

WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING

Municipal Center Council Chambers

October 3, 2023; 10:00 am

Minutes

I. Call to Order: *Chairman Moffitt called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.*

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call:

Present at Meeting: John Moffitt, *Chairman*
John D. Labriola, *Mayor*
Brad Belt, *Committee Member*
Russell Berner, *Committee Member*

Present Via Zoom: Michael Heidingsfelder, *Committee Member*

Also Present: Stephanie Tillerson, *Town Administrator*
Dorota Szubert, *Finance Director*
Jim Jordan, *Town Biologist*
Erin Pomrenke, *Communications Manager*

IV. Approval of Minutes:

A. Ways and Means Committee Meeting of August 28, 2023.

Committee Member Berner motioned to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2023, Ways and Means Committee meeting. Committee Member Belt seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

V. Citizens' Comments (Agenda Items Only):

Brad McIlvain – 146 Blue Heron Pond Road

Mr. McIlvain stated that “New Business” items include the review and recommendation of the amendments of the town attorney contract and the employment agreement for Ms. Tillerson, and neither of them was attached to the materials. He could see no reason for them to be withheld since neither was confidential.

VI. Old Business:

None

VII. New Business:

A. Review and Recommendation to Town Council for Approval of the Creation of a Wildlife Technician Position within the Wildlife and Environmental Department

Mr. Jordan stated that this topic was discussed at the Fall Council Retreat and was now providing a job description. The position would be responsible for performing a variety of duties to mitigate human-wildlife conflict in a developed community, advocate for awareness and appreciation of native wildlife species and habitats via outreach and education, and assist with all Town wildlife research projects and wildlife population surveys.

Mr. Jordan stated that the Town has had an Environmental Wildlife Department for 23 years, and he is proud of what has been accomplished. Throughout those years, a second biologist position was added in 2008, filled by Mr. Given, and after 15 years, he was again asking the Council for additional help. The Wildlife Department continues working on all its ongoing research projects, including the new ones that have been added; however, it has become increasingly difficult to continue doing what has always been done and doing the new tasks being asked of the department with a staff of two.

Mr. Jordan stated that in the last few years, his role had become more administrative, which limited the amount of time spent out in the field. This has created a need for help to continue the work and improve the quality of service offered to the community, especially as it relates to responding to Wildlife calls in a timely manner and dealing with nuisance and problem wildlife and alligators. He noted that Mr. Given will probably work 100 out of 105 days during the fall over the next couple of months.

Committee Members engaged in an in-depth discussion of whether compensating time off is given to make up for working 30 to 40 days straight, whether there are any additional infrastructure costs that we will incur as a result of having an additional person, if the salary is already budgeted, if incremental to the budget why it was not included in the budget that was recently approved and if it was more appropriate to consider the position at the midyear budget review.

Committee Member Berner motioned to recommend to the Town Council the approval of the Creation of a Wildlife Technician Position within the Wildlife and Environmental Department. Mayor Pro Tem Moffitt seconded the motion.

Committee Member Belt agreed with Committee Member Heidingsfelder. While not opposed to the position or the need for the position, the question was whether this would have been more appropriately presented in conjunction with the recently considered budget and whether it might be more appropriate to bring this up when doing the midyear review.

Committee Member Heidingsfelder asked how long it would take to find a person, how much of the estimated mid-range salary would impact the FY 23-24 Budget, and when.

Following the discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Labriola suggested looking into temporary help in the demanding months. Mr. Jordan explained the challenge of getting someone temporarily and training them to do some of the tasks that need to be done.

B. Review and Recommendation to the Town Council for the Purchase of Recycling and Solid Waste Educational Cart Stickers

Ms. Pomrenke stated that the Kiawah Goes Green Workgroup has convened since March 2023 to focus on ten areas related to environmental stewardship, sustainability, and the advancement of eco-friendly public and private practices across the island.

As a part of the Kiawah Goes Green initiative, one of the objectives focuses on better educating the community to separate household, recycling, and hazardous waste properly. Cross-contamination is a concern, not only in our state but also on the island. Previously, there has not been a coordinated cross-contamination educational effort for Kiawah Island. This allows a valuable opportunity to educate further and inspire property owners, short-term renters, and visitors to recycle and dispose of solid waste correctly and consistently.

Ms. Pomrenke reviewed some of the items that were incorrectly placed into the recycling containers, which include plastic bags, food left on recyclables, aluminum fold, and plastic wrap. Some common items that are incorrectly placed into garbage containers include batteries, compact fluorescent light bulbs, and house household cleaners that should go into household hazardous waste.

One of the ways that the workgroup recommended assisting in the effort to prevent cross-contamination is by placing recycling stickers on all recycling containers owned by the Town and signage in the recycling center at Kestral Court. Also recommended is placing stickers on all trash containers owned by the Town, which focuses on what items to avoid placing in the trash and how to participate in household hazardous waste collection.

Ms. Pomrenke provided a rendering of the recycling stickers, which includes visuals of the top recyclable items and some items that tend to be incorrectly recycled through the program, the Town ordinance, and a QR code that goes to the Town website's recycling page that has a waste wizard tool where residents can type in an item. It will tell them how or where they can dispose of it. The garbage stickers focus on household hazardous waste and list the most common items placed in the garbage that may be harmful to the environment. They also have a QR code to the Town's website, which tells them where the item can be disposed of.

These stickers provide a valuable way to encourage and educate individuals on how to dispose of these items correctly and prevent the harmful impacts of cross-contamination. The request is to fund 8,000 stickers to be placed on the Town's recycling and garbage carts at a total cost of \$21,607.60.

Committee Members discussed who would be installing the stickers on the containers; that most homes require that the containers be shielded from view; therefore, the stickers may never be seen; the Town having the responsibility to educate, and concerns about hazardous waste making it to the landfill or recycling center harming the equipment and the workers in in those facilities.

Committee Member Berner motioned to recommend to the Town Council the approval of the Purchase of Recycling and Solid Waste Educational Cart Stickers. Mayor Labriola seconded the motion.

Committee Member Berner shared the concerns expressed by the Committee Members and was shocked by how people are not aware or concerned about the environment. He shared his experiences with compliance in the previous he lived in.

Committee Member Belt felt he could not support the concept of placing stickers on all trash cans and expressed concern that having individuals wandering around properties to find out where the trash is located and then placing stickers on them may be problematic. Committee Member Heidingsfelder clarified that a sticker would be placed on the container while at the curb. Committee Member Belt felt more comfortable with a voluntary approach of making the stickers available to homeowners to place on the containers.

Following the discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

VIII. Executive Session:

- A. Executive Session Pursuant to Section 30-4-70 (a)(1) and (2) of the South Carolina Code to Discuss the Status of Negotiations Related to the Proposed Amended Contract and Compensation for the Town Attorney and Town Administrator**

Committee Member Berner motioned to go into Executive Session Pursuant to Section 30-4-70 (a)(1) and (2) of the South Carolina Code to Discuss the Status of Negotiations Related to the Proposed Amended Contract and Compensation for the Town Attorney and Town Administrator. Mayor Labriola seconded the motion, and it was unanimously passed.

Committee Member Belt motioned to leave the Executive Session. Committee Member Berner seconded the motion, and it was unanimously passed.

Chairman Moffitt stated that no decisions were made, and no votes were taken during the Executive Session.

IX. New Business:

A. Review and Recommendation to the Town Council for Approval of the Amendment to the Town Attorney Contract Services Agreement with Joseph Wilson

Chairman Moffitt stated that in the discussion of the amendment to Mr. Wilson's contract, there are several items in the version of the contract that, because of the way it is worded, were somewhat in conflict with what the ordinance says, having to do with to whom the town attorney reports, who assigns his tasks, who approves those tasks and so forth. The Committee Members agreed that those issues, some less substantial than others, would be addressed, and then schedule a special call meeting in a week to look at the revisions associated with those items and then move forward.

Committee Member Belt made a motion to table the Recommendation to the Town Council for Approval of the Amendment to the Town Attorney Contract Services Agreement with Joseph Wilson pending the review and subsequent meeting. Committee Member Berner seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

B. Review and Recommendation to the Town Council for Approval of the Amendment to the Employment Agreement with Stephanie Tillerson

Chairman Moffitt stated Committee Members agreed to make changes to the existing contract, including car allowance, severance period, and salary.

Mayor Labriola corrected Chairman Moffitt's statement by stating that the agreement was to approve the contract with the change in salary. Still, the contract was new from October 3, 2023, through October 31, 2025, so it is negotiating a new contract, not changes to the existing contract.

Chairman Moffitt added that embedded in the new contract is also a change to the car allowance from the existing contract and a change in the severance period.

Committee Member Berner motioned to recommend to the Town Council the approval of the three amendments to the Employment Agreement with Stephanie Tillerson. Mayor Labriola seconded the motion.

Committee Member Belt indicated that he would be voting "No" on the motion but would provide his rationale in more detail at the Town Council meeting. He noted that of the 80 municipalities that provided data to the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC), the compensation that is being proposed would exceed every one of those municipalities and that it would be appropriate to consider any compensation changes warranted at the end of the term of the contract not midterm. He also disagreed that consideration should be given to what is paid by a private sector entity.

Following the discussion, the motion was approved by a 4 to 1 vote, with Committee Member Belt voting “No.”

X. Chairman’s Report:

Chairman Moffitt deferred his report.

XI. Treasurer’s Report:

A. Monthly Budget Report

Ms. Szubert stated that overall, for the first two months, the Town’s consolidated revenues of \$1.3 million are 4%, or \$46,000 higher, compared to YTD for the last fiscal year and 9% of the total budgeted revenues for the current year.

All the revenues are as expected at the beginning of the fiscal year, and as this report is prepared on a cash basis, the majority of the revenues reflect only one month of revenue collection. Compared to last year, the Interest Income shows a significant positive variance of \$227,000 related to higher amounts invested and the higher yield offered by SC LGIP in the current year. This variance is offset by a \$221,000 decrease in the Building Permits Revenue, with 82 more permits issued last fiscal year through the end of August.

At the end of August 2023, the expenditures of \$1.6 million are 20% or 258,000 higher than for fiscal year FY2022 and 9% of the current year budget. They are in line with the budget, and the majority of the operating expenses are comparable to last year’s totals, with the exception of the following:

1. Personnel cost - the higher cost in the current year is mostly related to salary adjustments and bonuses paid in July 2023. Respectively, the benefits and payroll taxes are higher in the fiscal year FY2023.
2. STR Code Enforcement cost is higher in the current year as the new contract approved by the Town Council in February 2022 increased by \$100,000 annually.
3. Tourism and Recreation costs are higher in the current year due to fully funding one of the SATAX recipients at the beginning of the year.

XII. Citizens’ Comments:

Maura McIlvain – 146 Blue Heron Pond Road

Ms. McIlvain commented on the proposal for the Town Administrator, stating that she did not understand why it was not released until this point. She also indicated that the committee came out of the executive session stating that no votes were taken and no decisions were made. She then says that the Members agreed to make changes, so decisions were indeed made.

Ms. McIlvain compared the change in the salary, plus the car allowance and severance, to the salaries of the Mayor of Charleson and the Mayor of New York City, noting that she did not know where the number came from or related to. She also questioned why the Town Administrators salary is being adjusted mid-term, that the salary seemed way out of line, and also commented on the two discussions that questioned how much those items would impact the newly approved budget and waiting until the midyear review of the budget to add those costs; and why the same was not done with respect to the contract changes.

Brad McIlvain – 146 Blue Heron Pond Road

Mr. McIlvain stated in his earlier comment that contracts or draft contracts were not included with the materials. He indicated that the Town Administrator's salary would be raised to a certain amount but did not know what she was currently being paid. He questioned why the current contracts could not be viewed since they are public documents. He noted that salaries are reported by most municipalities and questioned why drafts of these documents were not being released so that the public could actually see what is being discussed, what provisions are in the contract, and what provisions are being changed. He also found it troubling that it was found that the Town Attorney's contract has provisions that violate state law and questioned why it was made to look like something was being done in secret or behind the scenes.

Committee Member Belt indicated that Mr. McIlvain stated that most municipalities provide data into MASC; he clarified that about a third actually provide data.

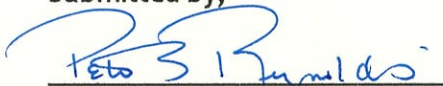
XIII. Committee Member's Comments:

Committee Member Heidingsfelder stated that at the August 28th meeting, it was discussed that Mr. Taylor would provide a proposal to increase the fees more substantially for the planning department when it comes to the developers and was wondering when it would be presented for discussion.

XIV. Adjournment:

Mayor Labriola motioned to adjourn the meeting at 12:08 pm. Committee Member Berner seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Submitted by,


Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

10.25.2023
Date