

**Daufuskie Island Council Meeting
Mary Fields School
September 19, 2017
Minutes**

CALL TO ORDER

Present:

Chuck Hunter
Steve Hill
James Bayes
Maureen Devine
John Schartner
Darnell Brawner
Charlie Small
Sallie Ann Robinson

Absent:

Deborah Smith

A majority of Council Members being in attendance, there was a duly constituted quorum.

Special Topics/Speakers

Daufuskie Elementary School

Chairman Chuck Hunter acknowledged the guest speaker: Amanda Lofton, Administrator, Daufuskie Island Elementary School. Amanda provided an overview of the 2017-2018 school year.

Daufuskie Island Elementary provides classes from pre-K through 5th grade. This school year 24 children are enrolled (up from 18 last year). School has two teachers handling instruction responsibilities: Kim Castillo and Melanie Willis.

Because of days missed due to Hurricane Irma, the school will conduct classes on two Saturday's in November. Don't be surprised when you see school buses operating on Nov 11 and Nov 18.

There is a new school bus on the island – one made especially for Daufuskie. It operates on gas and is wheelchair accessible. The school district has engaged two full-time drivers, AM and PM. To provide back-up drivers, CDL training classes are being organized. Anybody interested should contact Amanda at the school

The school's Fall Festival is being organized. Date to be published soon. The Christmas party is tentatively planned for December 14th. Arrangements are being coordinated with the Fire Dept.

Responding to a question, Amanda explained that the low student threshold is 12. If the number of students falls below this level, the school would remain open, but schedules and teaching responsibilities would change.

Bailey Bill

Steve Hill provided an overview of recent Beaufort County action on adapting provisions of the Bailey Bill for Daufuskie. On 18 Sept the County's Natural Resources Committee considered the Bailey Bill – formally titled an ordinance for special tax assessment for Daufuskie Island. Mr. Hill explained the proposed ordinance would establish a special tax incentive for owners of historical buildings. These buildings can be refurbished or repaired and remained taxed at a reduced rate. The State law permits a minimum investment of 20% of the building's value for a 20-year tax relief. Several years ago, the town of Beaufort enacted an ordinance with limits set at 75% investment for 10 years of tax relief. Steve Hill and Mike Bedenbaugh attended the Committee meeting and advocated the 20/20 standard for Daufuskie. After discussion, the Committee adopted a recommendation for the full Council of a 40/20 standard. Mr. Hill commented although the measure was adopted on a 4-3 vote, there is a strong sentiment for County-wide uniformity. He doubts the full Council will approve it.

John Schartner pointed out that conditions in the city of Beaufort are very different than Daufuskie Island. This is indeed the case and when the ordinance is considered by the full Council this difference will be emphasized.

Sallie Ann Robinson inquired how long people will have to make use of its provisions. It's expected to be available for as long as the ordinance is in force.

Committee Reports

Amenities

Darnell Brawner reported the shifting shoreline has necessitated a reevaluation of placing a bench at the beach near Turtle Road. Mr. Brawner may organize a Gazebo clean-up effort to include power washing and general policing of the area.

Sallie Ann Robinson asked if a fish cleaning station is going to be installed at the County Dock. Darnell responded that he did intend to proceed. The cost is about \$400 and he needs to secure permission from the County.

DI Plan and Code

Deborah Smith could not attend the meeting, however she asked that an announcement be made. The 28 August community meeting had to be postponed. A new meeting will be scheduled on 2 October.

Cultural and Historic Preservation

Sallie Ann Robinson reported that DIC has sponsored an application to Beaufort County for funding under the 2% Accommodation Tax Program. A request for a \$16,000 grant for Community Park signs, picnic tables, and grills has been submitted.

Outreach

Chuck Hunter reported that at a County Council Public Facilities meeting it was announced that one bid had been received in response to the RFP for the property at the County Landing. The County has decided not to respond to the bid, or re-announce the RFP. Instead the County is looking for an input from the Daufuskie Island Council. The DIC will meet soon and decide how to proceed. Positive news is that the property will not be sold.

Ferry

Steve Hill reported that the County's public ferry contract has not yet been finalized. The County is still discussing a renewal with Haig Point Ferry Company. Since the end of June, the ferry operation has been on a month-to-month extension. After the contract is finalized, a meeting of the Ferry

Committee will be organized so that any new policies or procedures can be explained.

In response to an inquiry, Mr. Hill indicated he is reporting as a member of the Daufuskie Island Council.

A community member reported she had received a message from Palmetto Breeze notifying that parking fares will soon be raised. Mr. Hill explained the intention to invite the Daufuskie Island Ferry Service manager to the upcoming Ferry Committee meeting to explain any new policies.

Resources Development

James Bays reported that \$955 had been raised at the recent Eclipse Party. He thanked all who attended and donated. The money will be used to fund Community Park playground equipment. A donation jar is still available at Lucy Bells restaurant.

Solid Waste

Darnell Brawner reported that Hurricane Irma storm debris can be deposited at the County dump. He also advised that the County backhoe is down. It was damaged during the recent road clearing effort.

Sallie Ann Robinson commented that the dump is in bad shape. Buzzards are even hanging around. Mr. Darnell agreed, pointing out that people are leaving trash bags on the ground which encourages rodents and buzzards. He believes monitors are needed to provide active surveillance of the facility.

A community member questioned whether there are any signs at the dump. Mr. Brawner acknowledged that signage would promote good behavior. Signs on the other side of the road have seemed to stop dumping in that area.

A community member commented on the need for anti-litter signs on the island. Indicating they should be placed at island entry points. Mr. Brawner said that Beaufort County should help. It was pointed out that the County usually doesn't own the rights-of-way.

Roads

John Schartner provided an update. The action statement endorsed last month by DIC was delivered to the County. Mr. Schartner followed-up with County reps on the margin of the recent Public Facilities meeting. The reps had recently visited Daufuskie and viewed the asphalt chunks on the roads. They indicated that getting a crusher to the island was not likely as it is too expensive -- \$30-40K. This pricing seems excessive. Mr. Schartner intends to further pursue with the County.

A community member agreed that the pricing figure quoted is exorbitant. Crushers can be rented by the day or week.

Another community member question why this is a County problem. Mr. Schartner explained that the asphalt material was transferred under the authorization of Beaufort County. A similar approach had been used on the road to Freeport. Beaufort County is responsible. The community member persisted, indicating the contractor who provided the material to the County is responsible.

Public Forum

Len Pojednic announced that the Daufuskie Conservancy will be holding their beach cleanup volunteer effort on Saturday, 14 October. Everybody is encouraged to meet at the beach Gazebo.

Mike Bedenbaugh commented that at the recent Public Facilities meeting during which the Bailey Bill was discussed, Tabor Vaux had been helpful and very supportive.

John Coulter commented that the beach gazebo needs attention and repair.

Sallie Ann Robinson announced that she has fully relocated to the Frances Jones cottage.