

Daufuskie Island Council Meeting Minutes

August 21, 2018

Mary Fields School, Daufuskie Island

Pledge of Allegiance (Led by Leanne Coulter)

Roll Call

Present: Deborah Smith, Sallie Ann Robinson, John Schartner, Chris Sutcliffe, Erin Quinn, Leanne Coulter, James Bays.

All Council members being present, there was a duly constituted majority.

General Announcements

- **Community Happenings:**

- Golfers! Friday September 7th – Charity golf tournament for the FUABC (First Union African Baptist Church) and the Jeremiah 38 Medical Missions Trips. Many of our islanders have been traveling to Honduras and Ecuador. This event is raising funds specifically for the medical supplies that are utilized during these trips. This event held at the Haig Point golf course is a wonderful way to play, have some fun, and is tax deductible. Additional individual and foursome spots are available. Volunteers are welcome.
- Tomorrow, August 22nd, at 5pm at Mary Fields: The Historical Foundation will host a viewing of 'Rosenwald', a documentary about a Philanthropic man who made his fortune as a business man with Sears & Roebuck, and mobilized communities to match his donations to help build 5,000+ schools for African American children in the South. The Jane Hamilton School is designed similarly to the models they used.

Treasurer's Report

John Schartner reported that there has been a separate bank account created to hold funds specifically for the park. Currently, \$1,200 from 2017 fundraising efforts is deposited. Shortly, \$20,000 from the state grant State Representative Jeff Bradley obtained for Daufuskie will be deposited. John also explained that the grant money was requested in collaboration with the Community Foundation, as it has a 501c3 status, which the Council does not have (a requirement of the grant). The full amount will be deposited into the Council playground account for equipment purchases.

Committee Updates:

Roads Committee

Committee Chair John Schartner reported that some community members had reached out since School Road had been having a larger influx of heavy vehicles. The road is now in pretty good shape thanks to the fast responses of Les Rivers and Greg Hutton to grade the road and remove the ruts.

DI Plan and Code Committee

Chair Deb Smith reported that the county staff has requested some technical changes to the proposed Code Revisions, and consultants Sonny Timmerman & Beverly Davis will present those requested changes at a public meeting of the Plan and Code Committee on Saturday, August 25th at 10:00 am at the Mary Fields School. The Plan was approved unanimously by the Planning Commission and was subsequently approved by a unanimous vote by the County Council's Natural Resources Committee. The Council members and staff were very complimentary about the quality of work and indicated that the document may serve as a best practice for other communities and expressed appreciation to Sonny and Beverly for their pro bono contribution. The Plan will now go to the full Council for three readings.

Cultural and Historical Committee

Sallie Ann reported that a new fundraiser is coming and is expected to be a successful one. She is working on clarifying who should be mowing the grass at the Frances Jones Park/ future ball field area as the high grass attracts snakes.

Erin Quinn reported that conversations have begun about having playground equipment put in at the FJPark. Terry Elrod has agreed to help organize the volunteer effort to prepare the ground and install the equipment. Having our community help with this will greatly offset costs and allow for more equipment to be purchased. Once working dates are organized, notices for helpers will be posted. Current estimates to have equipment delivered to the barge is approximately 11 weeks due to the manufacture's backlog of orders.

Resource Development Committee

James Bays reported that a committee meeting will be announced for early September and another \$36.47 was collected this month from the change donation boxes around Daufuskie.

Ferry Committee

Chris Sutcliffe read a statement from Captain Richard regarding the confusion around gratuity or charges for trailer use:

"Thank you for sharing your conversation regarding tips for the marine staff. The policy has not changed. A customary gratuity for assistance transporting items between the boat and parking lots on both docks has always been in place."

County passengers at no time in the history of the public ferry service have received valet service. DIFS has no obligation whatsoever to provide free valet service. Haig Point purchased 8 luggage trailers and provides two carts to facilitate ticket sale revenue from non-island resident visitors.

While doing so, island residents are welcome to avail themselves of that service and pay a generous handling fee, (aka, gratuity)

If the cargo continues to increase, there is a very real chance that DIFS will have to increase staff and impose cargo fees for two reasons: to cover labor costs and curb the amount of cargo being transferred on the ferry.

Right now, our job is to provide great service and to prevent abuse of our staff.

The situation is very simple. Islanders can transport their personal items. If they take advantage of the valet service, they pay a handling fee to the crew.

Please have all Islanders that need further explanation to contact me directly and I will be glad to explain.

Thanks, Richard”

Comments from the public included: agreement of thanks for the great job done by the mates and captains; large influx of luggage coming over as there were previously 2 blue carts used and now there are 6; some believe that both islanders and tourists have gotten away from tipping with larger amounts of cargo; Tourists are bringing even more belongings and food with them since there are fewer restaurants; encouragement to set everyone up for success by making reservations and having the appropriate size boats;

Additional concerns and questions can be shared with Chris Sutcliffe.

If you need assistance with tickets and are on island, please see Pam Cobb or LeAnne Coulter at Mary Fields School. You can also use the computer there to add money to your account.

Old Business

Trash Center- Mr. Casey Scott provided information on the new solid waste management services for the Historic District. The new program will start September 1st, and it will be staffed Tuesday to Saturday 9-12 and 1-5 (To contact, email info@daufuskieconveniencecenter.com). Residents will be able to drop off their household garbage, and can take white goods, bulky items, there will be recycling of flattened cardboard and metals (NO vehicles, boats, golf carts, oyster recycling). Future developments planned include: additional recycling options once approved and a tented swap shop reflecting a desire to have as many items reused in the community as possible. Contractors will be able to drop off on a fee basis based on the type and volume of materials and can request dumpsters to be dropped off at work sites.

Casey thanked the efforts of Laura Winholt and Karen Opderbeck for their years of hard work that effectively laid the groundwork for this project.

County Infrastructure Issues (Bathrooms, Buildings, etc.)- Deb Smith reported on her conversation with County Councilman Tabor Vaux: He anticipates the September

Beaufort County Council meeting to have several Daufuskie issues discussed. He is working with his fellow council members to recognize the burden placed on the community with the loss of another restaurant and they are evaluating options for related to any alcohol restrictions (examples include closing at 10pm, etc.).

An RFP in September for lease of the restaurant is anticipated. The Daufuskie Council continues to advocate that the space needs to be available for larger community gatherings such as the Thanksgiving community dinner, the Christmas parade, and Daufuskie Day.

An additional RFP is expected for the construction/renovation of new bathrooms at the County Dock and at the Beach Road beach access. A cleaning contract of the bathrooms is still being discussed as the original proposal process offered by the County is not possible on Daufuskie.

A resident expressed a desire for trash cans at the public beach, possibly with community members taking turns to empty them.

Casey Scott said that if the DICouncil asks and County supports it, the new trash center is happy to add this to what they provide. As that beach area is considered commercial, it was not part of their residential contract with the County.

DI Council Resolution -Beach Fires

At the July council meeting, concern was expressed by the Turtle Team members and others about the number of bonfires on the beach, and especially a particularly large one near a nest that was set by some visitors on the 3rd of July. County Councilman Tabor Vaux was present at the July meeting and said that with a resolution from the DI Council, he would introduce a County ordinance. There have been several meetings on this issue and the community has consistently supported the welfare of the turtles as an important factor. Additional feedback has ranged from confining the ban to the turtle nesting season only (May 1– October 31) to having it year-round as a protection against wildfires resulting from embers (that can travel long distances). The Haig Point community has a mixture of opinions for and against the ordinance impacting their beach area as they occasionally have fires behind the Beach Club beach for special events. A permitting process to include approval from Chief Boys and the Turtle Team was explored as an option, however Chief Boys said it was not within his purview to grant such a permit.

Chief Boys in conjunction with several other Beaufort County Fire Chiefs has provided feedback to the county for other county fire ordinance needs and this same process will be used to develop final language with Beaufort County.

Chairperson Deborah Smith moved for passage of a resolution calling on the county to ban beach fires during turtle nesting season, and James Bays seconded the motion. Several friendly amendments proposed by Chief Boys, and then the final motion was

approved by a unanimous vote. (See last section of minutes for the resolution language).

New Business

Candidates Forums - The Council plans to hold one or two candidate forums prior to the November General Election. Candidates for Daufuskie's Beaufort County Council and State Representatives seats will be invited, as well as the Republican and Democratic candidates for the open U.S. House of Representatives seat. Stay tuned for more details.

Law Enforcement on the Island -Utility Vehicles – This issue has been a topic of greater conversation in the last month as the presence of county law enforcement has increased on the island, and warnings and tickets for utility vehicles are being given out. This has uncovered a gap in the law for these vehicle types, including their use on 'non-highway', lack of handlebars and seat arrangement. Current state and local law both lack information on how utility vehicles are to get a tag, and not considered 'street legal'. The DI Council, Councilman Vaux, and the Sheriff's Office are working to find solutions, so residents can continue to use their utility vehicles on Daufuskie without legal problems.

Sheriff Tanner is continuing to research the issue. The Beaufort County Attorney said that it must be changed at the state level. State Representative Jeff Bradley is open to introducing a bill authorizing their use on Daufuskie when the legislature reconvenes in January.

One continual problem has been the inconsistent information from law enforcement. Many residents with utility vehicles have gone through the process of having them registered and insured as instructed, to now be told they can't drive them on DI roads. These residents have chosen these types of vehicles for the additional safety they provide for their young children, large families, and cargo-carrying capability, all while traveling around on the various road conditions on Daufuskie.

In response to a comment by a resident, it was stated that Daufuskie's county public works employee has been told by the sheriff's department that he is also not authorized to drive the utility vehicle provided to him by the county.

Melissa Davis shared her experience which included registering and insuring, as they were told if you can register it, you can drive it. They have received warnings and now a ticket. She is not mad at the police, rather frustrated by the situation. She is in conversation with Lt. Sandowski and will keep us updated. They have 5 utility vehicles and didn't know they were considered anything other than golf carts. The Kawasaki Mule she has listed as a low speed vehicle on the title. She has uncovered a bill introduced in 2017 that amends the current law on barrier islands without a bridge as it related to golf carts and ATVs.

Public Comments: A resident overheard 2 officers complaining about being stationed on Daufuskie. Residents feel targeted and are unaware if the previous enforcement concerns are being addressed (e.g. underaged driving, beach driving, open container, drunk driving). Concern was expressed over targeted vs. random stops. Some feel we don't need any police presence and don't have major problems on DI. Council member Sallie Ann stated there was an attempted break in by 2 intoxicated visiting individuals at a Bloody Point home.

The Sheriff's office continues to encourage us to call 911 if we experience or witness law enforcement violations, which will be especially useful if there are officers on the island at that time. In addition, these calls can help them to know what types of offenses, where and when they are occurring.

DI Council will request the list of citation offenses from the last month by the Sheriff's department. Deb will request Sherriff Tanner attend the September meeting.

Public Forum

No additional comments.

Next Meeting

The next regular Council meeting is scheduled for 6:00pm, Tuesday September 18th, 2018 at the Mary Fields School.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:43 pm.

Adopted Resolution

A Resolution Calling on the Beaufort County Council to Enact an Ordinance Banning Fires on Daufuskie Beaches During Turtle Nesting Season

Whereas Daufuskie Island includes beaches that serve as nesting areas for the endangered Loggerhead Turtles as well as other sea turtles; and

Whereas, fires on a beach jeopardize those nests, and especially because turtle hatchlings can become disoriented and crawl towards the fire; and

Whereas, both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services recommends that no fires be allowed on beaches during turtle nesting season; and

Whereas, recently there have been a number of fires set on Daufuskie beaches that have seriously threatened turtle nesting areas, causing grave concern by the Daufuskie Island Turtle Team and other island residents, and

Whereas, several communities within Beaufort County have restricted fires on their beaches; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Daufuskie Island Council respectfully requests that the Beaufort County Council adopt an ordinance banning fires on Daufuskie beaches between May 1st and October 31st; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Daufuskie Island Council respectfully requests that the Beaufort County Council work with our Council on the specific wording of this ordinance so that it fulfills the intent of protecting Daufuskie's turtle nesting areas while avoiding any unintended consequences.

Approved this day of August 21, 2018