

WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING
Municipal Center Council Chambers
February 6, 2024, 10:00 am

Minutes

- I. Call to Order: *Chairman Heidingsfelder called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.*
- II. Pledge of Allegiance
- III. Roll Call:

Present at Meeting: Michael Heidingsfelder, *Chairman*
John D. Labriola, *Mayor*
Russell Berner, *Committee Member*
Brad Belt, *Committee Member*
Madeleine Kaye, *Committee Member*

Also Present: Stephanie Tillerson, *Town Administrator*
Dorota Szubert, *Finance Director*
Craig Harris, *Public Safety Director*
Michael Sosnowski, *Barrier Island Ocean Rescue*

- IV. **Approval of Minutes:**
 - A. Ways and Means Committee Meeting of January 10, 2024

Committee Member Berner made a motion to approve the minutes of the Ways and Means Committee meeting of November 28, 2023. Committee Member Belt seconded the motion.

Committee Member Berner suggested the addition of “by the sheriff” to the end of the sentence referencing the termination of the CCSO (Charleston County Sheriff’s Office) permanent deputy contract.

Following the discussion, the minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

- V. **Citizens’ Comments (Agenda Items Only):**
None

- VI. **Old Business:**
 - A. Review and Recommendation to Town Council for Approval of the 2024 Off-Duty Deputy Contract with the Charleston County Sheriff’s Office

Mr. Harris stated that presented was the revised off-duty contract with Charleston County Sheriff's Office (CCSO). Changes made include the addition of a first shift and increasing the hourly rate for off-duty deputies from \$40.00 to \$55.00 per hour. He noted that most agencies around the low country have raised the hourly rate for off-duty deputies, so the increase is compatible with other agencies.

Chairman Heidingsfelder asked about the \$82.50 holiday rate. Ms. Tillerson stated that the CCSO sent out a notification to all jurisdictions that off-duty deputies' pay rate increase to \$55.00 effective February 1st. The Town has historically always paid time and a half for a holiday rate to incentivize

deputies to work during the holidays. The \$82.50 rate is the \$55.00 base rate put in place by CCSO, adding time and a half to make the rate competitive.

Committee Members engaged in an in-depth discussion of what other municipalities or vendors use off-duty deputies, the rate paid to those deputies, and whether Kiawah's rate is competitive.

Committee Member Berner expressed his concern that paying a rate of \$55.00, while higher, is the going rate for the county, and the Town will continue to have a challenge attracting deputies to provide adequate coverage. Ms. Tillerson felt that the CCSO had chosen a competitive rate and asked that the proposed new rate structure be given a chance. If, in two months, there continues to be an issue, another rate increase could be considered in the future. She also noted that an additional incentive was that deputies working for the Town are W-2 employees; in addition to the rate paid, the Town pays into their retirement.

Committee Member Belt made a motion to recommend to the Town Council the approval of the 2024 Off-Duty Deputy contract with CCSO. Committee Member Berner seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Chairman Heidingsfelder requested that when this is revisited, Mr. Harris provide data on the number of off-duty deputies along with the days and hours spent on the island compared to the past two years and what other municipalities and private companies in the wider vicinity are paying for off-duty officers.

VII. New Business:

A. Review and Recommendation to Town Council for Approval of the Barrier Island Ocean Rescue Contract Amendment for STR Code Enforcement Services

Mr. Harris stated the contract amendment request was to utilize one of the options to renew for two (2) one-year extensions provided in the approved 2023 contract with BIOR (Barrier Island Ocean Rescue) with no changes to the current contract scope or schedule.

Committee Member Belt made a motion to recommend to the Town Council the approval of the Barrier Island Ocean Rescue contract amendment for STR Code Enforcement Services. Committee Member Berner seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Committee Member Belt expressed his concern with the cost of the contract for staffing that included two code enforcement officers and two vehicles Memorial Day through Labor Day, and the rest of the year, just one code enforcement officer.

During the discussion of the contract amendment, it was noted that when considering the approval of the 2023 contract, the Ways and Means Committee went through all the details, including the labor cost. Mayor Labriola asked if that presentation could be located and presented to the Committee.

Committee Members pointed out that the contract cost of \$399,000.00 for the staffing provided seemed expensive. Mr. Sosnowski stated that there was an intrinsic value that was not written in the scope and schedule of the contract. The Town is not just getting somebody who drives around all night; it is getting somebody who is medically certified, rescue certified, and can do everything a beach patrol officer can and beyond. Beach Patrol received its Advanced Life Support credentials this year so that they can run EMS calls on the island. The numbers have shown the calls are tracking higher for public assistance in medical emergencies because they can act as a quick response

vehicle on the island. Committee Member Belt asked if the Town could hire somebody full-time to do that shift at a substantially lower cost.

Chairman Heidingsfelder asked if last year's presentation could be presented at the Town Council meeting later in the day to have a more fundamental discussion.

Following the discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

VIII. Chairman's Report:

None

IX. Treasurer's Report:

A. Monthly Budget Report

Ms. Szubert presented the town's budget to the actual report for the first seven months, ending 1/31/2024. The Budget to Actual Report is compiled on a modified accrual basis, and all the funds are consolidated. The original budget will be amended on February 6, 2024, through the second reading to adjust the totals to current estimates.

As a reminder, last month, the Town amended its budget to account for those estimates that differed from the original budget, so there were not a lot of discrepancies to report. Whatever was over or under the budget was taken care of through the amendment that could be approved with the second reading at today's Town Council meeting.

Overall, for the first seven months, the Town's consolidated revenues of \$8.2 Million are 20%, or \$1.6 Million, higher when compared to YTD for the last fiscal year, FY2023, and are at 53% of the total amended budgeted revenues for the current year. Overall, the revenues are within the budget, with the Building Permits from Special Projects and Interest Income higher than originally budgeted and amended for the estimated increase. She stated that the budget discussion will begin at next month's Ways and Means Committee meeting, starting with Revenues, and will include taking a deeper look into Building Permits.

With almost 60% of the year lapsed, the expenditures of \$5.9 Million are 4% or 246,000.00 higher than for fiscal year FY2023 and 35% of the current year budget. Most of the expenditures are reasonable and in line with the amended budget, except for the non-budgeted cost for the recent storm cleanup of \$38,000.

Committee Member Berner asked for clarification as to why Professional Services is currently already at 79% of the budget. Ms. Szubert stated that a significant amount of it was for legal fees.

X. Citizens' Comments:

Maura McIlvain – 146 Blue Heron Pond Road

Ms. McIlvain noted that with the pending change of solid waste contractors, the current contractor has been failing in its collection services. She didn't know what recourse the Town had or if the contract could be terminated early for non-performance, but she did want to make the Council aware of the issue.

Ms. McIlvain commented on the information flow.

- concerning the two swatting incidents that had recently occurred on the island. She understood why those could not be published right away, but thought that something could go out after the fact just telling people what had been experienced on the island.
- if the eblast that goes out could also appear on the website
- the recent lawsuits. She understood that the town knew about those a week to 10 days ago, and they were just published today.

Committee Member Belt agreed with Ms. McIlvain's point. He could understand not disclosing exactly what it was or who was involved, but that there should be some communication going out to residents when, in fact, there is a significant police presence on the island.

Mr. Harris stated this was a project he picked up and that he was making a great deal of progress on addressing the issue so that when an incident happens on the island, he could get a notification to send it out. It is a process and protocol of getting on the Charleston County system, not just the Sheriff's Department but Charleston County Consolidated Dispatch. The HIPAA agreement was sent to Charleston County attorney and our attorney, and once approved, he would receive notification of any incidents that happen and be able to get the information out. The next step is getting a more accurate system, along with what the Town already has so that residents will get that notification when an incident occurs.

Committee Members discussed

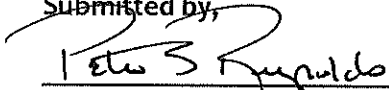
- the need for information to be put out as quickly as possible,
- who sends notifications, and when will they be sent out,
- information put out by the Town has to be credible and accurate as well as timely
- potentially moving to the Everbridge notification system
- reverse 911 notifications
- in the next week, testing the Town's notification system

XI. **Committee Member's Comments:**
None

XII. **Adjournment:**

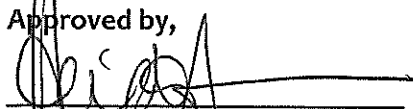
Committee Member Belt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:02 am. Committee Member Berner seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Submitted by,



Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,



Michael Heidingsfelder, Chairman

03/08/2024

Date