

# Council Meeting March 14, 2022

**Roll Call** – K. Auricio, C. Moore, R. Pinckney, B. McIntyre, L. Coulter, J. Shartner

## **Call to order**

### **Pledge**

### **Announcements:**

Mar. 29, 2022 – Island Bingo and Dinner at Church Ministry Bldg 6PM. Proceeds to benefit Island Council.

April 3, 2022 – Oyster Roast at Jolly Shores 2PM until Sunset. All proceeds to benefit Daufuskie Island Elementary.

DIFD – Geoff Brunning announces the new Fire Chief – Shane Camparetto  
Also announced and displayed was the new turn out gear for the DIFD supplied by the community.

New Captain – Mr. Odis Boyles

### **Island election** Results

Cathie Moore – 106 votes, Beth McIntyre – 101 votes, Roger Pinckney – 100 votes,  
John Schartner – 88 votes, Robert Ross – 66 votes

### **2022 Council and Officers:**

Roger Pinckney – Chair, Leanne Coulter – Vice Chair, Beth McIntyre – Secretary,  
John Schartner – Treasurer, Kathy Auricio, Cathie Moore, Robert Levis.

### **2022 Committees:**

**Roads, Access and Easements** – Roger Pinckney (Chair), Beth McIntyre

**Transportation (Ferry)** – Leanne Coulter (Chair), Beth McIntyre

**DI Plan and Codes Liaison** – Cathie Moore (Chair), Leanne Coulter

**Tourism** – Kathy Auricio (Chair), Cathie Moore, Beth McIntyre

**Parks** – John Schartner (Chair)

### **Guests and Speakers:**

#### **Beaufort County (BC)**

Eric Greenway - County Administrator

Mark Lawson – Councilman

Robert Merchant – Planning Director

Mark Davis – Deputy Planning Director

Juliana Smith – Planning Dept. (Long Range)

## **Presentations and Discussions:**

### **Short Term Rentals:**

#### **Deborah Smith**

In 2021, the county code was revised to include short term vacation rental regulations for unincorporated BC. Daufuskie vacation home owners received a letter in November, 2021 stating that they will now need a county business license in order to rent their property. As applications were made, however, licenses were denied because the DI code does not provide for vacation rentals. Ms. Smith said that when she notified Mr. Greenway about this Catch-22 situation, he was very responsive and assigned senior staff to work on the matter. Ms. Smith expressed appreciation to the staff who were present at the meeting for their collaborative efforts to rectify the situation.

#### **Eric Greenway:**

The DI code must be amended to allow and regulate short term vacation rentals on Daufuskie. This process, which involves both the DI Council and the BC Council, may be a lengthy one. In the meantime, Mr. Greenway said that he has authorized a special permit for existing Daufuskie vacation home owners. Specifically, if an owner can document that 1) they own a legal residential structure; and 2) that they have consistently paid the required accommodations tax (ATax), then they will be issued a special permit necessary for a business license. If the applicant is a new owner, however, then they will have to go through the special exceptions process administered by the Zoning Board. Mr. Rob Merchant, Director of Planning and Zoning, said they will provide information to Daufuskie's vacation home owners when details for this new process are finalized. He asked that any questions or concerns be channeled through Ms. Smith or the DI Council.

Questions: Regarding modifications for short term rentals -

Will short term rental owners need to go through the same type of requirements that B and B owners have to go through to meet a certain codes?

- No modifications will need to be done for short term rentals. After discussions with governing bodies, they need only to have a structure (per code) that is considered a legal residence in order to have short term rentals. Sprinklers for fire mitigation are not needed.

### **From the Chair:**

#### **R. Pinckney – Chair**

#### **Legitimacy of the DI Council-**

The precursor to the current DI Council was called the DI Community Improvement Club started in the 1960's by a resident who would ride around the island on horseback to solicit feedback and support for certain things needed by the island from his neighbors. This was then followed

by a committee called the DI Leadership Council. This committee is now known as the current DI Council and is the current conduit to BC for island requests/issues.

#### Bathrooms at the Beach -

Bathrooms have been on the agenda for 20 years. The council has been made aware of certain individuals who do not want bathrooms at the public beach. This issue is now an urgent public health matter and as such, needs to be immediately addressed. It is the goal to get bathrooms at the public beach on Daufuskie Island as soon as possible. Discussion has been closed on the subject.

#### Mark Lawson - County Council Representative

4 years ago he became the Representative for our area. He has worked diligently behind the scenes and will be announcing his bid for reelection.

#### Website Redesign -

##### Beth McIntyre

It is the intention of the DI Council to obtain funds for the development of a new website for the DI Council. The current plans are for emails to be centralized within the new site so that all council members will have access to all emails. Until this is accomplished, all council members have been asked to obtain a new Gmail address for council business to keep these communications separate from personal emails. It is the future intent for this website to become the central hub for Daufuskie residents and visitors. This should include all relevant information to the island and the main communication tool for the DI Council. The links to all pertinent island groups; Conservancy, Historic Society, Church, DIFD, etc., will be embedded into the site.

#### Eric Greenway -

He will link the BC IT person, Patrick Hill, to the DI council so that the BC can be involved in the development of the website. An email will need to be sent to Eric Greenway so that introductions can be made. He will also link the county Social Media Dept. to the DI Council to aid with the social media aspects of this endeavor.

#### Eric Greenway (County Administrator) - Presentation:

##### Roads

The county is currently instituting ROW (Right of Way) designation for 4 roads on island.

The first 3 roads are : Church Rd., School Rd., Frances Jones Blvd. ROW is required in order for any improvements to the roads for surface maintenance and drainage. Anyone who owns property on one of these roads will receive a letter that asks for the county to be granted ROW. There is categorically no plan to pave any additional roads on the island beyond those currently paved.

### Prospect Rd. -

There is a currently a lawsuit from a group of property owners to stop the county from condemning Prospect Rd. Condemnation is needed to prevent the closure of Prospect Rd. and to keep the road under county maintenance. The hearing has been delayed but is expected soon. The county remains confident in their legal position in this matter.

### Question:

Why is there a 50' ROW required for Prospect Rd.? Is this not required for the other 3 roads?

The deeds for all property owners contain an easement for ROW on Prospect Rd. Mr. Greenway does not know the specifics for the other roads. If Mr. Ford is at the meeting on behalf of a landowner involved in the lawsuit then Mr. Greenway as a county representative is not able to speak with him outside of a public meeting.

### **Bathrooms** At the Beach

BC Council adopted a resolution on Monday, March 13, 2022 to approve \$250,000 of ATax money to fund bathrooms at the beach. The water and the sewer connections have been stubbed out to the roadside when Sandy Lane Condos were built by C. Hutton.

Existing Restroom Maintenance – The issue of maintenance of the existing bathrooms and the planned bathrooms was been raised. The county has been made aware of a volunteer who has agreed to clean the Frances Jones Bathrooms for the rest of the year. Once the year is completed, the County will investigate/obtain money to be used for a cleaning service to maintain the bathrooms.

### **Multiuse Building -**

\$1,000,000 allocated from ARPA (American Plan Rescue Act) funds for a new multiuse building to be built near the current Fire Station. There will be one more reading of the bill before it is approved by the BC council.

### **Ferry**

The one year contract for the current ferry (Haig Point) concludes in May 2022. On Monday, there will be a Public Facilities meeting to discuss the ferry situation. There is no alternative to the current Buckingham Landing Embarkation. If residents would like to attend, a zoomlink can be provided.

### **Building Code -**

The proliferation of RV's on island is NOT allowed. RV's are only allowed for temporary housing, for one year, while a residence is under construction. The RV must be removed from the island after construction is complete. In order to mitigate the issue with RV's, the county will no longer issue electrical permits without the proper zoning and permits for a lot.

Beaufort County does allow for Manufactured homes. However, on a barrier island such as Daufuskie, these homes are not able to withstand the wind speeds that might occur. If the island would like to disallow the use of Manufactured homes, this will need to be written into the DI Code. The current manufactured homes on the island will be grandfathered in, but no new ones will be allowed if the island wants to move in this direction.

### **Workforce Housing:**

There is a severe shortage of workforce housing across the county. The County is working on a Regional Housing Trust Fund to aid with the building of workforce housing. This will be a partnership of private industry and public funds. This is not to be confused with Section 8 housing which refers to government subsidized housing. This is for workers that we all rely on in our communities. All jurisdictions can have a part in this endeavor.

Due to the housing prices on Hilton Head, BC has the highest annual median income at \$68,000 for a family of 4 in the state and that skews the numbers. The rent is based on a formula that takes 80% of that number and then uses the 30% threshold for housing costs. This amounts to \$1200 - \$1300 per month for housing costs.

### **Melrose Purchase - Whitestone Group Mgt.**

Kenneth Badgett and Austin Turner

The group has completed their due diligence and with the property set to convey on April 30, 2022. The group they represent is in the business of historic preservation and regenerative development. They are the management group for Red Stone Investment

Their goal is to manage expectations about the purchase. Within the first 12 months, they intend to renovate the existing cottages, open the pool for membership and re-start the restaurant.

They have heard the discussions about the roads and they have every intention of limiting their impact on the roads. They will rely on modular building and electric construction equipment when at all possible.

In an effort to aid the environment, they are looking to do a beach sweep cleanup on Earth Day, Friday April 22, 2022.

### **General Questions:**

When will bathrooms be built?

Final approval will be done in April 2022. We should see construction begin 3-6 months out, sometime later this year 2022.

How is the ATax money disbursed?

The first step is for the money to be approved for the design of the facility. Then after the design is approved, a request for bids will be posted.

What is the projected size of the bathroom project?

There is no projection yet as to size. The current plan calls for restrooms, an outside changing area, and to refurbish the pavilion. There is no plan for increased parking.

Will bathrooms cause increased tourism at the beach?

The main concern is the unsanitary conditions currently. Tourism is a result of a desirable location, and a way of life.

Will there be lights? We do not want to disturb the sea turtles.

Lights can be adjusted or made unobtrusive. The restrooms will be locked at night so as to not encourage misuse of the facilities.

Is there a specified location for a new ferry landing outside of Buckingham?

A new landing is being reviewed but the location will not be divulged for the next 4 months due to negotiations. Unfortunately, Pinckney Island will not be suitable due to the negative impact of such a facility on this environmentally sensitive location. A ferry depot would require too much asphalt and take up about 2/3 of the island, further impacting the environment.

How will the Melrose purchase impact the landing? Will there be bathrooms?

The county owns Buckingham but not Melrose. The County will need to work with the future owners to discuss the landing.

Can the county limit tourists?

There is no legal right to limit commerce and tourism.

Will the county allow food carts and souvenir shops at the beach?

Souvenir shops can operate with the appropriate legal documents on private land. If there is concern about a food cart that is in a permanent spot, the county has no jurisdiction but the state does. Any concerns should be addressed to DHEC and Food and Beverage regulators at the state level.

There is a current lack of Handicapped parking at the landing. How can this be addressed?

Again, the County will need to work with the current owner of the Melrose property to address this issue.

What impact will the major construction have on the roads and then who is responsible for repairs?

Any damage to the roads will need to be mitigated by the new owners at Melrose and required by the county.

With the influx of visitors, 120,000 expected this year, can we use ATax money for brochures?  
Yes we can.

Trash is a major issue on the island, can we get trashcans for the island?

Yes, trash cans can be obtained. However, the trash cans sometimes cause more problems than they are worth. Some tourists will use them for cigarette disposal and unintended fires can erupt as well as issues related to local wildlife.

At the last meeting you stated that the DI Code was not incorporated into the BC Code. Is this true?

No, the DI Code was incorporated into the BC Code as of 2018.

**Adjourned**