Daufuskie Island Council Agenda

Tuesday, November 16, 2021, 5:00 pm

DI Fire Station

In Attendance: Kathy Aurichio

Robert Levis

John Schartner

Roger Pinckney

Leanne Coulter

Absent: Robert Ross, Tonie Meyers

In addition, Eric Greenway, Beaufort County Administrator, and Mark Lawson, Daufuskie Island Representative on Beaufort Count Council, were in attendance as well as 13-14% of the island residents.

Pledge

Public Announcements:

An update from Dr. Carol Rizzo was given. 85% of the island is vaccinated. A Covid Booster clinic held at the DI fire station on November 30 from 2:00-6:00. The Pfizer booster will be administered by Burke Pharmacy for anyone over 12. EMT personnel and a pediatrician will be present. No specific time for appointment time is necessary, but if you sign-up for this booster, you must show up as this serum cannot be saved. If you have not had the first or second Covid vaccine, you can fill out a card and receive one of these vaccines as well. Please bring ID and Medicare cards with you. Dr. Carol Rizzo invites you to call or email her with questions.

The Community Thanksgiving will be held on this upcoming Sunday. The information for this is posted on Nextdoor. You can donate to the Community Foundation if you would like to support the costs and/or you can bring a side dish to the dinner.

The Holiday Market will be held on Saturday, November 27th, from 12:00-5:00. This market will include twenty-five vendors including artisans, music, and food. The proceeds will go to the Daufuskie Island Foundation. Poinsettia plants are also currently being ordered and sold and due for pick-up at the Holiday Market.

On Sunday, December 12th, the Christmas Parade will be held beginning with everyone lining-up at about 12:00 at the distillery and leaving at 1:00, heading to D'Fuskie's where there will be an oyster roast and the judging of a snowman village competition.

Committee Reports:

Frances Jones Park: John Schartner

The final project for the playground portion of the park will take place later this week. Patrick Ford, Captain Bruce, along with others worked to take sand from the barge landing to the park. On Saturday, residents are asked to bring rakes and shovels to spread the sand beginning at 9:30. The Frances Jones Park is ready to be used.

DI Elections: Kathy Aurichio

The bylaws call for the election committee to be comprised of those not running for office. The 2022 DIC Election Committee members are Jan Crosby, Jodee Brunning, and Sara Deitch. The DIC liaison is Kathy Aurichio.

The following are the dates to remember:

Applications for three open seats available beginning Monday, December 13th 2021 at Mary Field School, Haig Point Mansion, and online at daufuskiecouncil.com

Deadline for completion and submission to any committee member or emailed to <u>jbrunning@aol.com</u> or dropped off at Mary Field School is Monday, January 10th

Candidate Forum for all candidates on Tuesday, January 18th starting at 5:00

Ballots available on Saturday, January 15th

Prior to election day, ballots may be emailed and received by noon Friday, February 11th, placed in drop boxes by noon on Saturday, February 12th, or mailed-in and received by February 12th.

In-person voting will be from 9-4:00 on Saturday, February 12th at the ministry building behind the First Union Baptist Church.

Proof of eligibility includes a voter's registration card, driver's license, photo ID, or Palmetto Breeze ID card.

Ballots counted after 4:00 on Saturday, February 12th 2022 and published when count is concluded and results confirmed

American Rescue Plan Act: Leanne M. Coulter

This is a \$1.9 trillion emergency relief bill that provides \$65.1 billion to municipal governments to respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency, to offset revenue losses and to bolster economic recovery.

Beaufort County will receive 37.3 million.

In April 2021, Beaufort County Administrator Eric Greenway formed a task force to set priorities.

As chair of the council, Leanne Coulter was invited to a meeting on May 5th.

On May 12th, John Schartner, Vice Chair of the Council, and Leanne Coulter met with the assistant fire chief and the DI Board of Trustees to try to understand what the newly formed ARPA guidelines would mean

for Daufuskie Island. Assistant Fire Chief Bob Miley led the discussion due to his understanding of and research into the rescue plan.

At the May 18, 2021 council meeting, Leanne announced that John and she had attended the meeting and stated suggested projects for funding.

The suggested projects included the following:

Expanded dock space at the county dock landing

A multi-purpose building to be used as a public health facility and meeting space

An improved and expanded mailbox facility

An outdoor emergency warning system

The community was asked to provide any suggestions to the DI Council for project ideas.

At the September 21st DI Council meeting, another update was given on the previously suggested projects with the addition of a bathroom at the beach and a bathroom supplies storage space at the Frances Jones Park.

On November 4th, Mr. Greenway called Chair Coulter and stated that the county administration had presented information to the Beaufort County Council regarding the proposals for ARPA funding. He suggested that the DI Chair watch the online proceedings of the meeting which the chair did.

The information was put on Nextdoor providing the link to the meeting on the BC website.

The BC Council proposed the following three public sites for health/community buildings: Garden's Corner, St. Helena and Daufuskie Island, 1,000,000.00 each facility

Other proposed projects for Daufuskie Island are: Regional Ferry Service-\$500,000.00 and Daufuskie Island Improvement Fund-\$300,000.00.

Assistant County Administrator Jared Fralix stated that the money could not be used as a "rainy day" fund, to fund debt service, to off-set reductions in tax revenue or to make deposits to a pension fund.

There have been several projects, including the Historic District Trash Transfer Station, that have taken years to complete as a result of people coming together and working hard in order to build a better community.

The DI Council has worked hard for the community. Losing Steve Hill, the DI Council's Secretary and communication point person, has affected smooth community communications.

Access, Easements and Roads Committee: Roger Pinckney

Mr. Pinckney stated that there are three major issues currently facing the DI Council. The first issue involves the DI County Dock. Abandoned cars have been removed but the overuse of the dock by commercial vessels and boats tied-up too long is an issue that cannot be enforced by the DI Council. The proper county agency, including the police, need to be contacted about violations.

The second issue involves the public's use of traditional roads. The first road involves Bloody Point Drive. This road provides public access to the beach and cemetery where there is a five-car parking lot. Mr. Pinckney stated that people who wanted use that access have been turned away.

The third issue is the proposed closing of Prospect Road by the current owner of the property. DI Council resolutions in both 2016 and 2018, the council opposed the closing of the road as a dangerous precedent by

unanimous vote. This vote was a reflection of the community's wishes at the time.

Over the years there have been three attempts to close the road by three different owners. The DI Council left the decision in the hands of Beaufort County as to how best to keep the road open. Beaufort County recommended condemning the road and then the road would belong to the county.

Continuing of Road Discussion (along with other issues) Between Mr. Greenway and Public:

It was stated that in an island survey conducted by Beverly Davis when the DI Plan was being revised and accepted in 2018 that out of three hundred ten respondents to the survey when asked what the community wanted to preserve, 85% of the respondents strongly agreed that the unpaved roads and tree-lined streets should be preserved and 15% were neutral on the question.

Mr. Greenway stated that there are no plans to pave unpaved roads but that Haig Point Road needs improvement. The issue of dirt road maintenance was raised. It was stated that water pools in many places on roads after a heavy rain. It was also stated that many years ago there were ditches maintained on both sides of all roads to keep the water from pooling. County Administrator Greenway stated that the county cannot change roads unless the county holds the right-of-way to roads. He stated that the only way to keep Prospect Road open is to condemn the road and have the county take it and the right-of-way on both sides of the road. There was a letter sent to owners of land on both sides of Prospect Road for them to give the right-of-way to the county. There were several questions from the public directed at Mr. Greenway related to this issue. Owners wondered why they wouldn't be reimbursed for their lost property. Questions were asked about the exact amount of land to be taken. In addition to the Prospect Road issue, Mr. Greenway stated

that road easements will be needed in the future for emergency services and utilities. Residents asked why the appraisals mentioned by the county differ from previous appraisals? Mr. Greenway said he would get back to owners on these questions. Residents asked if trees would be taken down and Mr. Greenway answered only in the case of diseased or tree hazards. He stated that no one from the county is interested in changing the island. Other residents stated that the road is a draw for the island and could be as much as 250-300 years old. One resident stated that we should be careful when reading comments on social media as some information may not be correct.

One property owner who owns property on both sides of Prospect Road stated that the proposed pathway by the county might end up putting the island in worse situation, for example taking property without compensation. The owner also stated that the road is currently very narrow in some places and that the county rules requiring the taking of so many feet for the right-of-way might take up even more land. He stated that he put forth many ideas for compromise including re-routing the road in exchange for a conservation easement but none have been considered. He also stated that he would have a fund set-up for alternative road maintenance when asked how the alternative road would be maintained. One resident stated that a proposal was made to the owner to patrol the road to ease the property owner's concerns. Another resident stated that Prospect Road is an important emergency exit for some residents. One resident stated when compromises were discussed the property owner only wanted the road closed. Mr. Greenway stated that road easements will be needed in the future for emergency services and utilities. Zoning would allow 200 homes to be built on the southern side of Prospect Road. Mr. Greenway indicated a conservation easement doesn't eliminate the possibility of an owner from building. One resident stated that the road rerouting would be worth getting a conservation easement in exchange.

Besides road issues, Mr. Greenway said that there is a proposal in the works to put a bathroom, possible changing room, and a new pavilion at the public beach on Beach Road. The county will look into how to hook-up the bathroom appropriately. This proposed plan does not include a composting toilet. A resident asked to be sure proper shrubbery would be placed around that area.

In addition, one resident asked how an owner might get something fixed that is county responsibility. Mr. Greenway stated that residents could call him on his cell phone at 843-441-6129.

Another question from a resident was asked if there was any plan work force housing. Mr. Greenway stated that there is an initiative currently being worked on in Beaufort and Jasper counties which is a three-year plan. The resident was concerned that the laborers living in Melrose might not have that housing available to them in the future.

Toward the end of the meeting, two residents questioned the way in which council priorities were being proposed, and they put forth their view that the idea of having the council engaged in working meetings closed to the public lacked transparency. They also stated that the last issue the council voted on in public was two and one-half years ago. Mr. Greenway and these two members of the public discussed whether or not the same rules apply to the DI Council as to other bodies such as the Beaufort County Council.

At the end of the meeting, Mark Lawson, DI Representative on the Beaufort County Council, stated that he and Mr. Greenway were here to help and residents should contact them with comments or questions.