The Town of Hilton Head Island
Regular Public Safety Committee Meeting

Monday, July 7, 2014
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 June 2, 2014
4. **Unfinished Business**
   None
5. **New Business**
   a. Consideration of a Request to Amend the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office (BCSO) Contract Dated January 17, 2012. Review of BCSO Traffic Tickets and Warnings and S.C. Highway Patrol Traffic Enforcement, and Other Data Presented by BCSO.
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: June 2, 2014 **Time:** 10:00 a.m.

Members Present: Marc A. Grant, *Chairman*; John J. McCann and Bill Harkins, *Council Members*

Members Absent: None

Town Staff Present: Darrin Shoemaker, *Traffic & Transportation Engineer*; Jeff Buckalew, *Town Engineer*; and Lynn Buchman, *Administrative Assistant*

Others Present: Capt. Joey Woodward, *Beaufort County Sheriff's Office*; Kiera Morris, *Beaufort County Sheriff's Office*; and Eleanor O'Key, *Lowcountry Inside Track*

Media Present: Dan Burley, *The Island Packet*

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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 May 5, 2014

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2014 meeting of the Public Safety Committee was made by Mr. Harkins and seconded by Mr. McCann. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

4. Unfinished Business

a. Pedestrian Safety Concerns at Various South Island Locations

Darrin Shoemaker, Traffic & Transportation Engineer, displayed a PowerPoint presentation to supplement his remarks in response to the following concerns expressed at the last Committee meeting and at the request of the Committee to appear and address those concerns.

Lagoon Road Pedestrian/Bike Safety:

Mr. Shoemaker reviewed the details surrounding the fatality that had occurred on February 14, 2014, at 9:00 PM near the intersection of Lagoon Road and Bittern Street in which a pedestrian was struck by a vehicle as he was walking in the roadway with traffic, rather than facing on-coming traffic. An aerial photo of the area was displayed showing Lagoon Road as it begins at Pope Avenue proceeding through a commercial area, then continuing from Avocet Road to Bittern Street through multi-family development, and continuing from Bittern Street to Ibis Road through a residential neighborhood.

Referencing concerns expressed by Council Member Likins at the last meeting about the speed limit and the absence of any speed limit signs on Lagoon Road, Mr. Shoemaker reported that Lagoon Road is a State maintained road. While there is a 30 MPH speed limit sign posted at the intersection of Lagoon Road and Ibis Road to westbound traffic proceeding from Ibis Road to Pope Avenue, no other speed limit signs could be found on Lagoon Road. Upon request by the Committee and Council to Staff, Mr. Shoemaker indicated additional speed limit signs could be pursued with SCDOT or a study conducted to determine whether the current 30 MPH speed limit was appropriate or whether the conditions justified a reduction in the speed limit. He noted the State statutory speed limit in the absence of any speed limits signs on a built-up road, such as Lagoon Road, is 30 MPH.

Mr. Shoemaker noted on a PowerPoint slide the approximate location of the incident involving the fatality, which occurred just beyond the intersection of Lagoon Road and Bittern Street. He referenced the collision report that detailed various factors involved in the pedestrian fatality. Weather was reportedly not a factor, but the pedestrian was determined to be walking in an easterly direction within the roadway, with the motorist going approximately 25 MPH, which is less than the speed limit. The report found no fault for the driver, with the pedestrian at fault based on the fact that he was in the roadway walking with traffic rather than on the other side of the road against traffic as required by State law. Nothing in the report identified the pedestrian's clothing for visibility purposes, but apparently the driver did not see the pedestrian walking in the roadway.

Mr. Shoemaker noted Ms. Likins had also suggested pavement markings, such as edge lines, and possible rumble strips for Lagoon Road. He explained that if a request was made to SCDOT, they would likely adopt the position that this low-speed and low-volume residential road does not warrant the application of edge lines, much less the raised profile treatment or rumble strips. While improving the motorists' view of the roadway, they would not have made a difference in the unfortunate incident resulting in a fatality. He noted there is a double solid yellow center line running down the center of Lagoon Road, but there are presently no edge lines. Mr. Shoemaker estimated the cost for the Town on its own to add edge lines, raised profile treatment, or raised reflective pavement markers to the centerline and edge lines, and how this could be accomplished under a permit with SCDOT.

Addressing Ms. Likins' suggestion of constructing a pathway along Lagoon Road, Mr. Shoemaker pointed out the pathway constructed by the Town in 2010 along the portion of Lagoon Road from Pope Avenue to Avocet, at which point the pathway turns on Avocet Road and meets the pathway at North Forest Beach Drive. He noted there is only 1 pathway project in the 5-year Capital Improvements Program at this time. While a pathway on the northern side of Lagoon Road from Avocet to Ibis Road could be constructed along the border of the existing lagoon, to continue the pathway along Ibis Road to connect to the North Forest Beach Drive pathway would require obtaining right of ways and support from residents located along Ibis. He estimated the cost of the project to be approximately $375,000 to $400,000, which he emphasized was not currently included in the Capital Improvements Program, and barring specific action from the Committee and Council, could realistically take 10 to 15 years to move up in priority.

A brief discussion followed concerning the area in which the fatality occurred, details of the collision report, the presence or absence of impairments for either driver or pedestrian, and whether any other assessments had been done. Capt. Joey Woodward of the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office noted this accident was investigated by the SC Highway Patrol, and while he had no report from them, he could request one. Mr. Shoemaker was asked about the roadway segment's safety history, and he could not recall any complaints of excessive speed or other safety issues in that area that had been reported to Town Staff in the last 14 years.

Mr. Harkins and Mr. Shoemaker discussed the width of Lagoon Road, which Mr. Shoemaker estimated was probably 20' to 22' in width, which is not unusual for older roads, as opposed to 24' for newer roads. He stated that as State roads are resurfaced, the SCDOT is attempting to bring all roads less than the current standard 24' wide up to standard, however, he could not recall the last time Lagoon Road was resurfaced. He did note that widening such a road results in shoulder impacts that could be potentially resisted within the residential neighborhood.

Mr. Harkins and Mr. Shoemaker discussed the possibility of a pathway along Lagoon Road, the impact to residents that would cause, and the expected response from residents to acquire the necessary rights-of-way or easements. Mr. Harkins commented that introducing low cost items such as edge lines, raised reflectors, and speed limit signs would be of value to mitigate the possibility of such an incident in the future, with the pathway on a wish list in the future for serious consideration.

Mr. McCann suggested that Mr. Shoemaker, as the expert, make a list of changes that could and should be made, and report back to the Committee at a later date with recommendations, which Mr. Harkins supported. Mr. Shoemaker indicated he was prepared to offer his recommendations now, as follows:

1. Ask the SCDOT to place 30 MPH speed limit signs at 2 locations:
   a. On Lagoon Road, several car lengths after turning off Pope Avenue, just beyond the Coligny Exxon driveway;
   b. On the shoulder that is currently posted for "No Parking" just in advance of Bittern Street heading eastbound; and
2. Ask the SCDOT to remark the solid yellow centerline on Lagoon Road, which is badly faded and needs refurbishing, and at the same time to add bi-directional yellow raised reflective markers to the existing double solid yellow centerline.

Mr. Harkins and Mr. Shoemaker discussed adding edge lines and the possible widening of Lagoon Road to the SCDOT request, but Mr. Shoemaker explained the reasons he did not recommend these, namely that the edge lines would provide minimal additional safety benefit with the refurbishment and enhancement of the centerline marking, that a road in a residential area such as this one would not normally warrant an edge line treatment, that the lack of edge lines apparently did not contribute to the February pedestrian fatality, the current width of the roadway is adequate for conditions, and that an effort to widen the roadway may result in should impacts resisted by the owners and residents.

Mr. McCann suggested that the Committee take Mr. Shoemaker's recommendations and pass them on to Council.

Julie Williams, a Town resident, asked that a sign be posted on Lagoon Road stating "Residential Area" as it transitions from commercial to residential, and asked if a variance be obtained to lower the speed limit to 25 MPH at this area.

Eleanor O'Key, a resident of Egret Street in North Forest Beach, who drives by this area on Lagoon Road each day, agreed with Mr. Shoemaker's suggestions, and added her support for lowering the speed limit to 25 MPH. She suggested that a sign be placed at Avocet Drive to direct bikers and pedestrians along the Avocet pathway one block over to North Forest Beach, where there are additional bike paths. Ms. O'Key pointed out that Lagoon Road is used as a cut-through primarily by residents in the area to avoid going around Coligny Circle. She agreed that unless the road was widened to 24' and edges re-done, edge lines would probably not have prevented this accident. Mr.

Shoemaker offered to take a closer look at the road edges to see if there are places that warrant immediate attention from the State, but was not prepared to address that issue today.

Mr. Shoemaker noted that while the State does deviate in certain instances, it prefers to adhere to that statutory 30 MPH residential speed limit for consistency. Any suggestion to SCDOT to deviate would be met with a request for an engineering study and a recommendation from the Town.

A discussion among the Committee members followed concerning adding a recommendation for a bike path sign and a request for a speed decrease from 30 MPH to 25 MPH. However, Mr. McCann stated the State has its own regulations for a reason, and to change some blocks from 30 MPH to 25 MPH would be harmful and inconsistent. Mr. Harkins agreed. Chairman Grant indicated he did approve the posting of a sign to direct walkers and bikers from Avocet to North Forest Beach Drive, one block over.

Compiling the various recommendations discussed, Mr. Harkins moved that the Committee recommend to Town Council for approval that the Town ask the SCDOT:

1. To place 30 MPH speed limit signs at 2 locations:
   a. On Lagoon Road, several car lengths after turning off Pope Avenue, just beyond the Coligny Exxon driveway;
   b. On the shoulder that is currently posted for "No Parking" just in advance of Bittern Street heading eastbound;
2. To remark the solid yellow centerline on Lagoon Road, which is badly faded and needs refurbishing, and at the same time to add bi-directional yellow raised reflective markers to the existing double solid yellow centerline; and
3. To place a bike path sign at the corner of Lagoon Road and Avocet to direct walkers and bicyclists to the bike path one block over on North Forest Beach Drive.

Mr. McCann seconded the motion, and the motion was adopted by a vote of 3-0.

Crosswalk on William Hilton Parkway at Shipyard/Wexford Traffic Signal:

Mr. Shoemaker addressed with the Committee the safety concerns that had been raised concerning the intersection of William Hilton Parkway with Shipyard Drive and Wexford as it relates to the inappropriate driver reaction relative to who has the right of way. He noted this has been a long-standing issue since the signal was built in the early 1990's, and he showed various views of the intersection and the traffic signal plan. Mr. Shoemaker explained that because the side streets incorporate usually wide landscaped medians, which result in a large separation between approaching and departing traffic on the side streets, this has created some problems with motorists' perception of right of way. The opposing traffic is off at an angle, rather than directly in front of you and offset much further laterally than you normally expect to see oncoming traffic that triggers the yield reaction for left turning motorists. Furthermore, on both sides the majority of the traffic is turning left. The signal employs concurrent side street phasing, which is a very efficient way to run a traffic signal, but it requires that both sides go at the same time, and that the left turning vehicle yield to opposing through and right-turning motorists. In addition, frequently the queue of left turning vehicles can also create a site distance issue where motorists cannot see approaching motorists in the through right turn lane because of the queued left turning motorists. Once the line starts for the left turning motorists, they are reluctant to stop and yield to an oncoming vehicle that has the right of way. Left turn yield signs have been posted, but have little effect.

He explained the problems in placing additional left turn yield signs in the medians, and the dash lines that were painted on the pavement in yellow in an effort to relay the appropriate turning path to motorists and keep them from proceeding too far out into the intersection.

With the pathway project in 2012, a marked crosswalk across William Hilton Parkway was added, with median refuges in the center raised landscaped areas. The pedestrian crossing was designed to provide a walk signal phased with the side street signals, but left turning vehicles must yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. The inclusion of the pedestrian crosswalk exacerbated the right of way perception issues that were always there. Photographs of the intersection were shown from both Shipyard Drive approach and Wexford Drive approach to illustrate his remarks. He pointed out the crosswalk is not particularly in the peripheral field of view for turning vehicles as in most other intersections. The issue that has generated concerns ever since the crosswalk was built is that motorists turning left are not yielding and are unwilling to cede the right of way as would be appropriate.

Mr. Shoemaker noted that requests have been received to put this crosswalk on its own pedestrian phase, with red signals appearing on William Hilton Parkway and both side streets at the same time. While that treatment may be warranted in some instances, he explained that is an unprecedented treatment on Hilton Head Island with no other exclusive pedestrian phases, leaving the additional problem of vehicles not yielding to oncoming traffic on both sides of the intersection. He stated Staff's recommendation is to rephrase this signal to implement split-phasing. Therefore, Shipyard and Wexford would take turns and each times they got a green signal, there would also be a left turn arrow allowing a left turn with no oncoming traffic. Under that treatment, the crosswalk signal would continue to turn "walk" with traffic coming out of the Shipyard side. It would stay "don't walk" with traffic coming out of the Wexford side, leaving the lingering concern that right turns will still have to yield to those in the crosswalk. However, he felt that this would greatly improve safety for crosswalk users, because the large majority of concern for safety was related more to the left turn from Wexford rather than vehicles yielding when making a right turn from Shipyard.

He pointed out that this would inevitably result in longer red signals to William Hilton Parkway, as the current phasing is more efficient and keeps the red signals on William Hilton Parkway at a minimum, but Staff feels that treatment is warranted at this point.

Mr. Shoemaker explained that both the signals and William Hilton Parkway are owned by SCDOT, with the signals maintained and operated by the Town under an agreement with SCDOT. A request for such a change will require an engineering study as justification and a recommendation from the Town before SCDOT approval is granted. He stated that Staff is proposing to initiate the requisite engineering study to turn into SCDOT, which would be a considerable effort involving intersection turning movement counts throughout the day, data on collisions, photos, and field measurements relative to site distances. He explained a revised signal plan would be needed to include the proposed split-phasing, as well as a before and after analysis of operations, delays, and level of service to all the turning movements in the intersection. Basically, this represents an assessment of the adverse impact that the proposed signal revision will have to other movements, and since it is a coordinated signal with New Orleans Road and Arrow Road, revising the side street phases will require those coordination plans to also be revised accordingly.

Mr. McCann recommended that the Committee support the Staff's recommendation. A discussion followed concerning the estimated usage of the crosswalk and the size of the problem. Mr. Shoemaker indicated it had become enough of a problem that concerns were being expressed by citizens on a regular basis reporting close calls. He estimated at least 100 per day use the crosswalk.

Noting pedestrians should be the first responsibility, Mr. Harkins suggested shutting down the signals while pedestrians cross, and Chairman Grant reminded everyone that pedestrians have the right of way.

Mr. Shoemaker explained how all of the main street crosswalk signals only activate when someone presses the button, so that the next time the side street goes green, there is a walk signal followed by a longer time to cross. It does change the light.

Noting that Staff has studied the problem and made a thoughtful recommendation, Mr. McCann moved that the Committee recommend to Town Council that the Town initiate the requisite engineering study to turn into SCDOT in order to request that the signal at the intersection of William Hilton Parkway with Wexford Drive and Shipyard Drive be rephrased to implement split-phasing. Mr. Harkins seconded the motion and asked that once this is implemented, the issue be revisited in 12 months to see if the split approach is working. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Unspecified Concerns Regarding Arrow Road, New Orleans Road, and Pope Avenue:

Mr. Shoemaker noted unspecified concerns had been expressed about Arrow Road, Pope Avenue, and New Orleans Road, and he was prepared to address those. Mr. Harkins indicated he had concerns expressed by a constituent, and he would summarize those and email them to Mr. Shoemaker to address at a later time. No other Committee member or the public had further concerns to address.

5. New Business

None

6. Adjournment

At 11:25 a.m. Mr. Harkins moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. McCann seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Respectfully submitted:

_____

Lynn W. Buchman
Administrative Assistant

Approved by:

_____/_____

Marc A. Grant, Chairman

DRAFT

Town of Hilton Head Island
One Town Center Court
Hilton Head Island, SC 29928

MEMORANDUM June 18, 2014

FROM: Staff Attorney
TO: Public Safety Committee
Via: Town Manager

RE: Request for Authorization to Amend the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office (BCSO) Contract Dated January 17, 2012

Staff requests that the Public Safety Committee recommend to Town Council that they authorize the Town Manager to execute an amendment to the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office (BCSO) contract. This amendment would remove the requirement to have a four person traffic team operating on Hilton Head Island as part of the contract. At the June 17, 2014 meeting Town Council decided to forward this matter to the Public Safety Committee for full discussion.

The Town currently contracts with BCSO for the provision of Police Services. As part of the Agreement, BCSO provides a four person traffic team to operate within the Town's boundaries. At the Town Council Budget Meeting on May 21, Sheriff P. J. Tanner made a request for funding for a Special Enforcement Unit which would consist of three deputies. This unit would operate on special assignments related to law enforcement and be assigned as needed throughout the year.

While discussing the Sheriff's request, Town Council indicated that they would remove the contractual requirement for BCSO to provide a four person traffic team. This amendment will remove the contractual requirement for a four person traffic team and allow the Sheriff to utilize the four positions in any manner he deems appropriate on Hilton Head Island.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA	**)**	**ADDENDUM #1 TO TOWN/**
	)	**BEAUFORT COUNTY/SHERIFF'S OFFICE AGREEMENT**
BEAUFORT COUNTY	**)**	

WHEREAS, an Agreement (C01-2012) was made and entered into on the 17th day of January 2012 between the Town of Hilton Head Island (hereinafter the "Town"), Beaufort County (hereinafter the "County"), and the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office (hereinafter "BCSO"); and

WHEREAS, the County and BCSO entered into an Agreement with the Town for the purpose of providing police services; and

WHEREAS, the Town, County, and the BCSO desire to amend the Agreement to remove the requirement for BCSO to provide a four member traffic enforcement team; and

NOW THEREFORE, the "Town," "County," and "BCSO" hereby mutually agree that Schedule 1 paragraph 3 shall be deleted in its entirety.

All other terms and conditions as set forth in the original Agreement remain binding upon all parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused the within Addendum to be executed this _____ day of _____, 2014.

WITNESSES

_____

_____

BEAUFORT COUNTY

_____

Gary Kubic, Beaufort County Administrator

BEAUFORT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

_____

_____

P. J. Tanner, Beaufort County Sheriff

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

_____

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Stephen G. Riley, ICMA-CM, Town Manager

AGREEMENT FOR POLICE SERVICES

SCHEDULE "1"

BASIC LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

1. **SHERIFFS PATROL.** The BCSO shall provide a minimum of four (4) staffed patrol units on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide basic sheriffs patrol within the Town Boundaries.

2. **PATROL UNIT SUPERVISOR.** In addition to the minimum staffing requirements above, staffing shall consist of not less than one (1) "Patrol Unit Supervisor" on duty at all times, responsible for basic law enforcement patrol activities within the Town boundaries 24 hours per day, seven days a week.

3. ~~**TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT TEAM.** The BCSO shall provide a four (4) person, two (2) unit Traffic Enforcement Team to work traffic during the hours of 0700 – 1900 within the Town Boundaries.~~

3. **MARINE/BEACH PATROL.** The BCSO shall provide and maintain a Marine/Beach Patrol Team consisting of at least two (2) designated uniformed deputy sheriffs. The Marine/Beach patrol shall patrol as deemed necessary to provide specialized enforcement on the beaches and waterways within the Town Boundaries.

4. **EVIDENCE TECHNICIAN.** The BCSO shall provide one deputy sheriff whom is tasked primarily with the collection, cataloging, custody and preservation of evidence collected at crime scenes within the Town Boundaries.

5. **CRIMINAL INVESTIGATORS.** The BCSO shall provide three (3) deputy sheriffs assigned to investigate major criminal incidents occurring within the Town Boundaries.

6. **DRUG INVESTIGATORS.** The BCSO shall provide two (2) deputy sheriffs assigned to enforce narcotics laws within the Town Boundaries.

7. **CLERK.** The BCSO shall provide three (3) clerks assigned to the Sheriff's Substation on Hilton Head Island for the purpose of performing administrative duties such as correspondence and record keeping.

8. **VICTIM'S ADVOCATE.** The BCSO shall provide one deputy sheriff who is assigned as the Victim's Advocate to work with victims of crimes occurring within the Town Boundaries in compliance with state statutes.

9. **COMMAND OFFICER.** At all times during the Term, BCSO shall employ a Command Officer to exercise authority over the Southern Enforcement Branch of the Enforcement Division. The Command Officer shall meet and confer with the Town Manager or his designee as needed, for the purpose of maintaining the viability and vitality of this Agreement.