

**Minutes Daufuskie Island Council Meeting August 18, 2014
Mary Field School, Daufuskie Island, SC**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30. Board members in attendance: Janet Adams, Chuck Hunter, Mike Loftus, Bill Nickels and Jody Smith. There were 13 in the audience.

Chuck Hunter opened the meeting with a status update of the One Island Solution. He said that the county has retained a consultant to conduct a high level review of the feasibility of establishing a single public/private waste facility on Daufuskie. The county's consultant will be interviewing interested parties and stakeholders on August 20th and 21st. The choices for such a facility are Melrose or Haig Point or the county could build a facility at the Frances Jones Blvd location to service only residential waste. Based on the opinion of their consultant, they will make a decision.

Leanne Coulter commented that the choice of Haig Point as the location of the single facility would put it very far from the majority of Historic District residents.

Bill Nickels reported that he had called Beaufort County Mosquito Control to find out if Daufuskie had been treated. The response was that there had been no complaints. Bill learned that Mosquito Control only sprays in response to complaints. Complaints should be addressed to Gregg Hunt at 843-155-5800. There is a Federal law that prohibits spraying for mosquitos between October 1 and May 1 due to eagle's nests. Spraying within 1,800 feet of eagle's nests is against the law. Mike Loftus reported that the insecticide mix is changed from application to application since one spray mixture may have missed egg/larval stage mosquitos, so the next application would target them. Mosquito Control sprays on an irregular schedule also so that mosquitos at different stages of growth are targeted. Any property can ask to be put on a "no spray" list if they do not want their property sprayed.

Bill Nickels reported that there are now three trash cans at the county dock and one at the beach. The county also now has a lawn mower and so the road sides are now being mowed. Eddie Bellamy, Director of the Beaufort County Department of Public Works furnished Bill with photos of the county dump showing that there is construction waste and restaurant waste there. Both of these types of items should not be discarded at the county dump. It is strictly for residential waste.

Eileen Pojednic announced that the Daufuskie Island Conservancy in collaboration with the Haig Point Environmental Committee is planning the annual Beach Sweep for September 20th.

Our speaker for the evening, Eric De Weerd is one of three principles of Georgia South Carolina Maritime, along with John Bowen, a local attorney and A.J. Weis, a Department of Defense maritime master captain. Mr. Weis would be the managing partner of the sub company Daufuskie Island Ferry Company, LLC. He has long experience with ferry systems as his family started the Fire Island (NY) Ferry Service in 1948. Georgia South Carolina Maritime has a business plan that describes how they will provide ferry service, initially, between Hutchison Island, GA, Daufuskie Island and Harbour Town. Future expansion plans could include Pinckney Island, Port Royal and Beaufort. It is likely that there will be three trips per day between Hutchison Island and Daufuskie and one trip per day from Daufuskie to Harbour Town, to be determined based on tourism and resident demand. Expansion to residential traffic will be considered at some time in the future. After operating for long enough to prove that they can sustain themselves, they can apply for T21 grants. These grants would enable them to build out facilities and offer Pinckney Island, Beaufort County property, as a destination. In addition, T21

grant money could be used to build a Coast Guard Station on Pinckney Island. Georgia South Carolina Maritime has met with the county and is working to get the public component in place. They would be competing for county contracts.

Georgia South Carolina Maritime has identified two 81' tri-hull three level catamarans. One boat would operate on any given day. The catamarans have two male heads, two female heads and a bar/snack area. Dockage has been secured on Hutchison Island next to the Westin Hotel, on Daufuskie at the county dock next to Marshside Mama's and at Harbour Town. At this point, they have obtained from private sources, 10% of capital required. They expect to be ready to operate on March 1, 2015. It is expected that the round trip fare will be in the range of \$30/ person.

Georgia South Carolina Maritime would offer golf cart land transportation on Daufuskie and at Sea Pines. They are also in discussion with Savannah locations, Bloody Point, and Melrose to offer overnight lodging/golf/food packages to visitors.

Additional funding information provided by Mr. De Weerd after the meeting: By offering routine Ferry service to the general public, DIFC LLC is eligible to compete for and receive Ferry Boat Discretionary (FBD) Funding available to public transportation providers via the Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-147) henceforth known as SAFETEA-LU. This act, through the FBD funds created in section 1-64 of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (19901 ISTEA), provides a total of up to as much as \$67 million per year for a special funding category for the construction of ferry boats and ferry terminal facilities on a 80-20% grant basis with 80% of the grant money coming from the SC/GA Highway Departments via the Federal Highway Administration.

The National Highway System (NHS) automatically receives a \$20 M set aside on a yearly basis from the total annual SAFETEA-LU allowance for projects within certain states. The remaining allocated funds are up for competitive assignment of cash awards to the remaining states. Monies not allotted to specific projects by the end of the fiscal year are returned to the GAO (U. S. Treasury). On average, \$10 M per year is returned to the GAO due to lack qualifying parties. A Low Country regional ferry system could easily qualify for construction of ferry boats or ferry terminals grants in Georgia as well as in South Carolina. This would be a chance for South Carolina and Georgia to compete for and receive SAFETEA-LU funding on an annual basis for the construction of ferry boats and ferry boat terminals on a regular basis and would greatly defray the costs of future fleet and terminal facility construction.

In support of the potential future line of funding grants available from the SAFETEA-LU program, an article recently appeared in the Island Packet in which it was announced that "Last February, the Office of Management and Budget announced for the first time that Hilton Head Island- Beaufort –Bluffton was large enough to be classified as a Metropolitan Statistical Area, one of 381 in the nation." The article also went on to note in the same article that "from July 2011 to July 2012, the Census Bureau said the area's population increased from 189,749 to 193,882. That was a 2.2 percent change, which made the area the 18th fastest growing in the country."

The fact that the Hilton Head Island – Beaufort – Bluffton area is now recognized by the Federal and State governments as an official "Metropolitan Statistical Area" automatically opens the way to a wide variety of additional Federal and State opportunities for loans (as well as grants) based on or in conjunction with the SAFETEA-LU program and a wide variety of similar Federal (and State) Metropolitan Transportation planning and building programs.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:15. The next meeting will be on Monday, September 15th.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Opderbeck