

Sullivan's Island Town Council

STAFF REPORT

The Sullivan's Island Town Council held its regular meeting on May 20 at 6:00pm at Town Hall. Council member Patrick O'Neil was absent from the meeting.

Accreted Land

Island resident Norwood Smoak expressed his displeasure with the violations he personally observed in the accreted land. "I saw so many infractions of the law it made me sick," he said. "Where are the inspectors?"

Recently, the Town began an investigation after learning that areas of the island's accreted land's growth were being cut below the restricted height. Some residents have reported these actions have resulted in the deaths of trees and plants in some areas. Town Administrator Andy Benke stated that building inspectors had also observed violations. It was stated that the "case is still under investigation". Mayor Carl Smith pointed out that, in an effort to be objective, they have given the responsibility of investigating to Charleston County. Town Council stated that they did not know when a report would be available. *Note: The Island Eye News would like to apologize for reporting that Town Council would be releasing the report of the accreted land investigation at the May 20th meeting. We received some incorrect information and hope this error did not cause too much inconvenience.*

Disorderly Conduct

Several residents spoke about the problems of noise and drunken behavior coming from the Commercial District during nocturnal hours. Residents said they've observed people having sex in a car, drunk persons trying to enter random homes to use the bathrooms, and a dope bottle on a sidewalk. Of course, noise from patrons loitering outside or making their way to cars was another issue.

Rusty Bennett, owner of Poe's Tavern, announced that he, along with other business owners, have formed the Sullivan's Island Better Business Association and will attempt to address these issues. He admitted that some patrons can get unruly and loud when leaving the bars. However, he added that if more parking were opened up for the commercial district that he would be able to control patrons from the time they left their cars to the time they got back in. "I'm committed to being as good of a corporate citizen as I can be," he stated.

Council member Jerry Kaynard stated that there was a downtown business having similar trouble with noisy patrons leaving the bar near a residential area. The business hired a private security guard to handle problem patrons outside of the bar, even putting them in cabs if visibly intoxicated. Mike Perkis suggested that the late-night business

owners on Sullivan's Island could do the same thing.

Town Council let everyone know that they are working to correct the problem. Buddy Howle said that the Town is working with the Police Chief to approach the problem. Mayor Carl Smith noted that the Commercial District Master Plan that is underway will address these problems.

Budget Biz

Ways and Means Chairman Mike Perkis announced that there will be a small millage increase for the next budget cycle. He says the increase should be less than one mil and will result in an approximate \$35-\$40 increase over the next fiscal year. Perkis noted that the Ways and Means Committee worked very hard to cut expenses in order to minimize the tax burden. Mayor Smith praised Perkis for the excellent work he has done as Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.

According to the paperwork provided, the Town's financial balances are as follows:

- General Fund- \$2,587,724.30
- Sewer Fund- \$322,594.85
- Water Fund- \$349,471.03
- State ATAX (65%) - \$6,701.29
- State ATAX (30%) - \$8,224.78
- Hospitality Tax Fund- \$445,624.14
- Local ATAX Fund- \$231,889.32
- Tree Fund- \$3,981,142.91
- Park Foundation- \$59,354.83
- Volunteer Fire Department- \$90,566.86

Personnel

The Town now has a fully staffed Fire and Police Department. That is convenient as summer approaches and the Town's temporary population will swell. Personnel Committee Chairman Jerry Kaynard said that three Fire Department employees will rotate beach patrol on weekends.

Kaynard also stated that the Committee is working to implement a "merit-salary" system. The system will allow the Town to give raises to its employees based on performance evaluations

Commerical Consultant Chosen

The selection committee charged with choosing the consulting firm for the Community Commercial District Master Plan met on May 9 to interview the top six firms. Each firm was given 45 minutes to impress the Committee. In the end, Seamon, Whiteside & Associates, Incorporated was chosen over the other candidates. Urban Edge Studio, LS3P and Kimley-Horn and Associates, Incorporated will be working with them on various aspects of the project. The project will include public hearings where residents can provide input and suggestions.

The Sullivan's Island Town Council will hold a special meeting on June 2 at 6:00pm at Town Hall to pass second and third reading of the budget ordinance. The meeting will include a public hearing in order to receive comments and input from residents. Town Council will hold its next regular meeting on June 17 at 6:00pm at Town Hall.

