



# Town of Hilton Head Island **TOWN MANAGER UPDATE**

## **An Update from Town Manager Steve Riley 8/31/2020**

Good afternoon Hilton Head Islanders and Guests,

Here's an update of what's happening around Town.

Our Town Council voted unanimously today to pursue legal action to keep Beaufort County from imposing a uniform law enforcement service charge to collect an additional \$4.3 million in revenue for sheriff office services.

Following an executive session to discuss the matter, the Town Council voted 7-0 in open session for the "Town to take all necessary action to protect the interests of the citizens of Hilton Head Island with regards to imposition of the County's uniform law enforcement service charge."

Our next steps involve seeking an injunction and filing a lawsuit in the coming days to block implementation and collection of this new service charge. Even though we have been forced into taking this action, we remain committed to continuing discussions with County officials to hopefully resolve the issue.

On Monday, August 24, the Beaufort County Council voted to impose the uniform law enforcement service charge only for the Town of Hilton Head Island. This charge would generate surplus revenue for Beaufort County on top of the approximately \$52,000,000 that it already receives annually from Hilton Head Island taxpayers.

### **The Lights Are On: Yacht Cove Light Project Complete**

The new overhead street lights at the intersection of U.S. 278/William Hilton Parkway (Bus.) and Yacht Cove Drive have been installed and are now working. This pilot project was born out of discussions regarding pathway and crosswalk safety enhancements. Our contractor, J. Moore Electrical, began the work on August 11, and was able to complete the job well ahead of the project's deadline. The project included the installation of seven poles to support nine overhead light fixtures. We will be seeking public feedback on the aesthetic and perceived effectiveness of these overhead street lights and will report these findings to Town Council. We will let you know when our survey opens for feedback.

### **S.C. DHEC Updates COVID-19 Testing Recommendations**

Over the weekend, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) announced updated recommendations for COVID-19 testing and emphasized the importance of testing.



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Dr. Brannon Traxler, a DHEC Physician, said “while many people with COVID-19 have mild or no symptoms, it is still possible that they could be infected and pass the disease to friends, family and loved ones. Meanwhile, others don't know that they've been in close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with someone with confirmed COVID-19. Therefore, we continue to provide [no out-of-pocket costs community testing events](#) open to anyone who would like to be tested.”

DHEC encourages anyone who would like to be tested to get tested. In addition, DHEC recommends routine testing of individuals with known exposures or concerns about exposures. Routine testing allows public health workers to diagnose those who are asymptomatic and interrupt the ongoing spread of the virus.

“If you are out and about in the community or around others, participating in group events, or not able to socially distance or wear a mask, we recommend that you receive routine testing once a month or sooner if someone you've been around tests positive or if you develop symptoms,” said Dr. Traxler.

You should also get tested if:

You're having any of these symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- New loss of taste or smell
- Muscle or body aches
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Your doctor or health care provider recommends it for you.

You live with or have been around someone that:

- has recently tested positive,
- suspects they may have COVID-19, or
- is having symptoms of COVID-19.
- You were within 6 feet of others for more than 15 minutes without wearing a face mask.



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## **COVID-19 Testing In Our Community**

Both Hilton Head Hospital and Coastal Carolina Hospital (Hardeeville) offer free drive-thru testing for COVID-19 from 8 a.m. to noon, Monday thru Friday. No appointment is necessary and, as of tomorrow, Tuesday, September 1, you will not need a doctor's order to get the test at the hospitals. If you're looking for other community pop-up testing sites, go to DHEC's website at [scdhec.gov](http://scdhec.gov). DHEC's website is also your best source for information on the latest confirmed and estimated COVID-19 cases in our community. We share this data on our COVID-19 hub page at [hiltonheadislandsc.gov/COVID19](http://hiltonheadislandsc.gov/COVID19).

## **Cover – Distance – Clean to Stop the Spread of COVID-19**

Help stop the spread of COVID-19 by:

- Wearing a mask in public.
- Distancing yourself physically by six feet and avoiding group gatherings.
- Washing your hands often.
- Getting tested.
- Staying home if you are sick.

## **Charles Cousins, Longtime Town Leader, is Leaving Town Hall This Week**

Will we miss him? Yes!

Are we happy for him? Yes!

Do we mixed emotions? Yes!

It is with those same mixed emotions that I announce that my friend and colleague, Charles Cousins, is retiring this week from the Town of Hilton Head Island after 32 years of service to the Hilton Head Island community. Charles began work for our Community Development Department in the fall of 1988 as a Planning Analyst. One of his first assignments was to assist in the development of the Town's (and one of the State's) first Traffic Impact Fee ordinance. He became and remained the Town's impact fee expert. Charles assisted with the development of many of the plans and reports that have guided the growth and development of the Island. At the same time, he assumed different titles and responsibilities including that of Director of Community Development and most recently, Assistant to the Town Manager.

Charles' calm demeanor and thoughtful approach helped guide the Town through some tumultuous growth pains. Elected officials and citizens alike appreciated his grasp of the issues and deliberate calm as he helped to navigate the way forward.



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As a bicycling enthusiast Charles lent his knowledge and expertise to the expansion of our Island Pathway system and our successful pursuit of the designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community. He played a key role in our recognition as an Audubon International Green Community. Over the years Charles was very involved in planning for a variety of road and infrastructure improvements, assisting with our first Tax Increment Finance District, plans to improve telecommunications infrastructure through strategic siting of new towers, extension of water and sewer services in Ward One and other efforts. He played a key role in the development of the 2010 Airport Master Plan that led to the runway expansion project and now plans to expand the terminal.

Other projects included the Shelter Cove Redevelopment, the Island Rec Center expansion, enhancements to the Coligny and Sea Pines Circles; the USCB Island campus off Pope Avenue and the soon-to-be completed Celebration Park. And of course, Charles has played an important role in our disaster preparedness efforts and oversaw the Recovery Function following Hurricane Mathew.

Charles became the Assistant to the Town Manager in 2018 and in that role took on several special projects and represented the Town Manager at numerous meetings and negotiations on a variety of topics. Most recently he has been supporting the efforts on the US 278 Gateway Corridor Committee and has been the Town's leader in the negotiations with the St. James Church, Beaufort County, and the Federal Aviation Administration on relocating the church.

We congratulate Charles on an outstanding career, and wish him the very best in retirement.

### **Town Hall Closed on Labor Day**

In observance of Labor Day, the Town Administrative buildings will be closed on Monday, September 7, 2020.