

Daufuskie Island Council
October 17, 2017 Meeting
Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Chuck Hunter at 6:00 pm. Council members present were:

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

All members being present, there was a duly constituted quorum.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

FEMA Flood Maps

Mr. Hill reported that the FEMA preliminary flood maps are out for Beaufort County; The new maps can be found through the following link:

<https://hazards.FEMA.Gov/Femaportal/prelimdownload/>

The Daufuskie map is on 8 different pages so it takes a little bit of searching. The information includes impact on 100 and 500 year floods. People also may be interested in assessing the impact on insurance rates.

Mr. Hill also has hard copies of the map and invited people up to look at them after the meeting.

County Plastic Bags Ordinance

Mr. Hill reported that an ordinance providing for management of plastic bags is under consideration by Beaufort County Council, and has received its First Reading.

The ordinance relates to plastic bags within unincorporated parts of the county, including Daufuskie, and is designed to discourage the use of such bags and to encourage use of paper bags and reusable bags. Some restrictions and conditions apply.

The Coastal Conservancy League says the bags are a threat to marine wildlife (Loggerhead Turtles were used as an example) and the environment, and the group has been advocating for this proposal. The American Progressive Bag Alliance is against the ban and says banning bags is fruitless and will hurt working families while doing nothing positive for the environment.

The Ordinance has been referred to the County Council's Natural Resources Committee where amendments were added. More countywide hearings will be held, and then it will go to the full County Council for consideration.

Committee Reports

Solid Waste Committee

Mr. Brawner reported that the date for the community clean-up for the Francis Jones dump has been moved until later this month. The horrible fly problems were caused by 4 dead raccoons found in the dumpsters. Some people have also deposited deer entrails which has also added in a major way to the fly issue. Mr. Brawner suggested depositing such items in deeper water and the crabs will eat it. Or, such products can be buried.

Mr. Jim Miner, head of the County's Department of Public Works (with responsibility for trash removal) has retired. No replacement has yet been announced. This has created a gap in the focus on Daufuskie.

There is a concrete slab by the Oak Tree at the dump; Mr. Brawner encourages people to discard oyster shells there because they can then be reused/re-purposed.

Mr. Brawner also reported that he had a very productive conversation with the state DHEC representative for Daufuskie, and that this representative is very committed to working with the county to identify staffing for the Daufuskie dump, and making sure the dump is secured and monitored.

Mr. Brawner was asked if the Solid Waste Committee would be bringing recommendations to the full Council to address the trash situation based on a September public forum. Mr. Brawner replied in the affirmative, and said he would be submitting a simple set of recommendations for public review that would include the dump having 3 sides with a visual barrier of berms and one side with a fence; and also would include fulfilling requirements needed in order to have a staff person.

DI Plan and Code Committee

Ms. Smith reported that the second community workshop on the DI Plan review was held on October 2nd after having been postponed because of Hurricane Irma. It was a productive session with good participation by the community, and included two presentations: Results of the community survey soliciting views on what people believed

should be the collective vision for the island, and a presentation by Ecology Planning Inc, (which is the second firm providing pro bono services for the Plan review) which included topography information about Daufuskie, the flood maps, elevation issues, etc. The presentations have been posted on the Council's website and Ms. Smith encouraged people to look at them. (https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/76a9e3_bd007306ac8a42eba339c9d1ecae32bf.pdf). Ms. Smith also encouraged everyone to attend future workshops and committee meetings held as part of the Plan Review and Update process.

Committee on Cultural and Historical Preservation

Ms. Robinson reported that the trail has been installed in the park and the restrooms are almost done. She expected/hoped that the water would be functional within the near future. Mr. Hunter added that SCE&G has delayed completing the power installation because of the storm, but hoped that would be finalized within a few days. Ms. Robinson said that her Committee would be working on an opening event when this phase of the park was completed.

Ms. Robinson also reported that she represented the Council at a County meeting held to determine the distribution of the 2 percent occupancy tax proceeds.

Marshside Mama's Developments'

Mr. Hunter reported that per the county's efforts earlier this year to sell the Marshside Mama's buildings, the DI Council has been working hard to keep the facility available for the island community's use and out of private hands. The County Council has agreed to suspend their efforts to sell the property, and has indicated that they would instead consider transferring responsibility for the facility to the DI Council, subject to certain conditions. Mr. Hunter said that the Council is working with the Marshside Mama's Co-Op board in an effort to shape an agreement that will ensure that the building continues to be available for public use and in a manner that meets the County's expectations.

Ferry Committee

Mr. Hill reported that the Ferry Committee met two weeks earlier and there was a good public turnout. He described the procedures for the upcoming contract year. The County has still not finalized the contract, and operations continue on a month-to-month basis under the previous contract. He is not certain what these extensions signify.

Marshside Mama's Restrooms

Mr Hunter reported that he had met with county officials regarding remodeling of the Marshside Mama's restrooms, which they are committed to redoing. The original intent was to replace the current building, but the building codes do not allow for the construction of a new building/ Consequently, the county is suggesting that the existing building be completely renovated. Mr. Hunter believes there may still be an opportunity

for a completely new building, but one way or another there will be a substantial improvement in the facility. Activity by the end of the year relating to a new septic field is expected.

Ferry Schedule

Ms. Smith relayed that several island residents had talked to her about their disappointment that the early morning public ferry run had not resumed since Hurricane Matthew's destruction of Palmetto Bay Marina. She said her understanding was that the operation of that boat was in the current contract, and that it was intended to allow Daufuskie residents the opportunity to find employment on Hilton Head and surrounding areas. She referenced a local family who is moving off-island because the boat schedule limits employment opportunities for the main bread winner. James Bays also referenced another resident who had to quit her job on the other side because of the change in the ferry schedule.

Mr. Hill stated the Council adopted a resolution last year supporting an improved ferry service level. Included was a provision for early morning service to promote off-island employment. Earlier this year the Ferry Committee met to evaluate the current service provider on performance towards the contract. The Committee recognized the shortfall that early morning runs were not being provided. This evaluation was shared with the County. Mr. Hill commented that initially the early morning run was made possible based on the previous dynamics between the ferry provider and the Palmetto Bay Marina. A new embarkation dock is now in use, early morning runs remain a goal, however re-instituting it may only be "aspirational."

Ms. Smith moved and Mr. Bays seconded the following motion:

The Daufuskie Island Council reiterates its support for a public ferry schedule that includes an early morning boat so that Daufuskie residents will be able to pursue off-island employment opportunities.

The motion was passed by an 8-1 vote, with Mr. Brawner casting the dissenting vote.

Terminology for Daufuskie Residents

Steve Hill said that occasionally a question arises about the property terminology used to describe its residents, e.g., Daufuskians, Daufuskie Islanders, etc. There were various opinions expressed, but no real consensus was reached.

Public Forum

The following questions/comments were posed during the public forum section:

- Is the current ferry provider the only one eligible to apply for the service under the new contract?

Mr Hill answered "no," and that until the contract was signed anything could happen.

- What is going on with the asphalt in the roads? Why is it still a problem?

Mr. Hunter said that Mr. Schartner has been talking with the county officials about the problem, and county representatives have come over to assessed the situation. We are hoping that they will be taking steps to address the current problems.

- Based on the earlier comments, is the county considering closing the dump to public access for certain hours?

Mr. Brawner said that it is his understanding that DHEC will be recommending to the county that it be a manned facility, and in order to do that it will have to be secured and will not be open on a 24/7 basis. DHEC will mandate the county to pick up the debris on the other side of Francis Jones Road, and that action that may happen at the same time they come over to address the asphalt situation.

- Did the Council ask for this action?

Mr. Brawner said that DHEC was called by an certain individual repeatedly about dump issues, and that the DHEC representative has been over here three times to respond to his inquiries. Mr. Hunter added that the Council will keep the community informed as we get more information from DHEC and/or the County.

- Is the Council trying to take over Marshside Mamas?

Mr. Hunter clarified that the Council has been working to keep the facility from being sold and to keep it available to the broader community through a leased basis, so that it serves Daufuskie Island.

- Does anyone know why the contract negotiations for the ferry have been held up?
Has something changed that we don't know about?

Mr. Hill did not know what problems have caused the 4 month delay. He did confirm the current provider is very interested in renewal, and the delay is causing him concern.

Ms. Smith addressed again the Marshside Mama's issue, stating that the community had spoken loudly and clearly to the Council about the need to keep the Marshside Mama's available for public use. Consequently, the Council had been strongly advocating AGAINST the sale of the buildings by the County. Ultimately, the county agreed to look at other options, including the transfer of responsibility to the DI Council. The Council does not intend nor want to run the restaurant, but we do want to make sure it continues to be an asset to the community.

Ms. Robinson asked if the asphalt deposited along the side of the road leading to the park was going to be addressed by the County. Mr. Brawner said that removal was not on the county's list, and that the priority was for removal at the side of the road. Ms. Robinson asked if removing those piles near the park was going to be done eventually. Mr. Brawner replied that it was, and that it should be relatively easy to move them because they were in large piles. Ms. Robinson asked Mr. Brawner to ascertain a time table for the removal of those piles, and he said he would.

- Has there been any talk about installing compacters at the dump site in order to discourage vultures, raccoons, etc?

Mr. Hunter said that compacters have been under discussion for some years, and that hopefully that will happen at some point. Mr. Brawner also stated that there will probably be covers on the dumpsters that will help discourage activity by the vultures, flies, etc. The compacter issues are a little more complicated, and may take longer to implement. In addition, there are some discussions going on that may result in the dump being moved to another location.

- Is there a one year or five year plan, etc for the dump?

Mr. Brawner explained that the the county can move slowly, so we have to see what happens. Mr. Hill stated that there have indeed been discussions about an expanded convenience or transfer station, but that long-range planning by the county has not taken place. There are now some dynamics between the state and the county on the dump issue, which is probably a good thing in terms of something getting accomplished.

- Would the plastic bag ordinance exclude Hilton Head and Bluffton?

Mr. Hill said that is his assumption, and that it applies to the unincorporated areas, maybe because of issues with the tourists and vacation guests.

Ms. Robinson referenced the need for anti-littering signage on the island, and said she also thought it would be helpful if the cart renters put trash bags on their carts.

- It would be good if the Council works to move the dump to prevent flies etc for those who want to use the park.

Mr. Hunter said everyone would agree with that sentiment.

- Comment by public member: Re bags on carts, doing so would turn that trash into commercial trash, which means it couldn't be discarded at the dump. So the situation is more complicated than we might think.

In response to a comment, Mr. Hill said that the production "Conrack" is taking place in Beaufort though the upcoming weekend, and that some of the children appearing in that play visited Daufuskie recently. Ms. Robinson said that she had taken the children

around, and that they immensely enjoyed the experience and felt more informed about the island.

- Quite often there are run-over squirrels on the road. Is there any way that signs could be posted asking people to be respectful of the wildlife?

Mr. Hunter said that signage is difficult, because we have no right of way and permission would have to be granted by private owners. This has been an issue with attempts to put up anti-littering signs.

- The questioner said she would be happy to approach private owners asking for permission to install signs.

Mr. Hunter thanked her for the offer.

Adjournment

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