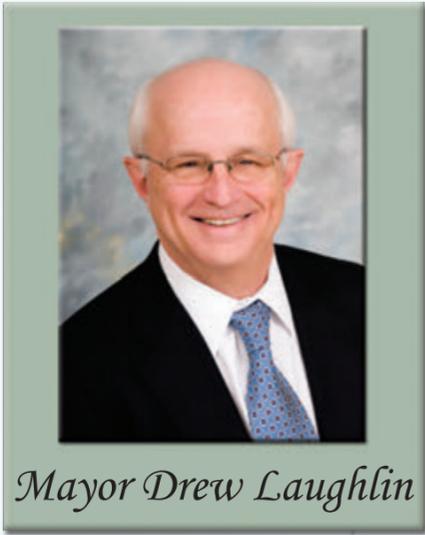


# Our Town

*A Newsletter of the Town of Hilton Head Island*  
 Brought to you by the Town of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina  
[www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov) (843)341-4600

## Mayor's Note



Mayor Drew Laughlin

One of the priorities Town Council adopted at its Strategic Planning Workshop was Public Information Enhancement. We owe it to residents to relate the value of what we do. This provides residents with a better understanding of the end product of their tax contributions. We are proud to show you a sample of the value of our work.

On page 6 of this edition, you will see information about the upcoming Heritage Golf Tournament. Please take advantage of this information and plan to attend and participate in one of the state's premier events. The preservation of the Heritage Golf

Tournament is a top priority of Town Council, and we have been doing all we can to help the tournament get through this year and find a title sponsor for the long term. I have met with Governor Haley, Heritage Classic Foundation members, and South Carolina state department heads. The efforts of tournament officials and others are not to simply preserve a golf tournament. I am reminded of a line in a movie wherein a once rich wife of an inventor, now poor, says "I don't care about losing all the money; it's losing all the stuff." Well, what is the "stuff" of the tournament? Admittedly, the town, county and state enjoy tax revenues from the event thereby reducing reliance on property taxes, but that pales to the benefits, or stuff, that the tournament generates, like: four days of International television and other media exposure for the Island; lots of business for hotels, short-term rentals, restaurants, caterers, retail businesses, real estate firms; millions of dollars for non-profits; tens of thousands of dollars for college scholarships to local students; and providing an opportunity to come together with a single purpose that produces a sense of pride and achievement for us all. That's the kind of stuff this tournament is really about, so please consider supporting the event by buying tickets, buying corporate sponsorships, or being a volunteer. Town

Council will do what it can to support and promote the tournament but needs your help as well.

Town Council recently created a committee to rewrite the Land Management Ordinance (LMO), and you will be seeing the committee in action soon. This too is a top priority of council. The committee is composed of a cross section of Islanders, and they will be tasked with making recommendations to the Planning Commission, then to Town Council, for the adoption of a streamlined, improved, and flexible LMO. The committee's process will be public, so please follow and participate in its work.

Finally, we need volunteers to be on our boards and commissions so please fill-out a talent bank application. Applications are available online at [www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov); at Town Hall between the hours of 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday; or by fax through the Town Clerk by calling 341-4604.

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## Town Manager's Note



Steve Riley

On a regular basis, residents read in our local newspaper and hear on radio and TV about various town hall topics and issues. Issues like the airport runway length, recycling, and occasional rezonings become headlines and lead stories. It is human nature to then think that the topic of the day represents the sole item we are working at town hall. We owe it to residents to articulate, with

just a sample, the value of the services you pay for. I can hear the following in my head, "What the heck are those people doing there?" That is a fair question, and sometimes I ask that myself! If you will please take a look at pages 2-5, you will get a sense of just some of the things we do that represent value to you-call it a return on investment. Do we do everything without fault or mistake? No, we're not infallible but I can assure you, we endeavor to meet your expectations by providing the highest quality service to our residents. Typically, the *Our Town* edition is 4 pages, however, when I asked staff to develop a list of some of the things they do and explain the value of what they do, I had more material than would fit within 4 pages. So, we added 2 pages but could have added many more. As the Mayor notes above, Town Council wanted us to get the word out about what we do so that residents could know town hall better.

Around town, we are improving the intersection of Beach City Road and Mathews Drive by constructing

a circle. The 3-way intersection was less than desirable and circles have worked wonders on the Island thus far. We've added security cameras at Islanders Beach Park and Coligny Circle. We experienced some car break-ins at Islanders Beach Park and adding cameras should deter that activity and, if a crime does occur, the cameras will aid in the investigation and prosecution of the defendant.

We are gearing up for the fiscal year 2011-2012 budget and public meetings will begin soon. Council will have to address competing needs in a tight budget atmosphere. Developing the budget is one of the most important things we do and despite cuts the last several years, we have been able, and will continue, to do more with less.

It's time to  
**GET YOUR PLAID ON!**  
 April 18-24, 2011  
 To order, call 843.671.2448  
 or visit [TheHeritageGolfSC.com](http://TheHeritageGolfSC.com)

# What The Heck Are They Doing At Town Hall?

Town Council adopted, as a moderate priority at its Strategic Planning Workshop, the goal of Public Information Enhancement. One of the ways to accomplish this goal is to express the value of what services town hall offers. The following is a sample of the value of our work.

## Fire & Rescue

### Fire & Rescue Training Division

- Provides EMS certification and training to ensure that our personnel are proficient and certified to state and national standards in order to provide high-quality medical care to the sick and injured.
- Operates the Training Center to ensure that our personnel are proficient in firefighting, rescue, and hazardous materials emergency response skills, possess the knowledge, and abilities to reduce property damage and to save lives.
- Conducts employee development and promotional testing to prepare Fire & Rescue personnel to meet new challenges and prepare them for future promotions so that qualified individuals are always available to provide the best service possible to the public.



### Fire & Rescue Planning Division

- Maintains records of emergency incidents and patient care reports to comply with state and federal reporting regulations and to respond to public requests under the Freedom of Information Act.
- Provides collection and analysis of emergency incident / response data as well as geographic information system (GIS) data to determine what the risks are to our community and to create an emergency response model utilizing the least number of people for the most positive outcome.
- Manages the E 911 addressing process to provide accurate and up-to-date addressing and road data for the public, utility companies, post office and other government agencies as well as to allow for the fastest and most efficient emergency response possible.

### Fire & Rescue Bureau for Fire Prevention

- Teaches fire and life safety in the schools, to civic organizations, retirement homes, and POA groups so that the public can prevent fires and respond more positively to fires in order to reduce property damage and save lives.
- Teaches the public CPR, AED, first aid, and babysitting classes at no charge so that the public is better prepared to respond to residents in need of medical attention.
- Installs child safety seats, distributes and installs smoke alarms, and participates in the file-of-life program to promote safety in the community.
- Conducts fire drills, publishes printed articles, and produces public safety messages so businesses, school groups, residents, and visitors are prepared to reduce fire and medical emergencies and to respond to them for the purpose of saving property and lives.
- Conducts plan reviews and inspections of new construction, renovations, and changes in occupancy in commercial structures to insure that the buildings in which we work and visit are safe from accidental fires, properly equipped with state-of-the-art safety control systems, and are designed to allow the public to exit dangerous situations as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- Conducts recurring fire code inspections of existing commercial buildings to ensure that buildings on the Island are safe to work, visit and properly prepared for emergencies when a fire strikes.



### Fire & Rescue Emergency Management Division

- Develops, maintains, and continually improves plans, procedures, and agreements dealing with a variety of emergencies and disasters so that the town can respond efficiently and minimize the negative impacts of these events on the people, property, environment, and economy of the Island.
- Conducts ongoing training in emergency and disaster response for town staff and regularly exercises with outside government entities. This prepares town personnel to be able to perform tasks far and above their normal duties and be prepared to work with other jurisdictions and entities to alleviate the damage from such potential disasters.
- Continually seeks to educate residents about emergency and disaster preparedness so that all residents are prepared to avoid when possible, and respond when necessary, to major disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados, and floods.

### Fire & Rescue Maintenance Division

Coordinates and makes repairs to all town and equipment so that when fires or other emergencies happen, the equipment is ready to perform at its optimum.

### Fire & Rescue Support Services Division

- Supports the Fire & Rescue operations through its communications network so that E911 callers are quickly located so that the closest life saving resources possible can be dispatched and arrive quickly and efficiently to save property and lives.
- Provides secure and reliable transmission of critical patient information directly to the Hilton Head Hospital so that the best health care possible can begin even prior to a sick or injured patient even arriving at the hospital.



## Fire & Rescue Dispatch Center

- Answers 911 emergency telephone calls, asks specified questions of the caller, and then dispatches the appropriate resources to emergencies in order to provide the closest and most appropriate resources to each emergency so that emergency situations are controlled as effectively and efficiently as possible.
- Provides trained dispatchers who can provide life saving instruction in CPR, rescue breathing, and choking so that proper medical care is provided by the public prior to Fire & Rescue's arrival in order to reduce the negative effects to the patient's health.



## Fire & Rescue Operations Division

- Maintains cross-trained personnel as firefighters and emergency medical technicians/paramedics in order to provide the most number of qualified firefighters to any emergency reducing the damaging effects of a fire.
- Maintains a collaborative relationship with the Hilton Head Hospital on new EMS treatment protocols that include recognition and interventions of new field treatment guidelines that can reduce recovery times for patients suffering from cardiac emergencies.
- Maintains response standards to medical emergencies that add value to the community by shortening the response time, providing emergency care quickly, and thus decreasing patient recovery time and/or increasing survivability.
- Maintains cross-trained personnel as emergency medical technicians/paramedics and firefighters in order to provide continuity of care from the initial treatment until the patient reaches the hospital emergency department in order to provide the best patient care possible.
- Maintains response standards to fire related emergencies adding value to the community by reducing response times which reduces property damage and maintains local property tax values.

# Finance

The town's finance department is responsible for ensuring effective preservation of the town and its fiscal assets. This is accomplished by:

- Providing effective cash management ensuring a strong bond rating for the town thereby reducing bond costs that are borne by taxpayers.
- Processing 5,770 business license renewals, 1,625 hospitality taxes payments, 2,440 accommodation taxes/beach preservation fees payments, and issuing 1,397 beach passes annually which ensures the town has funds to provide a wide range of services to its residents.
- Ensuring a level playing field for all businesses by applying fair and consistent billing, collecting, and enforcing practices.
- Overseeing the collections of all taxes, license fees and other miscellaneous fees ensuring the town receives the funds that it is due.
- Providing accounting services to the town's two affiliated organizations, Island Recreation Association and Coastal Discovery Museum, thereby reducing their administrative costs.
- Providing customer support to new businesses in the community, assisting whenever possible with their interactions with the following state agencies: Department of Revenue, Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation, Secretary of State, the Department of Health and Environmental Control, and the Internal Revenue Service.
- Ensuring public transportation vehicles, e.g. taxis, comply with minimum safety standards through the vehicle for hire inspection program.

# Administrative Services

## Town Website

Our town website provides residents access to town information 24 hours a day. A wide variety of information is offered online including full meeting agendas, the Municipal Code, adopted plans, forms, maps, town process guidelines, business license look-up, flood zone search and a whole lot more. Our e-subscription service allows residents to sign up for automatic notifications on a wide variety of topics as well as emergency alerts via e-mail or text message. Additionally, the town provides several online services that provide the ability to schedule and/or review building inspections, renew a business license, pay quarterly accommodations tax payments, or pay a municipal court fine. These online services significantly reduce the need for residents to drive to town hall.



## Interactive Voice Response Systems

Our telephone voice response systems provide residents quick access to specific business license account information, municipal court fines, inspection scheduling and results, and general information. These systems also reduce the number of phone calls town employees must answer allowing them to provide a higher level of customer service to those visiting town hall.

## Security Cameras

Over the past 3 years we have installed over 200+ security cameras at eleven different town facilities and parks. These cameras provide an additional measure of security for both residents and guests. Should something happen to their vehicle while it is unattended, the video from these security cameras provides the sheriff's office vital information that can assist them with their investigation. These cameras are also strategically positioned at both the Coastal Discovery Museum at Honey Horn and at Island Recreational Center.

## Free Wi-Fi Services

The town provides free Wi-Fi services at Coligny Beach Park and Compass Rose Park. This service is also available in council chambers and conference rooms at town hall, for business purposes.

## Records Center

The town's records center maintains records of both historical and legal importance to the town and its residents. The recent implementation of a digitized records management system will make it much easier and quicker for residents to research or retrieve a required record. In the future, several of these records will be made available on line.



# Community Development

## Optimizing Town Standards Through Day to Day Planning Activities

On a regular basis, planners work with elected and appointed officials and civic leaders, businesses, and residents to lead the planning process; the value of this to residents is that this planning creates communities of lasting value. Planners also help envision new possibilities and solutions to community problems; this creates value because we find ways to improve the existing environment and circumvent issues before they become real problems for residents.

We review development plans with a view towards consistency. This provides value to the community because we ensure that everyone is playing by the same rules. This is also valuable because development applicants have a better sense of what is required before submitting an application.

## Natural Resource Protection

This division oversees regulations on impacts to water, trees and the beach. This is a value to the public because it ensures that the Island has an abundance of natural areas for recreation and wildlife, good water quality in its creeks, and a dune system that protects us from storm surges and erosion impacts that could affect development near the ocean.

## Aesthetic and Urban Design

Land Management Ordinance regulations related to site and building design have had a direct positive bearing on our property values and increase our reputation as a tourist and retirement destination. The use of nature blending colors and materials are reflected in all aspects of site design including signs and buildings. Additionally the requirement of green space on every site preserves existing native vegetation and allows room for buildings to be placed on the site with adequate distances from streets. These are valuable to the public because they improve the look and feel of property and add to the town's reputation of a well planned community (which adds to our property values and the desire by people to relocate and vacation here).



## Guiding the Town's Future Through Long-term Planning

The Comprehensive Plan helps create a broad vision for the community and serves as our guideline that provides a future path on transportation, recreation, economic development, land use and other areas. It helps the community envision the future and find the right balance of new development and essential services, environmental protection, and innovative change.

Many programs administered by the Community Development Department have resulted in savings to the taxpayer and here's how:

- Enforcement of the energy code allows the public sees a reduction in their energy bills for their home or business.
- Enforcement of building codes reduces homeowner's insurance premiums.
- Building Insurance Services Office class rating of 3 & 4 allows wind, hail, & homeowner's insurance companies to reduce rates if they so choose.
- Participating for several years in the Community Rating System Program (CRS) means that all National Flood Insurance Program policies in flood zones will receive a 25% discount on premiums (approximately \$144 for the average policy holder living in an 'A' hazard zone with a maximum of \$250,000 property coverage). The town is one of only 52 CRS communities nationally to achieve a class 5 or better.
- Applying for and administering grants allows us to stretch public dollars, fund public improvements and to save taxpayers money. Since 1997, the town has received \$4.9 million in a variety of grant monies for capital improvement projects, public safety and education programs, and safety equipment for firefighters.

## Building Division

Seeks to ensure public safety in development and building construction by requiring: all structures are built to the standards of the building codes (building, mechanical, plumbing, electrical, energy, & fire); and contractors are licensed with the state and the town and have the proper background credentials in their field to properly conduct their job. This is valuable to residents because it ensures that buildings are safe and accessible.



# Public Projects & Facilities

## Facility Maintenance

Through daily inspections on town-owned facilities, facilities technicians are able create an image of a well-maintained facility and give a good first impression through proactive means and make on-site emergent repairs creating a healthy and safe environment for residents and visitors to enjoy. These inspections not only establish a well-run facility, it creates a regular program of inspection and preventive maintenance that can extend its useful life.

## Contracts and Service Administration

Through direct supervision and daily management of the town's various service contracts and franchise agreements, all facilities and amenities are maintained at a level that is clean in appearance and safe. Roadway shoulders and medians are properly groomed and kept free of litter; pathways are monitored and kept free of debris in conjunction with annual repair and rejuvenation; public beach accesses using ADA compliant mobi matting is checked and serviced daily to insure a smooth transition for the beach goers; and restrooms are kept clean.

## Operation and Maintenance of Traffic Signals

Responsive management of these systems means minimizing traffic delays and limiting our dependency on the state. Managing our traffic signals in-house also saves the town money versus contracting the bulk of this work to private companies.

## Storm Water Inventory and Maintenance

The collection of data and inventorying of the storm water systems allows us to proactively address maintenance needs and flood control projects and thus mitigate flood damage. Taking over the PUD drainage systems allows the town to manage the systems in a more holistic fashion and frees up PUD dues devoted to storm water maintenance for other projects.

## Pathway Construction and Maintenance

Beyond the recreational opportunities they afford and a means of reducing traffic and pollution, the construction and maintenance of a vast pathway network allows those who cannot drive or those without motor vehicles a safe means of getting around the Island.



# Administration

## Special Events

Permitting of special events ensures that parking, traffic issues, safety, and security are in place for all events. This allows for orderly, manageable, and safe Island events and races at, for example, St. Patrick's Day Parade, Wingfest, and Island-wide 4th of July fireworks. Special Events promote community spirit and pride by providing residents many opportunities throughout the year to participate and volunteer at Island-wide events; provide non-profit organizations opportunities to raise needed resources to assist members of the community with needed services; and provide opportunities for students to volunteer and earn required educational service hours.

## Intergovernmental Work with the Local Delegation/General Assembly

During the state legislative session, the town closely monitors/opposes/supports various bills that may impact the town. The value to residents is the freedom and flexibility to control local affairs, the preservation of home rule, and allows the town the ability to provide resources in a manner that best supports our local needs.

## Dissemination of Town Information in Newspaper Articles, Magazines, and Television

The town publishes: a quarterly edition of the Our Town Newsletter that acts as a report card of sorts; a quarterly article by our Mayor in La Isla Magazine; and a monthly Mayoral article in CH2 Magazine to keep residents and visitors up-to-date on town issues and projects.

## Processing of Freedom of Information Requests

The S.C. Freedom of Information Act ensures that town business is performed in an open and public manner. The town responds to many types of requests which provide residents with information on, for example, contracts, building permits, elevation requirements, accident reports, maps, etc.

## Land Acquisition Program

To date, the town, with support of its residents, has acquired over 142 parcels of land totaling 1,194 acres. The value to residents has been to: reduce traffic congestion by reducing development potential in strategic locations; preserve open space; preserve land for public access and/or views to the water; and provide land for active and passive recreation uses, scenic easements, and future public recreational facilities.

## Agreements with Beaufort County Sheriff's Office, Shore Beach Services, Inc. and Palmetto Electric Cooperative, Inc.

The town's law enforcement services agreement with the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office provides residents with a level of professional police protection while providing a cost savings that benefit the community. The town's franchise agreement with Shore Beach Services, Inc. allows Shore Beach Services to conduct certain commercial activities within designated beach areas. In return, Shore Beach Services, Inc. provides beach patrol, lifeguards, and removes trash and debris along the beach as needed. This provides residents and visitors with a clean, pristine, and safe beach to enjoy. The town's franchise agreement with Palmetto Electric Cooperative, Inc. provides for the burial of all existing and future non-transmission lines owned by Palmetto Electric Cooperative, Inc. Burial of power lines on a coastal, barrier island increases the reliability of providing electrical services to residents after a disaster situation and adds to the aesthetic appeal of our Island.



## Participation and Membership in Organizations/Agencies

The town maintains memberships with various organizations/agencies to keep informed and contribute to the success of our Island.

## Patrolling the Island for Compliance with the Town Code

Code enforcement officers conduct regular Island-wide patrols to ensure compliance with the town code, including the Land Management Ordinance (LMO). Some examples include sign enforcement, natural resources protection, parking enforcement, littering and making sure businesses are in compliance with their approved site plans. Enforcement of town codes helps protect the natural character, peace and tranquility Hilton Head Island is known for.

## Patrolling the Beach to Enforce the Sea Turtle Protection Ordinance

Code enforcement officers conduct regular nighttime patrols of the beach May 1st thru October 31st each year to enforce the Sea Turtle Protection Ordinance. This ordinance states that no artificial lights shall illuminate the beach. Before turtle nesting season begins each year, officers contact rental companies and provide them with literature to educate beach front visitors about the ordinance and the importance of keeping beach front lighting to a minimum to protect this federally protected species.



## Prosecution in Municipal Court

The staff attorney provides professionalism and expertise to the prosecution of town code and some state code violations and e.g. DUI cases, criminal domestic violence and drug cases. The added value of a prosecutor means, e.g., DUI cases are more likely to lead to guilty verdicts.

## Patrolling the Island to Enforce Noise Ordinance

Code enforcement officers conduct periodic patrols to ensure businesses are complying with the noise ordinance to protect the peace and quiet for our residents.

# Human Resources

- **Support Internships, Job Shadowing, Career Fairs and Youth Leadership Development Activities.** Exposes youth to local employment opportunities and ways to make a difference in our community.
- **Support Employee Training, Development and Acquisition of Licenses/Certifications/Degrees.** Produces enhanced knowledge/competency in service delivery.
- **Evaluate/Deploy Effective Employee Recruitment and Selection Processes.** Results in hiring employees well-qualified to advance town's strategic plan.
- **Encourage Continuing Focus on Employee Safety.** Contributes to reduction in workers' compensation cost and employee absence rate

# 2011 Heritage Golf Tournament

## Ticket Information

### Attention golf fans – It's Time to Get Your Plaid On!

Tickets for April's Heritage at Harbour Town are now on sale! Dates for the 43rd annual Heritage, the only PGA TOUR event in South Carolina, are **April 18-24, 2011**.

This year, The Heritage is excited to unveil **Daily Tickets** for the first time in more than a decade. A limited number will be sold for each day of the 72-hole competition.

Friday and Saturday tickets are priced at \$60 each.  
Thursday and Sundays are only \$50 each.

The Heritage is still offering week long badges.

#### Clubhouse Badge - \$190

Offers access to the tournament grounds for all seven days of the event. Includes admission to the Clubhouse featuring private restrooms and the Heritage Pavilion. New in 2011 – two on-course hospitality venues, presented by Hargray, with great golf views and food & beverage for purchase.

#### Grounds Badge - \$150

Grants access to the tournament grounds for all seven days of the event.

#### Arnold Palmer Pass - \$375

This enhanced ticket booklet grants exclusive access to 2 private entertainment venues with exceptional golf views. Enjoy access to the tournament grounds for all seven days of the event. Gain admission to the Hargray and Wild Wing climate controlled venues on holes 15 and 18, Thursday through Sunday. A daily upscale buffet, draft beer, wine and soft drinks are included in the ticket price at both venues. Spirits are available for purchase.

#### Practice Round Ticket - \$35

Enjoy the practice rounds and Pro-Ams Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of tournament week. Autographs and cameras are welcome.

Fans may purchase tickets by calling Tournament Headquarters at 843-671-2448 or by visiting [www.theheritagegolfsc.com](http://www.theheritagegolfsc.com).

## How the Heritage Helps

When you support The Heritage, you are helping support hundreds of non-profit organizations in the community. The Heritage Classic Foundation directs and guides the tournament, and since 1987 it has distributed more than \$20 million to a wide variety of charitable organizations.

## The Heritage: An Economic Engine for Hilton Head Island and South Carolina

The Heritage Golf Tournament Economic Impact Study was conducted by Clemson University and the University of South Carolina – Beaufort, April 12 – 18, 2010. Over 7 days, 1,891 spectators completed the survey using SNAP Survey Software and touch screen laptops. ReDyn input/output modeling software was utilized to determine the results.

### Heritage Economic Impact - \$81.9 Million in 2010

Compared to:

- 2005 Players Championship - \$95.78 Million
- Darlington Raceway - \$54 Million
- Cooper River Bridge Run - \$20 Million
- Family Circle Cup - \$25 Million

### Facts

- The Average Heritage Visitor spends \$345 per day.
- The Heritage Spectators are loyal. 85% have attended multiple times.
- 61% of Heritage Spectators live outside Beaufort County.
- 57% of Heritage Spectators play golf at least once during their stay.
- 71.2% of respondents with a permanent residence outside of Beaufort County indicated The Heritage was the primary purpose of their trip to Hilton Head Island.
- 62% of respondents with a permanent residence outside of Beaufort County indicated they would be unsure, unlikely or very unlikely to visit the area if the tournament was no longer held on Hilton Head Island.

