

The Town of James Island held its regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 1238-B Camp Road, James Island, SC on Thursday, October 16, 2014. The following members of Council were present: Mayor Pro-Tem, Leonard Blank, Garrett Milliken, Darren “Troy” Mullinax, and Mayor Bill Woolsey, who presided. Absent: Joshua P. Stokes (gave notice). A quorum was present to conduct business.

Also present: Ashley Kellahan, Town Administrator, Jane Hale, Senior Finance Clerk, Kristen Crane, Senior Town Planner, Mark Johnson, Public Works Coordinator, Bo Wilson, Town Attorney, and Frances Simmons, Town Clerk.

Opening Exercises: Mayor Woolsey called the meeting to order. He opened in prayer and followed with the Pledge to the Flag. FOIA: This meeting was published and posted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of James Island.

Public Hearing: Mayor Woolsey opened the Public Hearing at 7:02 p.m. to receive comments on an Amendment to the Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance §9.4.1B.2, under Tree Preservation Exemption, to add “g” that: all invasive tree species as referred by Clemson Extension and the SC Exotic Pest Plant Council shall be exempt from all provisions of this article”.

Senior Town Planner, Kristen Crane, gave an overview that the amendment would deem 13 trees listed on the Clemson Extension and the SC Exotic Pest Plant Council exempt from protection in the Town’s Ordinance and its Tree Protection Plan. This does not mean that people cannot plant these trees; it means they will no longer need permission to take them down. We would discourage planting these types of trees on commercial sites; however, a permit will no longer be required for taking these trees down.

Comments on the Public Hearing: No one spoke. Mayor Woolsey closed the Public Hearing at 7:04 p.m.

Presentation: Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce: Patrick Bryant presented the Charleston County School District’s Capital Improvement Referendum-Yes4Schools initiative. He explained why the Chamber supports the referendum by use of a Power Point Presentation. Mr. Bryant encouraged everyone to vote yes for the referendum at the November 4th Election.

Presentation: Town of James Island Greenbelt Application: Town Administrator, Ashley Kellahan, presented the 2014 Greenbelt Presentation. The presentation highlighted the Town’s intent to purchase land for a passive park at 461 Fort Johnson Road with its Greenbelt Funds. The cost of the land was appraised at \$890,000 and is being sold at that price. Mrs. Kellahan noted that a previous offer to purchase the property was unsuccessful, but now the Town has the opportunity to purchase the land for a park. Councilman Blank asked if the dilapidated house was a part of the purchase, to which Mrs. Kellahan answered that Council will be purchasing the entire property including the structures.

Public Comments on Other Matters: The following persons addressed Council:

Lisa Savage, 413 Fort Johnson Road: lives next to the DNR that abuts the 416 Fort Johnson Road property. She asked how the property will be used after it becomes a park. She mentioned having friends that live across from Sunrise Park having issues with under-age drinking. She commented that living at the end of Fort Johnson Road is somewhat isolated and the neighborhood has had problems with mailbox bashings, teenage drinking, and speeding on Fort Johnson Road. She asked if a plan for security at the park is in place, or will it be gated off in the evenings. She knows from the current owners that a graveyard was there for the relatives. She asked if this had been addressed; and, is there a plan to make sure the graves are kept in a good way for the relatives.

Jody and Jeff Wager, 711 Willowlake Road: Thanked Council for the data it compiled to consider placing speed humps on Willowlake Road. She spoke in favor of having them because there is a lot of speeding; and whether or not people live in the neighborhood, the end result is the same if a child is hit.

Chris Hatzis, 733 Willowlake Road: spoke in favor of speed humps on Willowlake Road. He thanked Mrs. Kellahan and Mr. Johnson for the information they shared from the SCDOT; and the cost of a speed hump vs. watching people drive 40-50 mph and killing a child.

Mr. Hatzis commented on the Town's interest in purchasing the Fort Johnson property for a park. He asked if there was no other place where a Town park could be. The City Park is one mile away, and even though it is in the City, it is used by everyone. He does not understand why there needs to be two parks so close together. He said a park will bring additional traffic. He questioned security at the park.

Donald Kilpatrick, 542 Wampler Drive: Mr. Kilpatrick said he has lived on James Island since many of the roads were dirt; and he has not encountered any piece of development that has negatively changed the character of his neighborhood as the park in Eastwood - crime has skyrocketed in his neighborhood over the last few years. He is disappointed that the picture in the slide presentation did not show the real traffic conditions on Fort Johnson Road which is congested Monday through Friday. He is afraid that the park will not bring the additional quality of life; it will hurt our neighborhood.

Mark Testiner, 465 Fort Johnson Road: at first he was excited about the Town purchasing the property for the preservation of the wildlife rather than having development there. Now he is looking at the park with a little trepidation; he believes a park is the best way to preserve the land, but appropriate measures need to be in place to assure that the standard of living will not diminish due to the crowds.

Richard Cisco, Wampler Drive: lived on Wampler for 12 years and has seen the character of the neighborhood change; crime has tripled. He commented about the wildlife and that the people living within three miles of the park will have more crime. He wants Council to remember that if they go ahead with the park, they will reap what they sow.

David Savage: had a question about a lot that appeared to be carved out (on slide presentation); and asked if that lot is a part of the property the Town will purchase. Mrs. Kellahan replied, yes, that the owner is selling the entire property to the Town.

Consent Agenda:

- a. Minutes of September 18, 2014 Regular Town Council Meeting passed.

Information Reports:

- a. Finance Report: Finance Clerk, Jane Hale, presented the September Budget Report. Revenues are 17% of the budget; Expenditures at 9%, and the percent of the fiscal year completed is 25%.
- b. Town Administrator's Report: Town Administrator, Ashley Kellahan shared highlights from her report: IT Services with VC3 is up and running. We hope to begin the testing phase in December and go live in January. Mrs. Kellahan and Councilman Stokes attended the Regional Advocacy meeting sponsored by the Municipal Association of SC. They met with local legislators to hear about issues they will address during the 2015 legislative session. Mrs. Kellahan gave the departmental reports for Codes and Safety, Planning and Zoning and Public Works. The Foxcroft side walk project was completed on time and within the budget. A sidewalk dedication was held with Council and staff. The preliminary plans for the Camp Road sidewalk has been received and approved by our engineers. Since some of the parcels are located in the City of Charleston's jurisdiction, the plans will be reviewed with their staff before submitting to the SC Department of Transportation (DOT) for permitting.

- c. Island Sheriffs' Patrol Report: Sergeant Shawn James gave the crime report statistics for the month of September. The Island Sheriffs' Patrol worked a total of 393 hours and made 393 stops. Sergeant James gave a brief update on the shooting that occurred on Fort Johnson Road. Mayor Woolsey and Sergeant James presented Resolution #2014-29 to recognize Master Deputy, Dennis Carter, as the Island Sheriffs' Patrol Officer of the Third Quarter for July September, 2014.

Requests for Approval:

Award of Contract for Sweetgrass Creek Road Erosion Control: Mrs. Kellahan reported that a bid opening was held last month and three bids were received. Blutide Marine Construction submitted the low bid at \$47,555 and has submitted the documents required to perform the work. The Town's Engineers, E.M. Seabrook, has reviewed their documents and recommends accepting the bid. Councilman Blank moved to approve, seconded by Councilman Milliken. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Landscaping of Camp and Dills Bluff Intersection: Mrs. Kellahan reported that she met with Leadenwah Landscapes and has received input from Kathy Woolsey on the types of plants that will grow well at this intersection. An encroachment permit will be required, however the landscaper knows the types of plants the SCDOT will approve based on the plants' height and its drought tolerance. Councilman Milliken moved to approve, seconded by Councilman Mullinax. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Request to SC Department of Transportation for Speed Humps along Willowlake Road: Mrs. Kellahan reported that the residents of Willowlake Road have requested that the Town install speed humps along Willowlake Road. A petition was provided in Council's packet. Mrs. Kellahan reported that there are approximately 25 residents on Willowlake Road and 20 signatures were approved (80%). Public Works Coordinator, Mark Johnson, has gathered data by use of the traffic counter. This data was also shared with the Eastwood Neighborhood Association who gave their input. 121 responses were received out of 200. 21 people were opposed; and 79 people were not. Mrs. Kellahan said if the request is approved by Town Council that does not mean the Town can proceed because Willowlake is a state maintained road and the SCDOT has to approve it. Mayor Woolsey asked for a motion in favor. Councilman Blank motioned for discussion, Councilman Milliken seconded. Councilman Blank asked what type of speed hump it will be; Mrs. Kellahan replied that the type had not been determined because approval is needed from the SCDOT first. She noted that it may be some type of removable or portable speed hump. Councilman Blank said he want to make sure that everyone understands that speed humps impedes first responders. Mayor Woolsey said the speed humps that we are looking at will not impede first responders. Councilman Blank shared an experience he had with driving across a speed hump on Woodland Shores Road; he cautioned others to drive at the speed limit posted for speed humps because it can cause problems to a car's anti-lock brakes. Councilman Milliken asked which Traffic Calming policy was used; the 2013 or the 2014 version that recently passed. He said that he was curious how the new plan might affect subsequent installations in the future. Mrs. Kellahan pointed out that the 20 mph speed limit in the petition is not in the Town or the SCDOT's requirements; that the request was petition-driven by the property owners. Mayor Woolsey explained that the Town's policy allows speed humps if the average speed is over the speed limit or the 15th percentile is 5 mph over the speed limit. SCDOT is more restrictive, requiring that the 15th percentile speed be 7 mph over the limit, which would be 32 mph. If the SCDOT approves the request, the Town would pay to install the speed humps, which is approximately \$4,500.

Councilman Milliken thought it was a good idea to have the removable or portable speed humps. He said this may remedy residents' problems in the short-term and get people accustomed to driving slower. He suggested including this as a revision to the Traffic Calming policy.

Councilman Blank suggested that if we install speed humps anywhere that we post where the speed humps are - signs need to be posted away from the speed hump, not right at it. The motion passed 3-1; Mayor Woolsey cast the dissenting vote.

Request to Fund Match for Light at Grimball and Folly Roads: Mrs. Kellahan announced that Representative Stavrinakis was informed by the SCDOT that they will install a traffic light at the intersection of Grimball and Folly Roads. The SCDOT needs an additional \$19,000 to fund the light. The Town would like to provide a third of the cost at \$6,500 and the City of Charleston and Charleston County would provide the remainder. Councilman Blank moved to approve, Councilman Milliken seconded. Councilman Milliken asked what the Town will receive for the money it is giving; will there be a pedestrian controlled cross-walk signal. Councilman Milliken said he think that is essential because of children crossing Folly Road to get to the elementary school. Mayor Woolsey said the Town will be getting some right-of-way. Mayor Woolsey noted that the cost of the light is well over \$19,000, and he understands that there will be a cross-walk. Councilman Milliken asked to add a recommendation to the motion to include a pedestrian controlled cross-walk signal. Councilman Blank said the traffic light was approved through the State legislature and they did a lot to get the SCDOT to agree to it. He thinks after the light is installed, we could request a cross-walk. Mayor Woolsey said he will write a letter to the SCDOT regarding the cross-walk. Motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Land Use Committee: No report

Environment and Beautification Committee: Councilman Milliken reported that James Island Pride participated in the Carolina Green Fair on September 21 and thanked everyone that participated. Max Milliken was instrumental in coordinating the Blood Drive that was held today; over 23 pints of blood was collected. Boy Scout Troop #44 was also thanked for their participation. He and Senior Town Planner, Kristen Crane will attend the SC Trees Conference on Folly Beach, October 23 and 24. James Island Pride Adopt-a-Highway litter pick-up will be held on November 1st. Plans are underway for an Arbor Day event in December at Fort Johnson Middle School (Principal David Parlor). Randy Howie (Hyams) has agreed to sell five trees (Live Oaks and Burgundy Leaf Redbuds) to the Committee for \$475.00 to plant the trees for the Arbor Day event. Councilman Milliken motioned that the Town release funds from the Tree Mitigation account of \$500.00 to cover the costs of the trees for the Arbor Day event at Fort Johnson Middle School; Councilman Blank seconded. There was no discussion; the motion passed unanimously. Arts on the Island met on Monday to plan their next event; tentatively scheduled for February 28. Arts on the Island has been renamed James Island Arts. Councilman Milliken thanked everyone on the committee for the work that they do.

Councilman Milliken read a Proclamation in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Copy attached to minutes.

Public Safety Committee: Councilman Mullinax announced that the James Island Neighborhood Council will meet on Thursday, October 23rd at 7:00 p.m. One item of discussion will be Halloween Safety. Councilman Mullinax moved to appoint Richard Schramm (Farmington neighborhood) to the James Island Neighborhood Council; Councilman Blank seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolutions:

Resolution #2014-25: Amendment of Resolution #2012-05: Policies Regarding Citizens Committees, Procedure Regarding Members: Children's Commission and Business Development Council: Mrs. Kellahan reported on the amendments proposed by Councilman Stokes. Children Commission: membership expanded to include interested persons in the community; and the five (5) members on the Business Development Council will be appointed by the Mayor and Town Council. Councilman Blank moved for approval, seconded by Councilman Mullinax. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution #2014-26: Support of Application to Charleston County Greenbelt Urban Grants Program: Councilman Blank moved for approval, seconded by Councilman Mullinax. Councilman Blank asked if Council will be apprised of how the lot is cleared. Mayor Woolsey said when we get to the stage where monies have to be spent the request will come to Council for approval. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution #2014-27: Adoption of Charleston Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan: Mrs. Kellahan reported that the Hazard Mitigation Plan administered by Charleston County is updated every five (5) years. Since the Town participates in the County's Community Rating System (CRS), we must adopt the Plan. Councilman Milliken moved for approval, seconded by Councilman Mullinax. Mayor Woolsey asked and was informed that Building Inspector, Berry Rudisill, was involved in this process. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution #2014-28: Resolution to SC Department of Transportation in Support of Intersection Improvements at Fort Johnson & Secessionville Roads: Mrs. Kellahan reported that City Councilwoman Kathleen Wilson has been pushing for intersection improvements at Fort Johnson and Secessionville Roads. Charleston City Council has sent a resolution to the SCDOT to request that they conduct a new traffic study. There is a flashing light at the intersection now, but the area needs to be surveyed again to determine if there is a need for a traffic light. Councilwoman Wilson mentioned this at the recent James Island Intergovernmental meeting and the Town wants to support this effort. Councilman Blank moved for approval, seconded by Councilman Mullinax. Councilman Blank commented that the intersection is dangerous and he noted several accidents there. Motion passed unanimously.

Ordinances up for Second Reading:

- a. Ordinance #2014-11: An Ordinance Amending the Town of James Island's Budget for FY 2014-2015: Councilman Milliken moved for approval, seconded by Councilman Mullinax. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Ordinances up for First Reading:

- a. Ordinance #2014-12: An Ordinance to Amend Zoning and Land Development Regulations, §9.4.1.B.2, Tree Protection and Preservation, Exemptions, "g" invasive tree species: Councilman Milliken moved for approval, seconded by Mayor Woolsey. Councilman Milliken commented that controlling invasive species is essential. He said if Council is going to adopt this, there needs to be an explicit link on the website where people can identify the features of these invasive species and make positive identification of the trees before they are taken down. We need to facilitate that by providing good visuals; perhaps better than the ones in the Clemson Extension pamphlet and post it on the website. There also needs to be a pamphlet available to our citizens at Town Hall for those people who not have access to computers. Councilman Blank agreed. Motion passed.

New Business: No new business

Executive Session: Not Needed

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the body, the meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Frances Simmons
Town Clerk