

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Tuesday, November 20, 2012
Regular Meeting

Members Present: George Williams, *Chairman*; Lee Edwards, *Council Member*; Drew Laughlin, *Mayor and Alternate Committee Member*

Members Absent: Ken Heitzke

Others Present: Bill Harkins, Bill Ferguson, and Kim Likins, *Council Members*; Joe Croley, *Lowcountry Inside Track*; Andy Patrick, *State Representative, Beaufort County Legislative Delegation*

Staff Present: Greg DeLoach, *Assistant Town Manager*; Faidra Smith, *Administration Manager/Public Information Coordinator*; Eileen Buckalew, *Senior Administrative Assistant*

Media Present: None

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 p.m.

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

March 20, 2012 Meeting

Mr. Edwards moved to approve and Mr. Williams seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 2-0-1, with Mayor Laughlin abstaining.

4. Chairman's Report

Chairman Williams explained that invitations had been extended to members of the Beaufort County Legislative delegation to appear before the Committee and give their thoughts on what we could expect during the coming legislative session and what the Committee might do to support them and be more effective. He reported that Representative Herbkersman and Senator Davis were unable to attend because of conflicts.

5. Unfinished Business

None

6. New Business

Chairman Williams stated the desire of the Committee to change the order of the agenda for new business and begin with Item b. while awaiting the arrival of Representative Patrick.

b. Consideration of a Resolution Expressing the Town’s Support for the Municipal Association of South Carolina’s 2013 Legislative Priorities

The Committee reviewed the Legislative Priorities identified by the Municipal Association of South Carolina. Greg DeLoach, Assistant Town Manager, explained that the list was compiled by the MASC from a poll of their members, elected officials, and city managers, and narrowed down to focus on three general categories. He pointed out that additional positions will be taken and support requested during the coming year, as well as consideration of any items suggested by this Town Council or others. Although no objections were voiced to the MASC priorities, a discussion followed concerning the priorities considered more relevant to the Town of Hilton Head Island, including mitigating the effects of Act 388. The Committee agreed to recommend to Town Council that it support the MASC 2013 Legislative Priorities, but also convey by letter Council’s belief that comprehensive tax reform, including Act 388, should be included in future MASC’s legislative priorities.

a. General Discussion with Invited Legislative Delegation Members

Representative Andy Patrick and the Committee members discussed local funding options, the flexibility to use funds as needed, the challenges imposed by Act 388, the property tax structure and funding of education as it affects Beaufort County, and local fiscal autonomy.

Chairman Williams asked Representative Patrick to outline his priorities for the upcoming legislative session and give an overview of what he expects to come before the legislature.

Representative Patrick indicated his top priorities included:

- Health care reform and the impact of the Affordable Care Act under the State Medicare system. As a part of his agenda, he will be introducing legislation that will hopefully reduce costs and improve access, whether the State opts in or not.
- Some form of school choice. Noting that he agreed with the argument that “one size doesn’t fit all,” he outlined his continued support for the idea of charter schools, a school voucher, or tax credit so that parents of children who are failing in our public schools can seek other options.
- Public Safety. After discussions with Solicitor Duffie Stone and Sheriff Tanner, he would like to see some type of “Khalil’s Law” to focus on the criminal and not the crime, which might include eliminating parole for certain offenders and re-defining violent and non-violent crimes.

Changes to the Beaufort County Legislative Delegation with the addition of Weston Newton were discussed and the experience he brings with him. Representative Patrick stated that he was not asking for any change of Committee assignment, and assignments should be known in early December.

Ms. Likins and Representative Patrick discussed possible solutions for education, noting that South Carolina falls last in all the statistics. Recognizing that throwing money is not the solution and that one size doesn’t fit all, ideas such as common core standards being adopted in different states, incorporation of innovation into the schools, and creation of an education culture within the community where the value of education is emphasized were discussed. Councilman Ferguson noted the frustration experienced by teachers, and Representative Patrick concurred that teachers have little ability to contribute practical solutions to address the problems and are not well represented in Columbia. However, he expressed his hope that this would change.

Chairman Williams thanked Representative Patrick for coming and indicated the Committee may invite him to attend another meeting later in the legislative session.

c. Proposed 2013 Intergovernmental Relations Committee Meeting Dates

Mr. Edwards moved to approve and Mayor Laughlin seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

7. Adjournment

At 4:01 p.m. Mr. Edwards moved to adjourn and Mayor Laughlin seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 3-0.

Approved: 2/20/2013

George Williams, Chairman

Respectfully submitted:

Lynn W. Buchman
Administrative Assistant