously approved by Beaufort County Council on April 8, 2024.

On July 9, 2024, the Finance & Administrative Committee voted unanimously to recommend this Resolution to Town Council for approval.

Members of Council asked questions, made comments and held discussion regarding: appreciation to staff for moving the item forward; acknowledgment of appreciation to County Council for providing funding for this project; and confirmation that staff is trying to obtain approval for puck lighting in the crosswalks and a reduction in the posted speed limit to 35 mph.

Consideration of a Resolution to Support a Best Buddies Certified Inclusive Playground at Shelter Cove Community Park - Shawn Colin, Assistant Town Manager

In April 2024, the Town was approached by Miracle Recreation and Best Buddies regarding a collaborative partnership to bring inclusive playgrounds to communities across the United States, including Hilton Head Island.

Miracle Recreation, a playground manufacturer for nearly a century, and Best Buddies, a nonprofit dedicated to creating opportunities for friendship, employment, leadership development and inclusive living for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), have announced an ambitious program to develop Best Buddies commercial playgrounds and Buddy Benches. Best Buddies-Miracle Recreation playgrounds will be designed to provide a new standard of best-in-class inclusive and accessible playground equipment for all ages and abilities.

Best Buddies + Miracle Recreation Inclusive Playgrounds are intentionally designed so children of all abilities and their caregivers can play, be challenged and have fun together. Their playgrounds go beyond wheelchair accessibility to include designs and features that support the needs kids with intellectual and developmental disabilities, so everyone has a truly inclusive, inviting and enjoyable playground experience.

Miracle Recreation and Best Buddies expect to have their Buddy Benches and first inclusive playgrounds installed in 2024.

Staff believes the recently approved Shelter Cove Community Park expansion provides the best opportunity to participate in this program. The Shelter Cove Community Park master plan includes a new, larger, inclusive playground in the park programming components. Staff received Parks and Recreation Commission input on the program and their recommendation for approval to Town Council.

Best Buddies is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development and inclusive living for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Founded in 1989 by Anthony K. Shriver, Best Buddies is a vibrant organization that has grown from one original chapter to nearly 3,000 middle school, high school, and college chapters worldwide. Today, Best

Buddies' 11 formal programs - Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges, Citizens, e-Buddies®, Jobs, Ambassadors, Promoters, Transitions and Inclusive Living - engage participants in each of the 50 United States and in 49 countries, positively impacting the lives of nearly one million people with and without disabilities around the world. In many cases, as a result of their involvement with Best Buddies, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities secure rewarding jobs, live on their own, become inspirational leaders, and make lifelong friendships. For more information, please visit www.bestbuddies.org.

In April 2022, Staff and their consultant team developed a project scope for the expansion of Shelter Cove Community Park, which has been open to the public since 2015. The scope of work identified opportunities for enhancements to park amenities including vehicular parking, playground expansion, and views to Broad Creek. The Master Plan for Shelter Cove Community Park includes the following improvements:

- Expansion of the existing park's Promenade,
- Pathway network through an existing forested area,
- Expanded passive open lawn spaces with public art,
- A larger, more inclusive playground, • Additional vehicular parking, and
- Iconic overlook structure with views of Broad Creek.

On April 18, 2023, Town Council voted unanimously to adopt the Master Plan for Shelter Cove Community Park

Town Council recently approved funding in the FY25 Capital Budget for the final design and permitting for the park.

On July 11, 2024, the Parks & Recreation Commission voted unanimously (6-0) to recommend Town Council consider supporting the Best Buddies certified playground.

If this is approved by Town Council, Staff would work with our park design team and the Miracle Recreation representatives to design a playground that is Best Buddies certified and appropriate for Hilton Head Island.

Miracle Recreation equipment can be purchased from a cooperative purchasing program that allows the Town to purchase equipment from existing, competitively solicited contracts. Cooperative purchasing is "Procurement conducted by, or on behalf of, one or more Public Procurement Units" as defined by the American Bar Association Model Procurement Code for State and Local Governments. This form of competitive purchasing meets the Contracting/Procurement requirements established in Title 11 of the Town's Municipal Code.

Sue Churchich provided background regarding Best Buddies stating that Miracle and Best Buddies came together early in the year which resulted in producing a very Best Buddy specific playground. She noted this will create another identity for the Town of Hilton Head Island in attracting visitors to the Island.

Mr. Ames moved to approve. Ms. Brison seconded.

There were no requests for public comment.

Members of Council asked questions, made comments and held discussion regarding: consensus the choice of Shelter Cove Park for the location is a good one; an inquiry to define the partnership; confirmation the Town will fund the entire project; confirmation the Town will coordinate on the design and integration of the program elements within the park playground before executing the project; and confirmation this makes us an inclusive community.

Motion carried 7-0.

Public Comment - Non Agenda Items

Richard Bisi address Council stating he felt Council granting Municipal Consent to a deeply flawed project will go down in history. He expressed his dissatisfaction in Town Council's actions.

Melinda Tunner addressed Council stating granting Municipal Consent is just one step in a very long process and the building of the new bridge and roadways is estimated to be completed by the end of 2030. She encouraged all to focus on things that can be done to control traffic during the meantime.

Executive Session

Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Contractual Arrangements and Discussions for the Proposed Sale or Purchase of Property (Pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act Section 30-4-70 (a)(1)) related to:

1. Pope Avenue Area
2. St. James Baptist Church Relocation
3. Marshland Road Area
4. South Forest Beach Drive Area
5. Easement Requests by the South Island Public Service District
 - a. Pope Avenue
 - b. William Hilton Parkway
 - c. Wexford Drive
6. Mitchelville Road Area
7. Beach City Road Area

Discussion of the Employment, Appointment, Compensation, Promotion, Demotion, Discipline, or Release of a Person Regulated by a Public Body (Pursuant to South Carolina Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 (a)(1)) related to:

8. Discussion of the Annual Performance Review of the Town Attorney and Contractual Matters Related Hereto

At 4:33 p.m. Mr. Ames moved to enter into Executive Session for the purposes

stated by the Town Manager listed above. Mr. Alfred seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

At 6:36 p.m. Mr. Ames moved to end Executive Session and return to the meeting. Ms. Brison seconded. Motion carried 6-0. (Mr. Stanford was not in attendance at this time.)

Action from Executive Session

Mr. Ames moved that the Town Council authorize the Town Manager to execute and deliver a revocable license agreement by and between the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, and the Beach House Owner, LLC, granting the Town and its contractors a right of entry over the property of the Beach House Owner, LLC, for access to the Beaches of the Atlantic Ocean. Ms. Becker seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Ames moved that the Town Council authorize the Mayor and Town Manager to execute and deliver the agreement by and between the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, and 69 Pope LLC, for the purchase and sale of 1.286 acres, more or less, on Pope Avenue, and to take such other and further actions as may be necessary to complete the transaction described in the agreement. Mr. Alfred seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Ames moved to extend the contract with the Town of Hilton Head Island Town Attorney for an additional 12 months, under the same terms and conditions. Ms. Becker seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Adjournment

Mr. Ames moved to adjourn. Ms. Becker seconded. Motion carried 6-0.

Approved: September 17, 2024



Kimberly Gammon, Town Clerk


Alan R. Perry, Mayor

The recording of this Meeting can be found on the Town's website at
www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov