

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING

Date: March 7, 2011

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Members Present: Bill Harkins, *Chairman*; Kim Likins, George Williams, *Council Members*

Members Absent: Lee Edwards, *Council Member*

Town Staff Present: Gregory D. DeLoach, Esq., *Assistant Town Manager*; Tom Fultz, *Director of Administrative Services*; Darrin Shoemaker, *Traffic & Transportation Engineer*; Shawn Colin, *Comprehensive Planning Manager*; Jeff Buckalew, *Town Engineer*; Brian Hulbert, *Staff Attorney*; Charles Cousins, *Director of Community Development*; Kimberly Kominski, *Administrative Assistant*

Others Present: Bill Ferguson, *Council Member*; Jesse Iverson, *Chairman, Greater Island Council Public Safety Committee*

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 February 7, 2011

Ms. Likins moved to approve. Mr. Harkins seconded. Ms. Likins asked the minutes be amended to include the request Ms. Likins made at the meeting that Sheriff Tanner provide the Committee with specific examples of cases wherein the Municipal Judge in Beaufort set bail at an amount which allowed an offender to be released, and upon release, the offender continued to commit additional crimes. Mr. Williams asked the record specify this is not the Town Municipal Judge. Mr. DeLoach explained that he spoke to Captain McSwain and he could not attend today's meeting due to a conflict, however, the Sheriff's office is working on compiling the information requested by the Committee.

Ms. Likins moved to approve the minutes as amended and Mr. Harkins seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 2-0. (Mr. Williams did not attend the 2/7/2011 meeting).

4. Unfinished Business

- a. None

5. New Business

a. Neighborhood Meeting Report – South Forest Beach/North Forest Beach

Chairman Harkins explained that Ms. Likins was approached by several constituents in her ward and she came up with the idea of a neighborhood meeting to allow community members to voice their concerns. The meeting was led by Sheriff P.J. Tanner, and Mr. Harkins expressed his appreciation to the Baptist Church for the use of their facility.

Ms. Likins reported that the meeting had approximately 50 residents in attendance, and thanked staff, especially Mr. DeLoach, for taking the time to be there and also law enforcement for sharing their expertise. She explained that the meeting focused on crime prevention and to that end, the Sheriff's Office offered several suggestions to residents, including: improve lighting, cut back shrubbery, lock cars and houses, and use motion detectors and security systems. Ms. Likins stated one of the most beneficial pieces of information presented to the community was the detective's review of all crime events in the area since 2010, as it gave specifics to what is going on and what is being done. The Sheriff's Office also completed a security assessment of the neighborhood and that report was made available at the meeting. Ms. Likins stated the Sheriff's Office related that there is a large presence of undercover staff placed in the community as an added security measure.

Mr. DeLoach stated that the Sheriff's Office is always willing to conduct security assessments when communities and businesses request them.

Chairman Harkins and Ms. Likins related that the meeting was well-received and the attendees were pleased with the information received and the opportunity to exchange ideas. Mr. Harkins stated the value of security cameras was discussed and the Sheriff's Office reiterated that residents need to be proactive and that they do want to be called when anyone sees suspicious activity.

b. Pathway Safety Enhancement Efforts

Chairman Harkins stated that there was an article in *Hilton Head Monthly* magazine regarding the progress the Town is making to gain designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community and this recognition will be a benefit to the community.

Darrin Shoemaker, Town Traffic and Transportation Engineer, gave a power point presentation which included pathway accident statistics, safety enhancements that have been completed by the Town, and plans for future improvements.

Mr. Williams asked for an update of the status of the extension of the pathway across Palmetto Bay Road at Target Road into the shopping center, as he has seen flags and stakes in the area for months. Mr. Shoemaker stated that does not know the status of that project. Mr. Williams will check with Scott Liggett.

Mr. Williams asked if the Town assists the private communities with their safety needs with respect to pathways. Mr. Shoemaker explained that the Town frequently is asked for assistance by the private security firms within the gated communities and will help them with issues such as speed on the roads, intersection control and safety matters in addition to pathway improvements and safety.

Ms. Likins requested a copy of the slide showing upcoming pedestrian crossing projects.

Mr. Harkins stated that visitors to this community come from many different parts of the United States as well as the international community, and asked if signage used in our community is universal and easily understood. Mr. Shoemaker explained that many states, including South Carolina, defer to the 2009 Federal Highway Safety Administration manual regarding signage, with increased uniformity as the goal.

Mr. Harkins stated that he has been asked, what should a motorist do in the case of a pedestrian crossing sign at a crosswalk in an uncontrolled intersection? Mr. Shoemaker explained a motorist does not have to yield to a pedestrian/cyclist waiting to enter the crosswalk at an uncontrolled intersection and that doing so would be detrimental to motorists. He further explained that the law states that motorists will yield to a pedestrian/cyclist within the crossing. However, the law further states there is an obligation for the pedestrian/cyclist to check traffic for an adequate gap prior to entering the crosswalk. Mr. Harkins stated the explanation makes sense, but the signage is still ambiguous and asked Mr. Shoemaker to give this matter some thought and get back to the Committee.

Mr. Harkins asked if there were any impediments to completing future improvements that Town Council might be able to address. Mr. Shoemaker stated that in recent years, as part of the Town Capital Improvement Program, a recurring line item has been put in for pathway maintenance and the Town has received feedback that since that time, pathway safety is improved. Mr. Harkins suggested that the projects be prioritized as low, medium or high, to ensure proper use of available resources.

Motion was made by Mr. Williams to amend the agenda to include the following items as New Business:

- Interest by Greater Island Council to Serve as Resource to this Committee
- Safety of Children -No Refuge Median and Motorists Are Not Stopping for School Buses on Rt. 278

Ms. Likins seconded the motion, which was approved by a vote of 3-0.

c. Interest by Greater Island Council to Serve as Resource to this Committee

Mr. DeLoach explained that Mayor Laughlin recently received a letter from the Greater Island Council Public Safety Committee requesting that members of the committee be added to this Town Council committee. Mayor Laughlin responded to them by letter and explained the five Town Council subcommittee system was created to allow for greater discussion among Council members and more opportunities for public participation. Mr. DeLoach further explained that Town Code requires the subcommittee to be composed of Town Council members and that the Mayor prefers this remain the case at this time. Mr. DeLoach stated that this committee has,

since its creation, allowed and encouraged public input and participation. Mr. Harkins encouraged the Greater Island Council to continue to attend the Public Safety Committee meetings and stated that their participation is welcomed.

d. Safety of Children - No Refuge Median and Motorists Are Not Stopping for School Buses on Highway 278

Councilman Bill Ferguson stated that William Hilton Parkway, in the Stoney, Chaplin and the tri-community areas near Northridge and Pineland, do not have medians dividing the highway, which creates a dangerous situation when vehicles on the opposite side of the road do not stop for buses dropping off and picking up children. Councilman Ferguson stated the issue is enforcement and requested the Committee and/or Town Council ask Mayor Laughlin to send a letter to the Sheriff's Office stating the Town wants enforcement of the law which requires traffic on both sides of a highway to stop when a school bus is stopped. Discussion took place regarding the law. Mr. Harkins requested that Staff and Engineering look into this matter, and by the next meeting, provide the committee with a summary along with recommendations to reduce/eliminate the danger.

Public Input:

Jesse Iverson, Chairman, Greater Island Council Public Safety Committee – Stated the intent of the Committee is to offer assistance and expertise on public safety issues facing the community.

Adjournment

At 11:10 a.m. Ms. Likins moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Williams seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Respectfully submitted:

Kimberly Kominski,
Administrative Assistant

Approved: 5/2/2011

Bill Harkins, Chairman