

**Minutes
DI Council Meeting
December 19, 2017**

Call to Order/Roll Call

Vice Chair Hill called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Council Members in attendance were:

James Bays
Darnell Brawner
Maureen Devine
Steve Hill
Sallie Ann Robinson
Deborah Smith
John Schartner
Charlie Small

Absent: Chuck Hunter

The Pledge of Allegiance

Francis Jones Community Park Update

Ms. Robinson had hoped to give a power point presentation on developments relating to the Francis Jones Community Park, but technical difficulties prevented that from happening. She will show it at the January meeting.

Ms. Robinson reported that much progress has been made on the park, and urged people to go visit it. She is hoping Mr. Hunter (acting as contractor) will be updating her soon about the status of the DHEC inspection which is required before the water can be turned on.

Presentation on the Haig Point “Daufuskie Island Ultra Marathon”

Ms. Devine introduced Mr. Dan Hernandez, who is spearheading the “Daufuskie Island Ultra Marathon” on behalf of “Run 4 a Reason.” Mr. Hernandez handed out a draft brochure and gave the following overview of the race:

- The race is scheduled for Saturday, January 20th. On Jan 19th the course will be marked with surveyor flags and chalk.
- Thanks to Adam Martin and Haig Point for sponsoring and supporting the race.
- The route will be throughout the island and is 25 KM. Runners will also have a 50 KM option by running the course twice.
- The race will start at the bocci ball court near the HP dock.
- Hope to have the race on an annual basis. Limited to 100 runners for this first year, and the registration is now full. One Daufuskie couple is registered.
- 20 percent of the runner entry fee proceeds will go to the Daufuskie Historical Foundation
- The top 50 K female and male runners will have bricks provided for the DI Historical Museum walkway with their names, the race, and finish time on the bricks.
- Water stops and bathrooms will be made available throughout the route.
- A draft event brochure was handed out
- Open for anyone; proceeds come from entry fees
- The entry fee includes HP ferry transportation.
- For questions, more information, or to volunteer, go to <https://www.facebook.com/roughrunnertrailraceseries/>

Committee Reports

Amenities (Chair: Mr. Brawner) - No Report

Cultural and Historical Preservation (Chair: Ms. Robinson)

Ms. Robinson reported that she received a letter from the Beaufort County Finance Department explaining that the reason for their rejection of the Council's request for funding for park amenities through the accommodations tax was because they didn't think it would generate tourism, which is a requirement of the grant program. Ms. Robinson said that we would try again next year, and at that time would be able to demonstrate a positive impact on tourism.

Daufuskie Island Plan and Code Committee (Chair: Ms. Smith)

Ms. Smith reported that the previous day's Committee meeting was cancelled because one of the consultants had a death in the family. The meeting will be rescheduled for January. In the meantime, she encouraged people to be sending in their feedback to the draft characters map (available on-line and posted in the Mary Fields School) and strategies for implementation. She said the Committee has received some very innovative suggestions for a revised Plan which promotes managed growth through initiatives that are in keeping with the character of the island.

External Outreach (Chair: Mr. Hunter) - No Report

Ferry (Chair: Mr. Hill)

Mr. Hill reported that several council representatives and a ferry committee member met earlier in the day with county officials to discuss the new public ferry contract. Although the new contract is not yet signed, it is expected to be shortly. The meeting included a discussion of which boats will be available for the service under the contractor offering. There was also a discussion about accommodations for disabled person. Marine vessels are not required to be ADA compliant because they are not considered to be buildings; however, providers are encouraged to be as

accommodating as possible. The larger the boat, the more likely they will be able to accommodate a disabled person.

The county officials asked the council representatives to convey the following messages to the Daufuskie community:

1. The County is not required to provide a ferry service, but have decided to do so. Because no funding is coming from other sources, they hope the community understands that the level of funding for services desired by the ferry riders will always be challenging.
2. They believe they will have to be raising the Palmetto Breeze ticket price since the price has not been raised for many years. When the 2018-19 contract is discussed, they will probably propose a rate increase.

Under the new contract, the service provider will be providing 4 rounds a day. There was a discussion about the desirability of an early morning run to provide employment opportunities for islanders seeking work on HH and Bluffton area. For the next contract, a case might need to be made that there are enough people who would use the service to justify it.

The budget process will start early in 2018, so in order to give the county council some ammunition to support a budget increase in any area, those discussions should start soon.

Parking will now be handled by the DI Ferry Company. There are 45 designated spots for Daufuskie residents. The County is also making available 60 spots at the county administration building. The cost for getting to the dock would be about a \$7-\$8 uber ride.

A public member said he was told by the sheriff's office at the county building that his car would be towed if he left it there overnight. Mr. Hill said that he would seek clarification about this policy.

Ms. Robinson said that because the 45 designated spots are not clearly marked, sometimes a resident will come to Hilton Head to do errands, but when they return to the parking lot someone else has parked in it. However, it appears that there will no longer be a designated area for those islanders who have a parking pass.

The ferry company will work to make sure that there will always be spaces available for people with a parking pass, but designated parking will probably not be available in the future. (Mr. Doug Egley)

Mr. Hill said that there continues to a waiting list for parking passes. There are a handful of people who have not renewed their passes and will soon lose them if they don't renew. Also, there are 10-15 parking spots available at the nearby Quick Mart for \$30 a month. Those interested in such a spot needs to contact the business owner directly.

Resources (Chair: Mr. Bays)

Mr. Bays reported that he will shortly be announcing a January date for the next committee meeting.

Roads (Chair: Mr. Schartner)

Efforts continue to address the asphalt pieces on the side of the roads and by the park. An invitation was issued to the head of the County's Public Works Department to attend and speak at tonight's meeting or the January Council meeting. There was no response. There will be a follow-up to see if he can attend the January meeting.

Solid Waste (Chair: Mr. Brawner)

Mr. Brawner said that based on feedback from community, he will be asking the head of the Beaufort County recycling program for grabbers to be used around each dumpster.

Ms. Robinson asked if he could request that the dumpsters be emptied soon, as they are very full right now. Mr. Brawner said that he would do so.

Ms. Smith asked about the status of putting covers on the dumpsters in order to minimize flies and varmint intrusions. Mr. Brawner said that he would look into that.

Beaufort County Plastic Trash Bag Ban Ordinance

Mr. Hill reported that the proposed Beaufort County ordinance that would ban the use of plastic grocery bags in unincorporated areas of the county will go before the County Council for third reading in January. He also clarified that although incorporated areas are excluded, those areas (such as Hilton Head and Bluffton) are in the process passing similar ordinances.

Another public hearing is expected prior to final consideration of the ordinance. For previous hearings, there has been a strong showing of proponents for this policy.

2018 Daufuskie Island Council Election Process

Mr. Brawner is chairing the Elections Committee Process, and said that starting the following day (December 20th) applications for the Council race will be available at various spots throughout the island including the County Dock General Store, Freeport Marina, the Coffee Grounds Shop, Lucy Bell's Cafe, and probably two locations in Haig Point. They will also be posted on the Council's website and through NextDoor.

Applications will be due on January 13th and on January 15th ballots will be available for advance voting. The Council's monthly January meeting (January 16) will also serve as the candidates forum.

The three seats up for election are Steve Hill's, Chuck Hunter's, and James Bays.

The Election will be held on February 10th.

Mr. Brawner suggests that anyone interested in running or sharing this information with others should do so.

Public Forum

The following were comments/questions from public members, and responses by Council members:

Comment: The new process for purchasing ferry tickets through an electronic scan bar code on the back of the Palmetto Breeze card (resulting

in the automatic withdrawal from the buyer's bank account) is not acceptable to some. Lucy Bell's was a good place to buy tickets for cash, but now they can't do that. Strongly recommend that people still have the option to buy tickets with cash. Said for years they could buy the tickets on the boat with cash. Why couldn't they still do that?

Response:

Mr. Hill said the ferry operator is moving towards a system where the ferry rider can swipe their Palmetto Breeze card and the amount will be deducted from their bank account.

Comment: There are still some tickets left that can be bought for cash at the Coffee Shop.

Response:

Mr. Hill said that he would ask someone to come and explain the program.

Ms. Smith said she was concerned that for elderly riders this was going to be problematic. Ms. Robinson said that a lot of folks don't like to give out their bank account information. Mr. Hill said this would be looked into.

Comment: The asphalt chunks on Church Road and other roads continues to be a big problem. Every time the roads are graded more chunks end up on the roads, and are damaging carts and other vehicles. Chunks were on Church Road right now. When will this be fixed?

Response:

Mr. Hill said that the county "road guys" had been invited to come over; We hope they come for next month's meeting. Ms. Smith said that the Council had passed a strong resolution asking the county to address this problem.

Comment: I've talked with Monica Spells at the County about the tradition of the public ferry providing complimentary transport for the funerals of native islanders. For years this had happened, and under Morris Campbell the county had been successful working with the ferry provider to

accommodate this type of service. Very much hoping that there will be a way to continue that type of service; perhaps by working with other groups such as the Church, to help with the cost. Most of the families who come here for these funerals own Daufuskie property and are taxpayers.

Response:

Mr. Hill agreed that it was an important issue. He pointed out that the current ferry contract says that the county may decide to arrange for ferry service for “special events.” The County has been reluctant to pay for the boat costs resulting from someone being brought back to the island to be interred, but he thinks that we need to address that issue.

The issue of Marshside Mama’s was on the agenda of a recent County Council committee meeting. Can we get an update on this?

Summary of responses from a variety of Council members:

This issue was discussed at the meeting with county officials earlier in the day. (Hill)

Josh Gruber had reiterated interest of county in turning ownership of Marshside Mama’s over to the Daufuskie Island Council. We are seeking legal advice on how to do that. Chuck Hunter had hoped to identify pro bono legal service for this purpose, but that didn’t work out. At today’s meeting, Mr. Gruber indicated the county may be able to provide a stipend to the Daufuskie Island Council to cover the costs of legal services for this purpose because the Council doesn’t have the funds to cover that. (Schartner)

We are working with the DI Co-Op to see if an arrangement can be made with them for continued oversight of the restaurant and store. Mr. Schartner, Mr. Bays, and Ms. Robinson serve on a subcommittee for this purpose and have met with representatives of the co-op. We have asked for paperwork from the Co-Op relating to their efforts, and intend to sit back down with them to go over that and other matters. (Schartner)

We do need to move forward. The Council wants to maintain that facility as a restaurant; we learned today that the County may provide resources from the County for legal services; because the DI Council does not want to be in the restaurant business and does not want to be liable. (Mr. Hill)

Follow Up Question: Since the County Council, as a public entity, perceives there is a liability issue with continued ownership of Marshside Mama's, and given that the DI Council is also a public entity, isn't it impractical to think that an arrangement can be reached with the DI Council to take ownership that doesn't result in the same problem?

Summary of Responses:

That's what we are struggling with. There are no guarantees, but we need to make sure that the burden that the county wants to relieve themselves of doesn't end up falling on us (the DI Council). This is why we need legal advice. (Hill)

We are not convinced that the liability concerns expressed by the County are well-founded. Any restaurant on Hilton Head or anywhere else that leases from a landlord assumes responsibility for what goes on, including the liability. If that weren't the case, no property owner would want to rent to a restaurant. And the restaurant itself carries insurance. (Schartner)

When this issue came up at an earlier County Council meeting, it was not clear that the liability issue was a legitimate one, but the bottom line is that the County Council no longer wants to have to deal with issues relating to Marshside Mama's, and thus the attempt to sell the property last summer. (Smith)

Follow-Up comment from another public member

If no one wants the liability, then maybe the facility should simply be restored to the community for community use and events.

Responses:

We've discussed that. (Mr. Hill and Mr. Schartner) Liability insurance is something most home owners carry. So part of the process in looking at this situation is the need for there to be liability insurance by the contractor or subcontractor. (Ms. Robinson)

Mr. Gruber encouraged us to look into the cost of insurance and incorporate those costs into the rent requested of the contractor (such as the current Co-Op). (Ms. Smith)

So we just need to get some legal advice and that's what we are pursuing to help us chart the course. We are committed to retaining the property for the benefit of the community, i.e., to advance the cause of the community. (Mr. Hill)

Inquiry: Who owns the property?

Responses:

The County (Several Council members)

The property the County is giving up does not include anything except the building, that is, not the dock, playground, nor bathrooms. (Hill)

Question: What about the part of the building that houses the general store?

Response:

That would be included (several Council members)

Question: Will the Council try to ensure more regular hours for the store? Because right now it's very unpredictable when it will be open. Please try to make sure the store has "decent hours". We never know if it will be open or not.

Response:

That's why our committee will be working with the Co-Op. (Ms. Robinson)

Question: Has there been a vote island-wide of residents to see if better internet service is wanted?

Response:

That vote was just within Haig Point. (Hill)

Follow-up Question: I've been told that there is no intention to increase the speed and efficiency of internet service in the Historic District. Can something be done about that?

Responses:

There was a cost to the increased service in Haig Point. (Hill)

There is a possible option for better service on the island, i.e., installing network devices throughout the island called DSLAMS. These devices could be installed in front of Melrose, Bloody Point, and other areas of the island. However, many service providers are migrating away from using DSLAMs, and have warehouses filled with such units. I will contact Hargray about the feasibility and cost of installing DSLAMs (Brawner)

Several home owners associations on Melrose and Bloody Point are looking into installing fiber optic service, and are talking to several providers about this option. Would not be islandwide. (Smith)

The hope is that eventually the entire island will go wireless. (Brawner)

Comment: If the Council can't resolve the Marshside Mama's issue, I will take the property for \$1.

General Announcements

This Thursday will be the winter solstice. (Hill)

(From a public participant) This Thursday is the annual Marshside Mama's Christmas party at Beth Shipman's house; all are invited.

On behalf of the entire Council, we wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year (Ms. Robinson)

There being no further business at hand, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.

