

Town of James Island

Annual Report

2013 / 2014

Town of James Island

Bill Woolsey
Mayor



Council Members
Leonard Blank
Garrett Milliken
Darren Troy Mullinax
Joshua Stokes

September 17, 2014

It's been almost two years since the Town's fourth and final incorporation. The 2013 / 2014 year for the Town of James Island was one of growing, adapting, and finding our place in the Lowcountry. We have made great progress, but there is still much to do.

One major priority is to reunite our Town. We made a first step with our annexation election in February of 2014 in which 217 more residents joined the Town of James Island. An overwhelming majority of voters voted yes. We continue to work with Representative McCoy, Senator Thurmond, and Senator Campsen on our annexation bill in Columbia. My goal is to reunite the rest of the unincorporated Charleston County on James Island back into the Town. From knocking door to door and speaking to constituents, it is clear that is what the people want. Now, we must find a way to accomplish this task. The current annexation bill proposes doing so by having the James Island Public Service District request an annexation election. All of those who were left out of the incorporation election in 2012 would have a chance to vote. If the majority voted in favor, the Town would be reunited. Our bill made great strides in the 2014 legislative year, and is well positioned for the 2015 legislative year.

The Town is also working diligently to provide a property tax credit. We have had many conversations this year with the James Island Public Service District, Charleston County, the County Auditor and Treasurer, and the SC Attorney General, on how to best go about placing a Town of James Island tax credit on the tax bill. I am committed to tax relief for James Islanders, and I'm hopeful that ongoing discussions with these entities will result in lower property taxes.

Another Town priority is to complete sidewalks along our secondary roads. We are also working to pave earthen roads where requested by residents. Improving our infrastructure is important, and I will continue to work with Council in committing funds to complete these projects. The Town has seen its active citizen's groups take off this year —the Neighborhood Council, James Island Pride, and the Children's Commission all make an impact here on James Island.

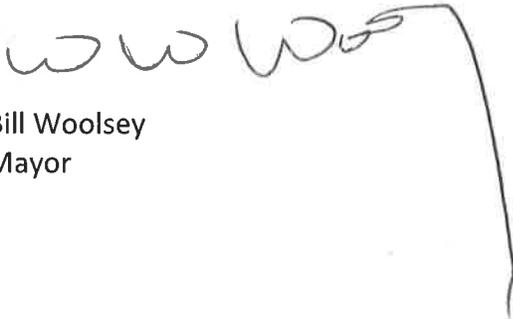
The Island Sheriff's Patrol was expanded in 2013, providing additional law enforcement for the residents of James Island. My goal is to continue expanding this necessary program as funds are available and the need grows. A strong law enforcement presence on James Island is important to me and our residents.

www.JamesIslandSC.us

Lastly, The Town is actively seeking land for a new Town park. In 2014, the Town was successful in committing \$200,000 of its Greenbelt funds to the St. James Foundation to build a Gullah Cultural Center. We are proud to be a part of this project, as it will surely benefit generations to come and something all Island residents can enjoy and experience.

I am honored to serve as your Mayor and greatly appreciate the opportunity to continue another term. As I mentioned, there is still much to do and I will work to achieve all the Town's goals and initiatives. I hope you enjoy this 1st Edition of the Town's Annual Report and I look forward to bringing you more good news in the coming years.

Sincerely,

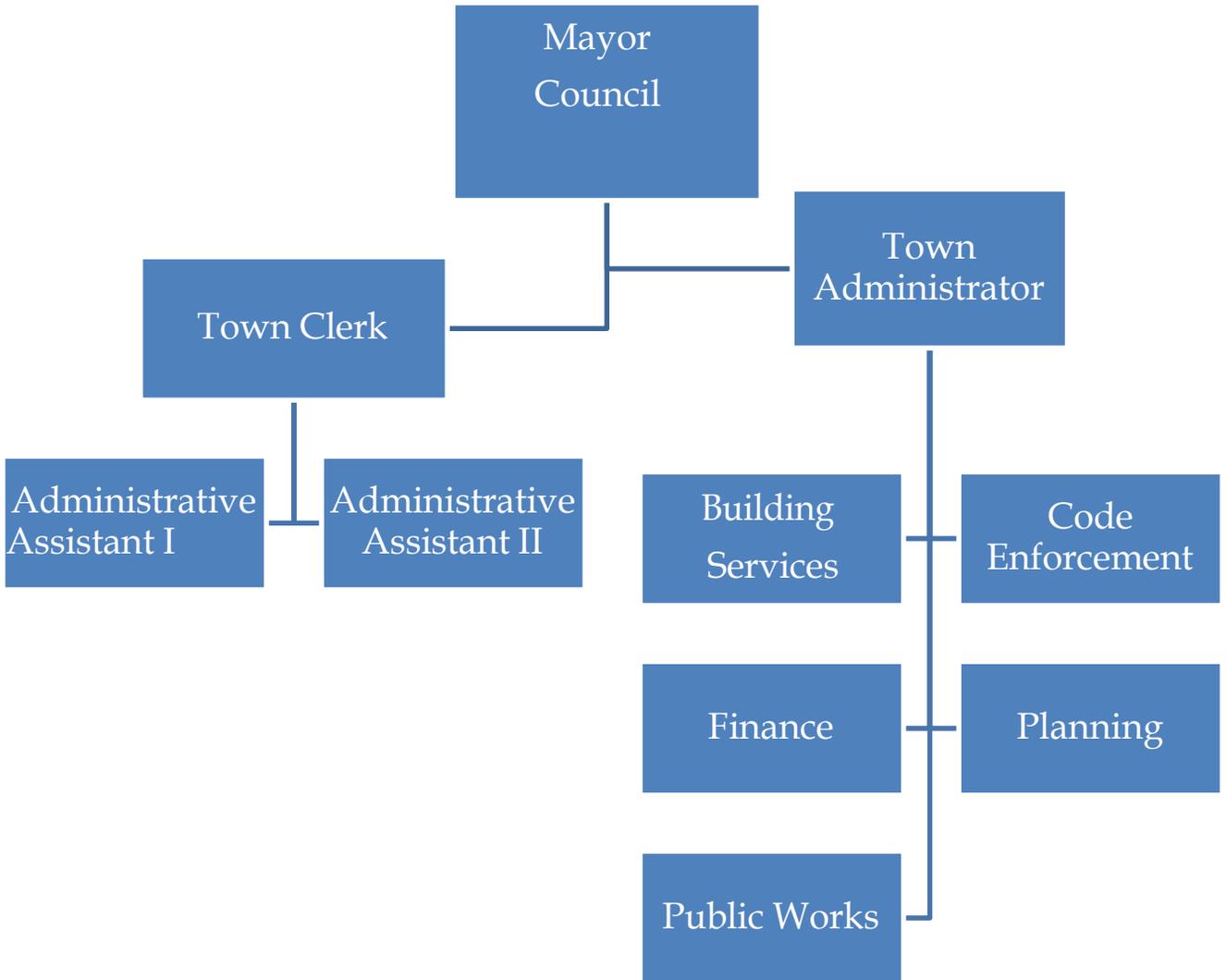
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Woolsey', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right and then curves downwards.

Bill Woolsey
Mayor

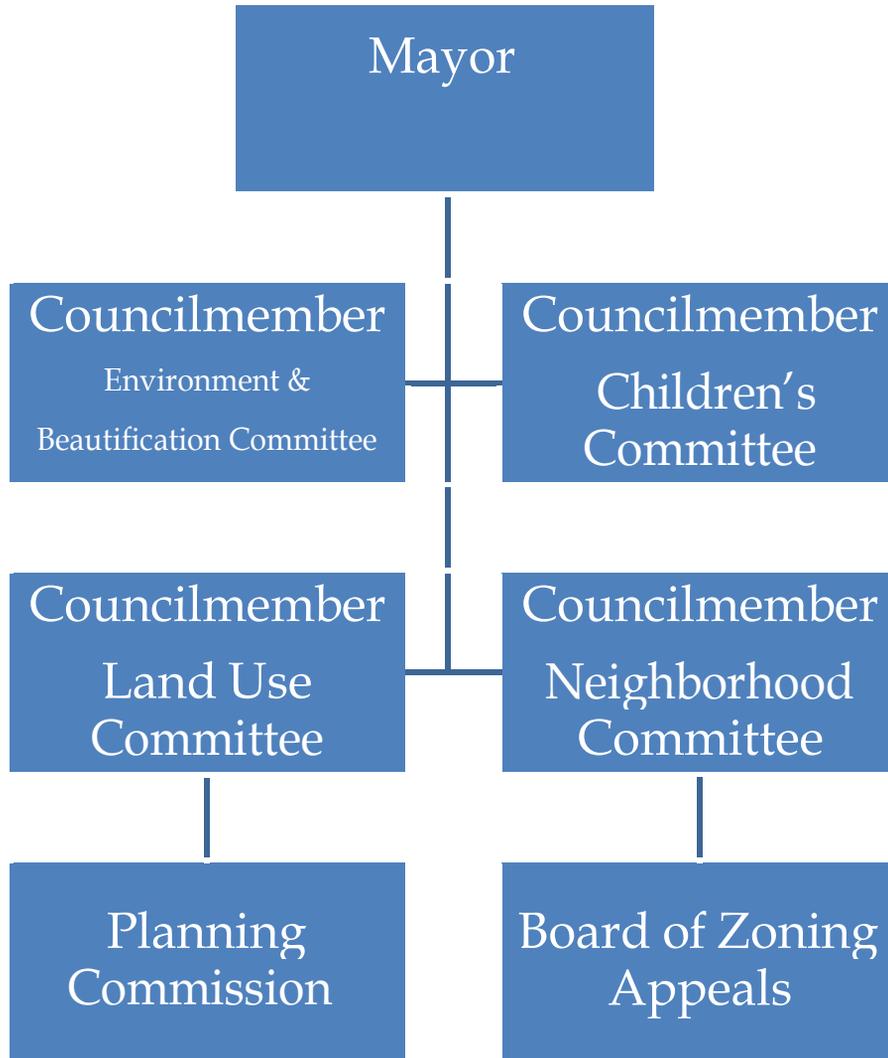
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Our Organization



Our Organization





Administrative Department

Town Administrator

The Town Administrator is responsible for overseeing the day to day operations of the Town. Reporting directly to the Mayor, the Town Administrator supervises all departments and manages all functions of the Town. The Administrator is the Town's Personnel Director and sets forth personnel policies, as well as is charged with executing policies and procedures set forth by Town Council and ensure they are properly adhered by all departments and employees. Responsibilities also include advising the Mayor and Council on issues affecting the Town's business, and reporting to them the activities of all departments.

Budgeting is a top priority for the Town Administrator. It is this position's role to develop a sound and fiscally responsible budget each year and present it to the Mayor and Council for adoption. Monitoring the annual budget throughout the year is a key factor in maintaining the Town's finances, and adjusting the budget through amendments presented for Council approval is a way in which this is accomplished. The Administrator also oversees the auditing process of the Town's finances and reports accordingly.

One of the most important roles of the Town Administrator is upholding positive public relations between the Town and its citizens, other government entities, various boards and commissions, and community organizations. Engaging the public and sharing information is essential, as is representing the Town responsibly in all matters. The Town Administrator often engages in Special Projects for the Town to help the organization move forward.

Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2013 / 2014:

Implemented new personnel policies to include employee timecards, monitoring of time accrual and leave, and developed a pay plan matrix for all positions.

Began the process for hiring an Information Technology company to oversee the upgrade of all the Town's IT infrastructure and operations.

Entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement with the City of Charleston to provide recreation services to Town residents at a reduced rate.

Developed a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2014/2015.



Goals:

Assist the Mayor and Town Council in finding suitable property in the Town of James Island for a new Town Park.

Work to revise the Town's current Emergency Management Plan and ensure the plan is properly implemented through training and review.

Monitor any state-wide issues and legislation that could affect James Island and its residents and advise elected officials accordingly.

Increase transparency between the Town and its residents and look for ways to disseminate more information to the public, including continuing development of the Town newsletter.

Town Clerk

The Office of the Clerk is one of the oldest offices in government. The primary role of the Town Clerk is to record the proceedings of the Town's legislative body and attest to and affix the Town Seal on official documents.

The Town Clerk attests to all laws enacted by the Town, legislation desired by and affecting the Town that requires action from other entities. The Town Clerk is responsible for keeping the transcripts of the proceedings of Town Council and its Boards (Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals) minutes, retains leases and deeds of Town property, grants, agreements, bonds, tax notes, and other forms of obligations of the Town. The Town Clerk also retains the executive and administrative orders of the Mayor, appointments to Boards, and oaths of office taken on behalf of the Town. The Town Clerk is the custodian of the Town Seal.

In addition to these duties, the Town Clerk prepares agendas and meeting notices for Town meetings, notifies the media, the public and interested parties of meetings through the Town's advertising methods, handles job related needs of Town Council and the Administrative Department, maintains a monthly calendar of Council meetings and events, serves as the Benefits Coordinator for the benefits offered through the Town, and supervises the administrative assistant staff.



Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2013 / 2014:

Coordinated efforts to have the Town's ordinances codified through American Legal Publishing Company. The Town Codes will be available on-line for information and easy access to the public.

Staff Training: Coordinated Basic Safety Training for staff through the State Accident Fund. Additional training will be scheduled biannually to include topics such as customer service skills, telephone etiquette, and other training that will enhance our service to the public.

Coordinated the first Employee Appreciation event for staff and Council.

Goals:

Continue to update and use relevant knowledge to keep up-to-date technically and apply new knowledge to the job.

Continue to search the market to develop employee training opportunities that will enhance skills.

Continue to stay abreast of legislation changes that affect healthcare through the Employee Insurance Program.

Administrative Assistant II

The Administrative Assistant II for the Town of James Island provides office services to the staff, community and constituents. Implements administrative projects, processes business licenses, reports, and provides information to residents by answering questions, following up on requests, and addressing other various concerns.

Performs administrative and office support activities for staff. Duties include fielding phone calls, receiving and directing visitors, word processing, creating spreadsheets and presentations, filing, faxing, and posting events and public notices on the Town's website and email listing. Ensures the office is readily equipped with supplies through the ordering of supplies, and proper maintenance of office equipment including the copiers and postage machine.

Offers input to management on office technology to enhance the workflow of the front office staff. Maintain the office equipment inventory and update it as needed. Ensures that office



supplies are stocked to inventory level, verifies receipt of supplies and research/order specialty items as requested by management.

Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2013 / 2014:

Successfully fostered great working relationship with Charleston County Revenue Collections to efficiently process business licenses for Town of James Island businesses.

Joined the Municipal Association of South Carolina's Business License Official Association and completed training session 1 of 3 to earn MASC's Business Licensing accreditation.

Goals:

Continue to maintain a professional and technical knowledge by receiving additional training.

Continue to review professional publications and periodicals to keep abreast of new techniques in the administrative field to enhance job performance.

Continue to be a team player and help other staff members realize their goals.

Receptionist / Administrative Assistant I

The Receptionist / Administrative Assistant I for the Town of James Island provides service to the members of the community by greeting, welcoming and directing them appropriately. This position also provides clerical support to the staff. The duties of this position include, but are not limited to, receiving and routing incoming calls, greeting and directing office visitors, processing and filling completed business licenses, maintaining the Town's schedule and calendar for public meetings, processing mail, and maintaining a clean and safe reception area.

Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2013 / 2014:

Assisted in maintaining a welcoming and safe atmosphere for our citizens and staff.



Goals:

Continue providing excellent customer service to the staff, residents, and visitors of the Town of James Island.

Continue to grow professionally and improve in the task of processing business licenses.

Attend workshops and/or seminars to enhance quality of work and skills.

Finance Clerk

The position of Finance Clerk involves maintaining the financial accounting system under the direction of the Town Administrator, assuring the integrity of financial records, including financial statements, reconciliation of bank accounts, monthly budget preparation and reporting, payroll, payroll tax returns, accounts payable, and Municipal revenue tracking. Other responsibilities include handling all accounting issues within the Town's records, provision of data and financial information to outside CPA firm, maintain reporting to the State's retirement system, Ad Hoc reports as needed by Administration, and reporting budget data at monthly Council meetings.

Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2013 / 2014:

Successfully received a clean audit report for the Fiscal Year 2012 / 2013.

Goals:

To continue to maintain financial records of an excellent quality, readability and usefulness to Administration and our Citizens.

To continue good organization and filing of sensitive financial data and employee data by keeping good source document records and filing them promptly.



To continue to maintain our reliability and good standing with the Vendors we are associated with by being aware of our Accounts Payable status, paying vendors promptly and establishing a payee/payer relationship with new vendors.

To continue pursuing up-to-date Financial Accounting knowledge, adhering to GAAP principles.

Building Services Department

Building Inspector

The Building Services Department of the Town of James Island assures compliance with the International Building, Residential, Plumbing, Mechanical, Fuel Gas, Fire, the Energy Conservation Code, the National Electrical Code and other construction related, federal, state and local laws. The purpose of the codes are to establish the minimum requirements to safeguard the public health, safety, and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress facilities, stability, sanitation, adequate light and ventilation, energy conservation, and safety to life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the built environment and to provide safety to fire fighters and emergency responders during emergency operations.

The vision of the Building Services Department is to work collaboratively with the other Town Departments to ensure the built environment in the Town is safe and attractive for people who live, work, and visit so that investments will not only be maintained, but will also grow. The Building Inspector is responsible for the enforcement of the building codes related to new residential construction, repairs, alterations, additions, rehabilitation, and demolition projects. Functions of this department include:

- Building Code Enforcement; responding to building code requests
- Review plans for new construction and rehabilitation projects
- Building, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, safety, and sign inspections
- Certificate of occupancy inspections
- Issuance of construction related Permits
- Contractor Licensing
- Finalizing permits
- Special investigations - in-progress work being done without building permits.



Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2013 / 2014:

Passing the Residential Building Inspector exam.

Goals:

Complete all required inspector certifications.

Implement the Town's access to the County's EnerGov system - enabling issuance of permits and contractor licenses from Town Hall.

Provide all required single family inspections for work performed in the Town.

Increase investigations of work being done without permits

Develop statistics on all construction activity in the Town.

Code Enforcement Department

Code and Safety Officer

The Code Enforcement Officer is the arm of the Town's Municipal Government that ensures the ordinances of the Town are enforced by residents, property owners, and business owners. Code Enforcement is applied in the areas of Planning and Zoning, Livability, health / safety issues, and the enforcement of business licenses. All cases handled are considered *criminal violations* and is subject to appearance in Charleston County Magistrate's Court if the violation is not abated within the time or to the degree set forth in the Ordinance. When appropriate, the Code Enforcement Officer works in conjunction with the department to orchestrate an abatement plan to avoid a court hearing, or summons to result in a successful conclusion. This option may be offered on a case by case basis.

The duty of the Code Enforcement Officer is to help those to meet abatement of their violation(s) and to come into compliance. This position requires a broad knowledge of the Town's Ordinances, and the ability to discern civil and criminal issues.



Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2013 / 2014:

Received certification in FEMA ICS-100, 200, 300, 400, 700, and 800 Training and the EOC Operations and Planning for All Hazards, and MEOC Development and Deployment Training.

Completed England Enterprises CBO Code Enforcement Training Seminar.

Successfully closed five of six Code Enforcement cases taken to Magistrate's Court representing the Town of James Island

Goals:

Continue to learn and practice new techniques enabling the effectiveness as a Code Enforcement Officer

Continue to improve ways of approaching and redirecting difficult situations for the betterment of all parties involved.

Planning and Zoning Department

Senior Town Planner

The Planning & Zoning Department is comprehensive in that it touches on almost every aspect of local government at the Town level. The primary role of the Senior Planner is to oversee the implementation and enforcement of regulations and ordinances as set forth in the *Town of James Island Zoning and Land Development Regulations Ordinance (ZLDR)*.

The Senior Planner works with developers to ensure compliance with Town standards and the ZLDR when new development or re-development occurs. Commercial development and re-development must comply with the ZLDR in multiple areas; the Senior Planner must ensure compliance when dealing with sign regulations, tree surveys, site plan reviews, site improvements, special events and proper buffering. In addition to commercial development, the Planning & Zoning Department assists residents with planning and zoning related inquiries and issues such as home occupations, grand tree removal permits, accessory structures and plat reviews.



In addition to the above mentioned duties, the Senior Planner acts as a liaison to the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals by advising these groups on planning and zoning-related issues by preparing staff reviews, posting notices, formulating member packets, creating reports and preparing presentations for variances, special exceptions, appeals of administrative decisions, reconsiderations, zoning and land development regulations text amendments and zoning map amendments.

Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2013 / 2014:

Participated in efforts to create the Folly Road Corridor Overlay Zoning (FRC-O) District with participation from Charleston County, City of Folly Beach and City of Charleston.

Member of the Battery2Beach Task Force which will provide 32 miles of marked mixed-use transportation paths through multiple jurisdictional boundaries.

Participated in the Riverland Drive Corridor Management Plan study team to protect the designated scenic Riverland Drive.

Member of the James Island Advisory Group for the Folly Road Complete Streets Corridor Study and Engineering Report with the goal to remake Folly Road a state-of-the-art, multi-modal corridor.

Goals:

Continue the positive relationship with Charleston County and continue to learn from their expertise and knowledge.

Become self-sufficient in the residential planning and zoning aspects, particularly plat reviews, approvals and subdivisions.

Become more involved in the development and implementation of the *Town of James Island Comprehensive Plan*.

Continue to develop skills by attending conferences and using this newly acquired knowledge for the betterment of the Town of James Island's future.



Public Works Department

Public Works Coordinator

The Public Works Department is charged with maintaining roads, stormwater drainage systems and traffic control/way-finding signage in the Town. The Public Works Department maintains the public rights of way and easements, the Town's Park and recreation facilities and Town facilities. Working with Charleston County, the City of Charleston and the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT), the Town of James Island Public Works Department manages and supports the transportation and drainage of the Town.

The Town of James Island has an Intergovernmental Agreement with Charleston County Public Works in which the County maintains our roads. The Town is allotted a budget each year depending on funding and the Town's need to ensure our Public Works infrastructure is well-maintained. The Public Works Coordinator is charged with submitting Work Orders when necessary to either Charleston County, SCDOT, or the City of Charleston, depending upon the jurisdiction. The Town works to improve its infrastructure to ensure paving projects are undertaken where needed, and based on citizen request works to pave or improve earth roads. Stormwater drainage on James Island is also managed by Charleston County. The Town hosts quarterly meetings at Town Hall of the James Island Stormwater Management Committee. Here all entities charged with Stormwater and drainage issues on James Island can meet and discuss cooperative efforts to alleviate concerns.

The Public Works Coordinator is also responsible for improving and expanding the Town's program for pedestrian activity, including sidewalks, bike paths and/or walking trails. Primary roads of focus in the Town are Fort Johnson, Camp, and Dills Bluff Roads. The Town works with Charleston County, The City of Charleston, and the Department of Transportation to facilitate projects and works to provide matching funding when possible. Another area the Public Works Coordinator is responsible for is traffic concerns. The Town monitors traffic on roads within its jurisdiction to address concerns by the residents. The Town strives to alleviate concerns through a variety of traffic control methods.

Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2013 / 2014:

Secured Transportation Sales Tax (TST) funding and provided matching funds for the paving of Ben Road.



Secured Charleston County Transportation Committee (CTC) funding for engineering work to construct the Jerdone Bypass sidewalk.

Received the Town's number one priority for 2014 funding through the TST program with commitment to extend a sidewalk on Camp Road from Fort Johnson to Dills Bluff road.

Began engineering work to extend a sidewalk on Camp Road from Dills Bluff to Secessionville Road.

Completed engineering work for the Sweetgrass Erosion Control project and the Foxcroft sidewalk project.

Received two PARD Grants. In 2013, the Dock Street Park parking lot was constructed and in 2014, new benches and trashcans were purchased.

Goals:

Continue to work to improve the drainage on the Island, increase our inventory of sidewalks, bike lanes and multi-use paths and improvements to the traffic flow on the Island.

Continue cooperation with SCDOT, Charleston County and the City of Charleston to establish a foundation of mutual assistance on issues that face James Island.

Increase and improve communication and cooperation between the Town and the James Island and the Public Service District on projects affecting residents of the Town of James Island.

Development of inspection devices and water quality testing protocols to provide better services to our residents.