DAUFUSKIE ISLAND COUNCIL MINUTES - JANUARY 26 2015

3:00pm

Location: Mary Field School

Present: Chuck Hunter, Charlie Small, Janet Adams, Bill Nickels, Mike Davis, Mike Loftus, John

Schartner, Jody Smith

Guests: Senator Tom Davis, Don Newton 60+ attendees - standing room only

Chuck Hunter introduced Sen. Davis explaining that he went to the Senator saying that Daufuskie Island (DI) needs a voice. Sen. Davis has agreed to help and has researched incorporating and thus we should "treat him as a dear friend.

Sen. Davis began by saying that he became involved in politics in 2002 and that this is his seventh year as State Senator. He states that he now has an understanding of the fundamental issues of DI including:

Solid Waste
Transportation
Roads
Ferry
Beach erosion
Basic amenities
CoBRA (Coastal Barrier Resource Act)

He agreed to research the pros and cons of incorporating and is working on access to the island involving the new Jasper Port and field cut.

Working on potential erosion problem (Army Corp of Engineers) from Savannah River dredging. Willing to talk to Congressmen Clyburn and Sanford about the basic amenities including condition of roads and facilities (lack of) at public sites.

I am here to learn from you and take back information to all levels of govt including local, state, federal and the Low Country Council of Governments.

Senator Davis responded to questions from the audience:

Q: Do you meet with the County Council?

A: Yes - every year to discuss problems, solutions and appropriations

Q: Opinion about DI incorporation?

Look at the costs, use of private vendors and contractors.

Pros: elect representatives and apply for grants

Disadvantages: bureaucracy, potential for higher taxes

At the state level, proximity to existing incorporated municipalities. And is it something that the DI community wants?

Sen. Davis admitted that until 3-4 months ago, DI has,'t been on his radar.

Q: Examples of other communities that have tries incorporating?

A: He would need to research. Would work with Municipal Association of SC.

For DI, the priority should be about getting basic concerns addresses and suggests continuing to meet.

Q: We need attention. Someone needs to look at our property tax flow versus what we get back.

A: Suggests including State and congressional delegates including Congressman Jim Clyburn and Congressman Sanford.

One of his main objectives for 2015 will be DI.

Q: Can anyone be contacted regarding DI erosion problems aside from Army Corps of Engineers?

A: We are beyond the comment period for SHEP (Savannah Harbor Expansion Project). Jasper Port ripple effect will be positive for DI.

Q: Is the Jasper Port project still viable?

A: Project will be filed in August 2015. Starting date unknown.

Q: What can we do about the CoBRA issue?

A: Property owners can work with agencies by getting good data to present and involving Sen. Graham and Sen. Scott. Currently, CoBRA zones are largely politically driven.

Q: We've had trouble getting the attention of Beaufort County Council. We need someone beyond our own council. Thank you for attending. Are you now "the guy"?

A: Yes, but it depends on what issues you are talking about. Smaller issues (roads, amenities), yes. Larger issues he will definitely work on but suggests that we start small.

Q: Sen. Scott, Gov. Haley have been here. Can you help us get past the stumbling block of DI being recognized only as a beautiful spot?

Q: Where are we with the ferry system?

A: Looking at field cut. Will work with SC Department of Transportation and will focus on this as the biggest part of our transportation issue.

Knows of Haig Point ferry (hourly) and the public ferry (two trips per day). A spokes person for the public ferry said that approximately 35 people ride weekly (???) and that more trips weren't necessary.

Audience responded that there is no public service on Sunday and that the trips on and off are at 7:30am and 2:00pm (??) so that DI residents cannot have jobs off island. The ferry is actually a tour boat not a ferry and that on certain trips, luggage and bags are not allowed. Senator asked what the most important issue is:

Audience was unanimous - FERRY.

Audience: A parking lot is needed on Hilton Head. People on DI need to work off island. 3/4 of your day can be taken up on the public ferry. Not having a ferry is inhibiting revenue coming to the island (real estate sales...). The price of the ferry is a problem for vacation rentals.

Senator Davis: Emergency preparedness will be the issue that gets results.

Sen. Davis asked spokes person for the public ferry how is the public ferry subsidized?

A: We get comped back. Tickets are \$2, \$3 and \$4 and we get reimbursed for the rest (??)

Audience member explained that there is no public landing on HH. County obligation is currently one round trip per day.

Subsidy was \$150,000 and is now around \$250,000 but that the money is now divided with Haig Point for the transportation of school children on and off DI.

The county has set parameters for both time and money for the ferry.

Another audience member said that Pinckney Island had been designated as a public landing for Daufuskie. Would need development, oversight and safe road access.

Q: The missing ingredient is representation from Beaufort County Council. Who will listen to our concerns? Please get the Council to listen to us.

A: I understand.

Q: Salt water intrusion.

A: Very familiar with that issue. Prior to being Senator was involved in research of this issue involving allocation of Savannah River water, discharge into river and ground water. City of Savannah uses excessive amounts of water from Floridan aquifer. Bi-state problem (GA/SC).

May have missed opportunity to weigh in on this issue about 3 years ago. Could easily end up in court 10 years from now. GA needed clean water certificate from SC - project moved through without it.

Charlie Small thanked the audience and Senator Davis. Audience was able to speak with Senator briefly afterward.

REGULAR MEETING:

Present: Charlie Small, Janet Adams, Bill Nickels, Mike Davis, Mike Loftus, John Schartner Charlie reiterated council's role. A community service, responsibility and an opportunity for anyone and everyone to participate. Need for consistent communication. Proposed questionnaire for DI residents about issues, problem resolution and strategies.

February 14 Election update:

Ballots were printed but will be redone.

Janet looked up deadline for application for DI Council candidacy - January 31. Ballots will be reprinted and distributed after that date.

Geoff Bangert withdrew (personal reasons).

Charlie announced the formation of a committee to study incorporation led by Len Pojednic. Len is asking Milton Deitch, Aaron Crosby and others to join committee. Discussion about roads: Church Road graded today but stopped. Roads being surveyed on Wednesday January 28.

Open forum:

Possible use of Nextdoor.com and Front Porch for DI Council communications ACTION ITEM:

Front Porch will run announcement (provided by Charlie) about new ballots (provided by Charlie).