



The Town of Hilton Head Island Regular Public Safety Committee Meeting

Monday, September 10, 2012

10:00 a.m. – Benjamin M. Racusin Council Chambers

AGENDA

As a Courtesy to Others Please Turn Off All Cell Phones and Pagers during the Meeting

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Freedom of Information Act Compliance**
Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - a. Regular Public Safety Committee Meeting of August 6, 2012
- 4. Unfinished Business**
 - a. Update on Palmetto Bay Road Speed Limits
- 5. New Business**

None
- 6. Adjournment**

Please note that a quorum of Town Council may result if four (4) or more of Town Council members attend this meeting.

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING

Date: August 6, 2012

Time: 10:01 a.m.

Members Present: Bill Harkins, *Chairman*; Kim Likins, *Council Member*; Lee Edwards, *Council Member*

Members Absent: None

Town Staff Present: Greg DeLoach, *Assistant Town Manager*; Ed Boring, *Deputy Fire Chief*; Darrin Shoemaker, *Traffic & Transportation Engineer*; and Lynn Buchman, *Administrative Assistant*

Others Present: Captain Toby McSwain, *Beaufort County Sheriff's Office*; Ken Heitzke, *Council Member*; and Eleanor O'Key, *LowCountry Inside Track*

Media Present: None

1. Call to Order

2. Freedom of Information Act Compliance

Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and mailed in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the Town of Hilton Head Island requirements.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the June 4, 2012 Regular Public Safety Committee meeting was made by Lee Edwards and seconded by Bill Harkins. The Motion was approved by a vote of 2-0-1, with Ms. Likins abstaining since she was not present at the June 4th meeting.

4. Unfinished Business

None

5. New Business

a. 2nd Quarter 2012 Crime Statistics – Captain Toby McSwain

Before starting the report on the 2nd Quarter 2012 Crime Statistics, Captain McSwain on behalf of the men and women of the Southern Division extended a heartfelt thanks to the Town Council, Mayor, and Town Staff for providing the new building housing the Beaufort County Sheriff's Department on Hilton Head Island. He announced an Open House to view the facilities being held on August 16, 2012, and invited the Town Council members and public. Although construction is still being planned and is underway for the next few months, he noted the building gives the Department a professional appearance and provides additional needed space.

Captain McSwain reviewed the 2nd Quarter 2012 Crime Statistics in detail with the Committee. Although it had been a busy summer, overall he was pleased with the decreased numbers shown on the report. He detailed the circumstances surrounding the two murders that had been committed in the 2nd quarter in response to Chairman Harkins' inquiry.

Crimes against persons, assaults, and property crimes were all down from last quarter as noted by Captain McSwain, with several significant arrests having been made and warrants pending. Chairman Harkins asked if any crimes appeared to be from gang activity or clustering of teens, but Captain McSwain indicated that was not the case, but rather these were crimes of opportunity. Stolen cars were the result of keys left in the ignition, inside the car, or inside open garages rather than from car break-ins.

Ms. Likins inquired about the significant number of burglaries in the Forest Beach area, in spite of the meetings within the community encouraging them to lock doors, trim bushes, and change out lighting. Captain McSwain confirmed this area was still being targeted, with some arrests made and warrants pending as a result of aggressive patrols taking place during the summer. However, he noted only a few burglaries were forced entries, with the majority being cases of open doors and unlocked homes. Captain McSwain confirmed to Mr. Edwards that the majority of thefts were from rental properties.

Chairman Harkins noted that a shared concern is that one of our core businesses is tourism, and asked Captain McSwain's opinion on what help he might need to reduce crimes in the rental segment. Captain McSwain noted conversations held with Greg DeLoach, Assistant Town Manager, concerning sharing the Town's public time with WHHI-TV and splitting shows with the Chamber of Commerce. This would allow the Sheriff's Office to do a broadcast segment to welcome visitors, advise them to lock up, and explain beach regulations that apply during turtle season and otherwise.

Noting the positive cooperation with rental companies during Spring Break, Ms. Likins asked Captain McSwain if the Sheriff's Department could work with those rental companies to share safety information. Captain McSwain cited the brochures designed by the Chamber almost 10 years ago that were distributed in the rental packets and placed by phones in the units, along with Hargray public information segments. However, he noted little success with attendance at meetings from the rental agencies in the Forest Beach areas coupled with the difficulty of getting this information to the average tourist who is more interested in heading to the beach than reading a pamphlet next to the phone. He felt the airing of segments with the Chamber during tourist season would prove more successful.

Chairman Harkins and Captain McSwain discussed the recent case involving a realtor stealing from clients' homes and ideas to prevent this from happening. Noting this was a crime of opportunity, the only recommendation Captain McSwain could make would be not to allow anyone in your home without being there.

Captain McSwain noted vehicle collisions were down 49 from last quarter, with 2 fatalities occurring in one accident.

Captain McSwain reported that over the last 4 months, he had worked with the Town to provide a speed radar sign that can be positioned on the side of the road and attached to traffic signs, in addition to a desperately needed solar powered electronic message board for special events.

Their placement and wordage for the board will be determined in consultation with Darrin Shoemaker, Town Traffic and Transportation Engineer. Ms. Likins reported that the electronic speed signs positioned in the Forest Beach area in the early summer made a huge difference and the residents were sad to see it leave. However, they understand if the sign stays too long, it loses its effectiveness. Captain McSwain noted that the reports generated by the signs helped pinpoint the highest and lowest speeds, the times speeding was occurring, and enabled deployment of the traffic team during the most needed times.

The use of cameras, the areas where these are used, their limitations and effectiveness were discussed among the Committee members and Captain McSwain. A new reporting system to be implemented within the next 18 months was outlined by Captain McSwain. This new system would enable sharing of data with other counties and entities from the patrol cars, as well as providing the capability of viewing camera footage from the cars. Fixed mounted systems at traffic signals and portable car mounted systems enabling scanning, recording, and immediate database checks of license tags and costs for such systems were also discussed. Chairman Harkins indicated the Committee's desire that research and budgeting for such systems be explored by the Sheriff's Office.

Captain McSwain concluded his report with an update on the traffic tickets, changes to the traffic team, and issues with the wireless ticket books that are being worked out. He pointed out the great service provided by volunteers who worked over 1800 hours.

Chairman Harkins and the Committee members thanked Captain McSwain for his report.

Chairman Harkins asked for public comments, and Brady Jamison and Lindsey Crose, residents of the Bay Pines Community at the base of the Cross Island Bridge appeared before the Committee requesting a recommendation to Town Council that the speed limits on Palmetto Bay Road be reconsidered and the speeds decreased to 40 MPH or 35 MPH. They pointed out the danger to residents turning left onto the Bridge, as well the danger to children, bikers, walkers and runners in the area with cars traveling upwards of 60 MPH, in addition to the increased noise from the vehicles.

Mr. Edwards reminded the Committee of his previous concerns and his earlier objections to the speed limit change and expressed his disappointment that the reflector separation on the bridge requested by the Committee had not yet been addressed. He indicated similar concerns had also been expressed to him by other residents of the Bay Pines and Point Comfort communities.

Chairman Harkins noted the goal was to have traffic flowing at a reasonable speed, which the majority felt was 45 MPH. He asked Darrin Shoemaker, Town Traffic Engineer, to comment.

Mr. Shoemaker acknowledged that the normal mode of setting speed limits was to artificially set them low with the expectation that people will take liberties with the speed limit, thereby allowing a cushion for law enforcement. His feeling, however, was that 45 MPH was a safe speed limit, and selective enforcement associated with the recent speed limit change is warranted. Mr. Edwards noted that the wide lanes encouraged speed and discussed with Mr. Shoemaker what could be done to calm the traffic flow. Mr. Shoemaker indicated that enforcement was a critical aspect of encouraging compliance with the speed limit, aided by deployment of the interactive speed limit sign by the Sheriff's Office. He reported that efforts are being made to find a vendor for the treatments on the bridge recommended by the Committee, which includes refurbishing the white edge lines that divide the vehicles lanes from

the breakdown shoulders used by pedestrians and bikers with a raised profile that acts as a rumble strip with an audible noise.

Discussion followed among the Committee Members, Mr. Shoemaker, and Mr. DeLoach as to methods to determine if an unsafe condition or hazard has been created, which was not the intended result of the speed limit change. With additional input from Ms. Jamison and Ms. Crose, the Committee suggested that speed data be collected by the placement of tubes across the road, which would most accurately reflect the speeds occurring at this time. Upon analysis of the data collected, Town Staff would coordinate the placement of the interactive speed sign to provide additional data for use by the Sheriff's Office to deploy resources most efficiently for enforcement of the speed limits.

Adjournment

At 10:53 a.m. Ms. Likins moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Edwards seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Respectfully submitted:

Lynn W. Buchman
Administrative Assistant

Approved by:

Bill Harkins, Chairman

Memo



To: Public Safety Committee

From: Darrin Shoemaker, Traffic and Transportation Engineer (Voice (843)341-4774)
(Cell (843)384-5021)

cc: Jeff Buckalew, Town Engineer

Date: 09/07/2012

Re: Vehicle Speeds on Palmetto Bay Road just south of the Charles E. Fraser Toll Bridge

Recommendation: None is given. This is in response to a request for a motor vehicle speed survey at the subject location made by the Public Safety Committee at their August 6th, 2012 meeting.

Summary: Data originating from the South Carolina Department of Transportation's (SCDOT) real time solar-powered traffic counting station is available online, and this data includes the average motor vehicle speed on a by-direction and by-hour basis. The data for any calendar day during the past several years is archived and is available. This data enables a direct comparison between the average motor vehicle speed prior to and following the recent increase in the speed limit on this roadway segment. The average motor vehicle speed was calculated for two three-day periods, each comprised of a consecutive Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The first three-day period surveyed was approximately one month prior to the speed limit increase and the second three-day period surveyed was approximately two months following the speed limit increase.

The survey of data provided by SCDOT shows that the average motor vehicle speed was 47.8 MPH prior to the increase, when the posted limit was 40 MPH, and 49.8 MPH following the increase in the limit to 45 MPH, an increase of 2.0 MPH or approximately four percent.

Background: Differentials of more than five miles per hour between the posted speed limit and the average vehicle speed would be considered atypical and indicative of a need for selective enforcement and/or consideration of speed limit revisions to establish a limit that is more appropriate for conditions. The differential of 7.8 miles per hour between the average motor vehicle speed and the previous 40 MPH limit is considered indicative of this condition. The differential of 4.8 miles per hour following the speed limit increase is narrowly within the zero to five mile-per-hour range that would be considered typical, but is close enough to the five miles-per-hour to indicate that selective enforcement may still be considered.

(over)

The use of the SCDOT data eliminated the need to deploy pneumatic tubes on the roadway for several days to collect the average speed data. The data surveyed to develop the average motor vehicle speed is attached.

SCDOT TRAFFIC POLLING & ANALYSIS SYSTEM

Version: 6.1.3.10

Help

Exit

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Locator Map



View Graph

Atr Date GO



Site: 0047-BEAUFORT for Tuesday, 04/24/2012

Site Location: US278 Toll Facility

Time	Eastbound			Westbound		
	Vehicle Count Current	Vehicle Count Historical	Average Speed (MPH)	Vehicle Count Current	Vehicle Count Historical	Average Speed (MPH)
01:00	34	49	48	42	77	46
02:00	12	22	44	31	40	49
03:00	8	10	48	21	29	48
04:00	13	13	43	22	32	45
05:00	30	30	45	18	33	46
06:00	91	102	46	66	76	47
07:00	337	362	47	200	200	46
08:00	906	910	47	545	553	48
09:00	1202	1255	46	642	669	48
10:00	760	818	47	594	653	49
11:00	601	678	47	671	710	48
12:00	585	720	47	672	706	49
13:00	582	731	48	649	735	49
14:00	628	743	47	724	775	48
15:00	694	782	48	796	834	49
16:00	770	852	48	931	992	49
17:00	853	900	49	1042	1185	49
18:00	817	854	48	1191	1298	48
19:00	540	657	49	698	841	48
20:00	358	462	48	525	583	48
21:00	331	405	47	322	380	47
22:00	225	340	47	301	335	46
23:00	164	196	46	210	295	46
24:00	84	99	48	140	199	47

BEFORE

3-day weighted average = 47.8 MPH

SCDOT TRAFFIC POLLING & ANALYSIS SYSTEM

Version: 6.1.3.10



View Graph


Site: 0047-BEAUFORT for Wednesday, 04/25/2012

Site Location: US278 Toll Facility

Time	Eastbound			Westbound		
	Vehicle Count Current	Vehicle Count Historical	Average Speed (MPH)	Vehicle Count Current	Vehicle Count Historical	Average Speed (MPH)
01:00	34	51	45	48	81	46
02:00	16	25	44	24	38	50
03:00	13	16	46	32	35	45
04:00	23	15	46	30	28	50
05:00	28	30	43	18	27	46
06:00	86	122	45	58	82	45
07:00	342	404	47	201	206	47
08:00	879	864	47	553	518	49
09:00	1199	1227	47	634	639	48
10:00	713	840	47	574	704	48
11:00	618	721	47	626	741	48
12:00	592	750	47	614	740	49
13:00	634	748	47	668	772	48
14:00	627	778	48	703	794	49
15:00	701	821	47	818	912	49
16:00	779	851	48	940	1016	49
17:00	753	903	47	1036	1142	49
18:00	739	880	47	1181	1313	49
19:00	602	739	47	673	832	49
20:00	476	572	47	487	565	48
21:00	364	443	47	427	470	47
22:00	280	356	46	280	336	47
23:00	182	249	47	257	321	47
24:00	113	151	47	158	196	46

SCDOT TRAFFIC POLLING & ANALYSIS SYSTEM

Version: 6.1.3.10



View Graph



Site: 0047-BEAUFORT for Thursday, 04/26/2012

Site Location: US278 Toll Facility

Time	Eastbound			Westbound		
	Vehicle Count Current	Vehicle Count Historical	Average Speed (MPH)	Vehicle Count Current	Vehicle Count Historical	Average Speed (MPH)
01:00	71	81	47	66	98	47
02:00	38	30	48	52	59	47
03:00	15	17	46	50	62	46
04:00	16	18	43	35	46	48
05:00	32	37	45	26	39	48
06:00	90	111	46	64	67	45
07:00	333	360	46	194	199	48
08:00	857	864	47	553	446	48
09:00	1262	1180	46	662	628	48
10:00	735	901	47	624	667	48
11:00	641	776	47	636	757	49
12:00	703	835	48	613	740	49
13:00	643	788	47	693	791	49
14:00	618	772	47	714	800	49
15:00	821	810	48	788	871	49
16:00	809	888	48	949	1030	49
17:00	798	898	48	1151	1167	49
18:00	737	882	48	1159	1277	49
19:00	575	754	48	744	872	48
20:00	451	580	48	462	612	49
21:00	428	457	46	359	422	47
22:00	314	388	47	298	354	47
23:00	278	257	47	264	321	46
24:00	125	174	49	154	234	48

SCDOT TRAFFIC POLLING & ANALYSIS SYSTEM

Version: 6.1.3.10

Help

Exit

View Site

Locator Map



View Graph

Atr Date



Site: 0047-BEAUFORT for Tuesday, 07/24/2012

Site Location: US278 Toll Facility

Time	Eastbound			Westbound		
	Vehicle Count Current	Vehicle Count Historical	Average Speed (MPH)	Vehicle Count Current	Vehicle Count Historical	Average Speed (MPH)
01:00	64	65	50	115	101	49
02:00	36	41	50	54	53	51
03:00	25	32	50	39	37	50
04:00	12	21	49	33	31	51
05:00	29	30	46	38	28	49
06:00	109	105	48	60	76	47
07:00	370	381	49	185	183	48
08:00	837	762	49	429	439	49
09:00	1184	1191	49	585	556	49
10:00	764	844	49	675	670	50
11:00	681	705	49	692	729	50
12:00	687	692	49	682	735	50
13:00	639	753	50	800	764	50
14:00	764	756	50	741	794	50
15:00	770	807	50	827	819	50
16:00	830	850	51	910	972	50
17:00	800	873	50	1126	1181	50
18:00	785	815	51	1338	1300	50
19:00	660	662	50	810	825	50
20:00	495	493	51	544	549	50
21:00	410	451	50	392	376	49
22:00	402	417	50	354	366	49
23:00	229	273	50	336	368	48
24:00	142	160	51	266	268	49

AFTER

3-day weighted average = 49.8 MPH

SCDOT TRAFFIC POLLING & ANALYSIS SYSTEM

Version: 6.1.3.10



View Graph



Site: 0047-BEAUFORT for Wednesday, 07/25/2012

Site Location: US278 Toll Facility

Time	Eastbound			Westbound		
	Vehicle Count Current	Historical	Average Speed (MPH)	Vehicle Count Current	Historical	Average Speed (MPH)
01:00	72	94	52	110	137	49
02:00	34	48	50	55	77	48
03:00	26	31	50	34	59	46
04:00	14	26	46	20	33	50
05:00	31	34	48	24	37	48
06:00	110	97	47	64	72	47
07:00	345	325	48	187	167	49
08:00	794	657	50	435	364	49
09:00	1167	970	49	584	476	49
10:00	828	699	49	705	617	50
11:00	672	644	49	820	683	50
12:00	708	719	48	775	677	49
13:00	696	742	51	854	714	50
14:00	759	737	50	839	704	49
15:00	773	747	51	826	782	50
16:00	850	779	51	952	913	50
17:00	823	762	51	1151	1025	50
18:00	874	711	51	1275	1079	50
19:00	707	599	51	819	707	50
20:00	506	481	51	559	468	50
21:00	418	407	51	398	379	49
22:00	470	387	51	312	357	49
23:00	293	359	50	358	455	49
24:00	174	203	50	276	279	49

SCDOT TRAFFIC POLLING & ANALYSIS SYSTEM

Version: 6.1.3.10

Help

Exit

View Site

Locator Map



View Graph

Atr Date GO



Site: 0047-BEAUFORT for Thursday, 07/26/2012

Site Location: US278 Toll Facility

Time	Eastbound			Westbound		
	Vehicle Count Current	Vehicle Count Historical	Average Speed (MPH)	Vehicle Count Current	Vehicle Count Historical	Average Speed (MPH)
01:00	101	103	51	103	144	49
02:00	48	46	51	69	83	49
03:00	24	24	51	79	89	48
04:00	17	22	48	44	61	49
05:00	37	31	46	42	42	48
06:00	112	100	48	64	76	47
07:00	329	346	49	186	192	49
08:00	763	742	50	456	441	50
09:00	1162	1131	49	593	596	49
10:00	785	822	48	660	705	48
11:00	711	706	50	767	798	50
12:00	741	719	50	695	730	50
13:00	742	778	50	835	821	50
14:00	769	804	50	838	832	50
15:00	801	821	51	859	906	50
16:00	815	849	51	957	955	50
17:00	872	871	51	1167	1216	50
18:00	863	824	50	1271	1291	50
19:00	682	661	51	808	835	50
20:00	552	545	51	507	558	50
21:00	520	486	51	386	393	49
22:00	460	430	51	328	368	49
23:00	276	296	51	391	381	49
24:00	176	181	50	297	317	49