

MINUTES
JUNE 11, 2020
REGULAR TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
6:00 P.M.

Town of Edisto Beach
Town Hall
2414 Murray Street
Edisto Beach, SC 29438

Present: Jane S. Darby, Mayor, Crawford Moore, Mayor Pro Tempore, Jerome Kizer and Patti Smyer, Council Members, Councilmember Susan Hornsby joined the meeting via telephone; *Quorum of Council Present.*

Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation

Councilwoman Hornsby led the Pledge of Allegiance and submitted an invocation read by Mayor Darby.

Approval of Minutes

Public Hearing Meeting Minutes, May 14, 2020, Regular Council Meeting Minutes, May 14, 2019, 2020 and Special Council Meeting Minutes, May 19, 2020 – Mayor Pro Tem Moore moved to approve the minutes from the three meetings, seconded by Councilman Kizer and approved unanimously.

Proclamations and Presentations

A. Five Year Service Award, Margaret Green – Mayor Darby announced that Margaret Green has received a five-year service award and pin with many thanks.

Old Business

A. Second Reading of Ordinance No. 2020-15 to Adopt the Budget for the Fiscal Year 2020-21 for the Town of Edisto Beach, South Carolina for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2020 and Ending June 30, 2021 – Councilman Kizer moved to approve the second reading of Ordinance No. 2020-15 to approve the budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021. Councilwoman Hornsby seconded the motion. Town Administrator Iris Hill and Financial/Budget Analyst Krystal Parsons gave an overview of the proposed budget, which can be found under “Town Budget” on the Town’s website, www.townofedistobeach.com, “Transmittal Letter FY 2020-21.” The Mayor called for the vote and the motion was unanimously approved. Administrator Hill and Council thanked the Department Heads for their fiscal responsibility and constraints shown in this uncertain time. Administrator Hill also thanked Krystal Parsons and Mark Aakhus for their diligence working on the budget.

B. Second Reading of Ordinance No. 2020-16 to Amend Section 66-8 (c) to Adjust the Fees for Garbage Collection and Transportation – Councilwoman Smyer moved to approve the second reading of Ordinance No. 2020-16, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Moore. Administrator Hill stated that Administration had met with Republic and the Town received credit on some past bills based on the lack of service on July 4 and other issues. Mayor Darby called for the vote and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Second Reading of Ordinance No. 2020-17 to Amend section 78-36 Penalty for Parking Violations – Councilman Kizer moved to approve the second reading of Ordinance No. 2020-17 increasing most parking violations from \$25.00 to \$50.00, seconded by Councilwoman Smyer and approved unanimously.

D. US Army Corps of Engineers Storm Reduction Project – There are two major obstacles to moving forward with the US Army Corps of Engineers project: funding and easements. The estimated cost for the initial construction of the storm reduction project is \$19,635,000. The Town’s portion is 35% or \$6,872,250. This cost is perplexing since the original estimated cost for the initial phase of construction was \$21,000,000 which included the groin lengthening component. The Town completed the groin lengthening portion and placed over 1,000,000 cubic yards of sand on the beach, yet there seems to be no cost savings for the work already performed, completed and paid for by the Town. To proceed with the project, the Town has to self-certify financial capability to fund the Town’s portion of the project. The Town has \$2,353,379 if we account for all tourism-related funds. This leaves a short-fall of \$4,518,871. The Town has two funding options: borrow funds from the Army Corps of Engineers and pay over time or borrow funds by obtaining a General Obligation Bond. The balance of \$4,518,871 is within the 8% debt capacity of the Town and could be borrowed without a referendum. This would be added to each property tax bill as debt millage and would be proportionate to the property value. The funding that was at the South Carolina Parks Recreation and Tourism (SCPRT) was a one-time appropriation. According to SCPRT all of these funds are allocated. The next round of capital project sales tax funding approved in 2014 will turn in 2022. It is extremely doubtful that the Army Corps will wait that long. The other obstacle is the required easements for the project. The Town has to certify authority and there has to be 100% compliance in obtaining easements. The US Army Corps of Engineers has requested the perpetual easement line (PEL) be within two to eight feet of the structure. The easements remain an area of contention with property owners, since the documents include the public use and perpetual language. The Beachfront Management Committee met on May 29, 2020 and recommended the Town ask for a nine month postponement due to COVID-19. That request was submitted to US Army Corps of Engineers, and was denied. For the purpose of discussion, Councilwoman Smyer moved to approve the Army Corps Project. Councilman Kizer seconded the motion. Councilwoman Hornsby asked, “If we don’t move forward with this now, we lose out on the project completely?” Mayor Darby, “Yes ma’am.” Councilwoman Smyer stated, “When this was first brought to us, I thought we’d be absolutely insane not to jump on board. However, things have changed.” Councilwoman Smyer noted the dune placement being two feet from the structure as a drawback for property owners signing easements. Funding is another troublesome aspect. Councilwoman Smyer stated, “I can’t see a good way for us to go forward with this project.” Councilman Kizer mentioned the surveys the Town would need to pay for as another drawback. Mayor Pro Tem Moore expressed concern over the \$6,972,250 that the Town would have to come up with. The motion failed, 0 – 5 with all opposed to approving the project. Councilwoman Smyer moved to have the Town of Edisto Beach formally withdraw from the United States Army Corps of Engineers Storm Reduction Project. Councilwoman Hornsby seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

New Business

A. Coastal Science & Engineering Proposal – Post Hurricane Dorian Spot Nourishment – Councilman Kizer moved to approve Coastal Science and Engineering’s proposal for post Hurricane Dorian spot nourishment to perform permitting and oversight at a cost of \$61,000 to be paid from ATAX funds. Mayor Pro Tem Moore seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

B. Special Council Meeting June 24 at 11:00 a.m. – Mayor Pro Tem Moore moved to approve the special Council meeting on June 24, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. to discuss Change Order #1 submitted by Wharton Smith on the Water Improvement Project. Councilwoman Smyer seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

C. Resolution No. 2020-R19 to Request the Tourism Expenditure Review Committee Grant Permission to the Town of Edisto Beach to Use Accommodations Tax Funds Acquired in Excess of Two Years Prior

for Beach Renourishment – Councilwoman Smyer moved to approve Resolution No. 2020-R19, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Moore and unanimously approved.

D. Change Order No. 1, Mitchell Construction, Fire Department Barracks Remodel – The original contract sum for the Fire Department barracks remodel was \$103,030. The Volunteer Fire Department will pay the change order amount. The change order total is \$14,975 which brings the new contract sum to \$118,005. Mayor Pro Tem Moore moved to approve the change order, seconded by Councilman Kizer and approved unanimously.

Accommodations Tax Advisory Board

A. Town of Edisto Beach – Bell Buoy Bond Debt - \$50,000 – Councilman Kizer moved to approve the ATAX Board’s recommendation of the Town’s application to pay the Bell Buoy Bond Debt in the amount of \$50,000, seconded by Councilwoman Smyer and unanimously approved.

B. Town of Edisto Beach Police Department – Beach Patrol - \$7,500 – Councilwoman Smyer moved to approve the ATAX Board’s recommendation of the Police Department’s request to fund the 2020 Beach Patrol in the amount of \$7,500. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Moore and approved unanimously.

Committee Vacancies

A. Accommodations Tax Advisory Board – 2 vacancies – There are two vacancies on the ATAX Board. Councilwoman Smyer moved to approve the applications of Mike Hobson (Hospitality) and Robert Pratt (At Large) to serve on the ATAX Board. Councilman Kizer seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

B. The Image & Design of Edisto (TIDE) Committee – 1 vacancy – Mickey Van Metre has resigned from the TIDE Committee. Mayor Pro Tem Moore moved to approve advertising the vacancy, seconded by Councilwoman Smyer and approved unanimously. Mr. Van Metre will be recognized for his many years of service at the July meeting.

Departmental Reports and Committee Updates

Administration

	Received	Spent
General Fund	84.45%	80.79%
Water Fund	73.75%	82.54%
Wastewater Fund	77.99%	75.02%

Building

	May- 2019	May- 2020	YTD
Business/Rental License Fees	\$105,244.97	\$109,135.87	\$270,182.06
New Construction Permits	1	0	12
Other Permits	25	21	289
Permit Fees	\$9,705.00	\$2,170.50	\$63,174.00
Inspections	38	52	566

Fire

Calls	May - 2019	May- 2020	YTD
Medical	19	15	179
Fire-related	38	2	95
EMS/Misc	50	30	293
Beach Wheelchairs	5	11	77
Water Rescue	1	1	7
Welfare Checks	<u>26</u>	5	

Police

	May- 2019	May- 2020	YTD
Miles Patrolled	11,519	8,101	93,860
Incidents & Calls for Service	352	135	1,012
Property Checks	1,033	903	9,449
Town Parking Tickets	137	175	503

Utilities

	May -2019	May - 2020	YTD
Pumped MG Water	14.89	9.82	115.04
Treated MG Wastewater	4.14	3.21	27.71
Water Line Repairs	5	5	49
Work Order Repairs	70	35	455

Public Works

The Public Works Department has started the summer time mowing schedule. Eighteen trash cans have been delivered. The Vine Street bike path has been cleaned, and extra trash cans were delivered for the Memorial Day weekend holiday.

Public Comment

Councilwoman Smyer addressed Council and those watching remotely. “I have been watching the numbers as I’m sure many of you have been for the uptick in numbers for COVID-19, especially in Colleton County. I started on May 8th, when we only had 32 cases. As of today, Colleton County has 201. Just since yesterday, it has gone up 42 more cases. We also have three cases now in 29438 instead of just one.... I’m hoping that our Council, as leaders, are trying to find solutions to help our residents stay safe. We are listening to our Governor, we’ve heard him say he will put no further restrictions on our state. He encourages people to socially distance and wear masks and wash their hands, which are still three of the most important things that we all can do. Meanwhile, the cases are soaring. The population on our beach, on our sandy beach, on the weekends makes it very difficult for the kind of social distancing to really keep people safe. They are staying with their family unit in their tents, but it’s just when you have that many people on the beach on the weekend, they get pushed too close together. People are saying the reason there are more cases is that we are testing more people.

Actually the CDC is showing that the cases that are being tested are roughly the same. What they are finding out is that the cases that they are testing more of them are positive. Each person who tests positive is touching two, three or four other people that they are infecting. So it's making the cases go up exponentially... I've spoken with each one of them (Councilmembers) individually to see if they have some ideas of things we can do. I even suggested we might look at the checkpoint again. I know that's not popular. I've asked about the possibility of putting more police on the beach, and I've been told we don't have the backup from the county that we had before, that we're just now losing that. Some of the ideas I came up with are meeting brick walls. I did hear a couple of really good suggestions as I was talking to Council members if any of you would like to say what that was." Councilman Kizer, "Yes, I think a lot of times, especially now, people are going on vacation and they are forgetting about the rules that are in place about distancing and wearing face masks in public and things like that.... You forget about those things, you're on vacation, it doesn't matter here. But it does matter here. I think they need to be reminded of those things... Maybe something on our (website) homepage.... Maybe just a reminder: keep your distance when you go to our shops, wear your masks when you're out shopping... We were talking about the police sign (radar trailer)... at the beginning of the beach. I don't know if you could something on there like 'welcome to Edisto, don't forget about distancing and wearing your masks.'" Mayor Darby, "Chief Brothers says that is entirely possible." Councilman Kizer, "It's a reminder. You're coming on to the beach, you're not leaving the world behind, this is our world too and we need you to remember that we're all in this together." Mayor Pro Tem Moore, "Like a changeover day, over the weekend, Thursday – Monday, or just all the time." Councilwoman Smyer, "All the time." Administrator Hill, "We can put something on our website." Mayor Darby, "It's like the Governor said yesterday... He realizes the difficulty of legislating common sense, good sense and practice. It's impossible to legislate. How would you enforce it? To borrow the Governor's words, 'there's a lot of stupid going around right now' so I think constant reminders is the way to go... The other thing Mrs. Smyer and I talked about is, we can't legislate masks....but we can ask shop owners if they would consider some restriction before coming in the store." Councilwoman Smyer, "I would just like to put one more number out there. Today South Carolina has 687 new cases. This is the worst day of the pandemic in South Carolina." Mayor Darby, "Folks, it's up to you to protect yourself and protect others. If you're one of the ones running around with no precautions, remember, you're not the only one in your family, that you have the possibility of... passing along disease to valued and loved family members and you really don't want to be responsible for that."

Adjournment

Mayor Pro Tem Moore moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilman Kizer and approved unanimously.

The media/public was notified of the date, time and location of the meeting on Friday, June 5, 2020.

APPROVED BY TOWN COUNCIL



Deborah Hargis, Municipal Clerk
July 9, 2020