

Daufuskie Island Council Meeting
July 26, 2016
Minutes

Charlie Smith called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The following council members were present:

Charlie Small
Chuck Hunter
Len Pojednic
John Schartner
Dave Hutton
Deborah Smith
Steve Hill

The following council members were absent:

Janet Adams
Tina Fine

A majority of the members being present, there was a duly constituted quorum.

Hilton Head Monthly Article

Charlie Small announced that he has been asked to write an article about Daufuskie issues for Hilton Head Monthly, and welcomed submissions. Such submissions need to be in by Monday, August 1st and should be sent to chasmo5245@yahoo.com.

Francis Jones Park Restrooms and Trails; Restrooms at County Dock and BP Beach

Chuck Hunter provided a report on the public restrooms and walking trails for Francis Jones Park. The county contract should be awarded by the end of August, and construction is expected to start soon after that. The building will be a tabby-like structure.

For the county-funded restrooms at the county dock and at the public beach near Beach Road, county concerns about both areas falling below the flood line have delayed implementation of those facilities. Chuck said he is working with a county land planner and architect on an exemption of these facilities from the flood line restrictions. When constructed, the facility at the beach will be one male and one female stall, and a shower. The county dock facility will be larger with more stalls than the one that is being currently used. Maintenance of all proposed bathroom facilities is an issue, but Chuck reports that the county will be pursues a contract with a local service to clean and maintain the facilities.

Webb Tract Development

Chuck also reported that Roger Freedman is working with land planners re development of the Webb Tract, and trying to determine the parameters of what he can and can't do regarding his proposed housing development and water adventure attraction. Chuck said that on August 8th there would be a public meeting so that the Council and the island community could learn more about this development proposal. The location of this meeting is yet to be determined.

Aaron Crosby, who represents Mr. Freedman, said a lot of work has gone into what can be done, and now they are trying to decide what should be done.

Tax Initiatives

Steve Hill reported on two separate tax-related initiatives

1. One Cent Sales Tax Projects

As reported at previous Council meetings, in June the County Council approved specific projects that would be funded by a temporary countywide one cent sales tax increase. If approved by the voters in November, the total amount of funds collected through this tax will be \$120 million. The projects approved by the County Council include \$1.3 million for Right of Way acquisition of Daufuskie roads and \$1.8 million for an island solid waste facility.

2. Two Percent Accommodations Tax

The County runs a grant program funded by the accommodations tax collected from tourist-related activities. The County is currently accepting applications for projects designed to promote tourism and fund tourism-related activities. Last year, the Daufuskie Island Foundation received a \$6 thousand grant to support Daufuskie Day and the Daufuskie Island Historic Foundation received \$1,200 for literature.

The deadline for grant applications is September 7th and applications can be found at www.bcgov.net. Steve encouraged anyone interested in proposing a project to contact one of the DI Council members.

County Ferry Handbook

Steve Hill reported that the County Ferry Handbook needs to be updated, and some county officials have indicated that that we can play a role in the progress. The DI Council will help coordinate an initiative to update this handbook.

Update on Public Ferry Initiative

Richard Inglis provided a report on the new public ferry program, scheduled to begin on August 1st. The new service represents a collaboration between the Haig Point Ferry Company and the Melrose Resort, and will be operated under the auspices of a new company called the Daufuskie Island Ferry Company. A copy of the anticipated ferry schedule was distributed.

Richard expressed appreciation to a focus group comprised of island residents who utilize the public ferry service. That group will continue to serve as advisors to Richard and the new ferry company as the new program moves forward. He said the mission of the new service will be to provide ferry service to the island based on both reliability and accountability. He said the company will try hard to run the boats on time, and asked residents to strive to be on the boat before the departure times. He said “We want you to be able to count on the boat schedule.’

Richard said that they will be soon providing definitions of cargo and freight. For the most part, cargo will be considered regular household goods such as luggage and groceries, and there will be no charge for them. Freight will be larger items such as appliances and will have to be transported in a trailer, and there will be a charge for such items.

Wagons and carts to help transport groceries etc. down the dock will be allowed. Eventually, there will be one or more golf carts and trailers at the Palmetto Bay Marina transfer station with assistance provided by the boat staff if needed.

Communications tools such as a website and a contact phone number will be provided soon. There will be an online ticket purchase resource for non-Palmetto Breeze customers, e.g., vacation guests.

The goal is to start on Monday, August 1st; and get cars moved over from Broad Creek by that date. Richard said they have had conversations with Palmetto Breeze and Ms. Spells and have asked for grace period to move cars out. Beaufort County may extend contract with Simmons by one month for better transition, but that has yet to be determined.

35 public spots will be identified by Melrose at the Palmetto Bay Marina dock by Monday.

In response to a question, Richard said that in order to facilitate a smooth transition between Broad Creek and Palmetto Bay, they may make special trips to Broad Creek to drop people off to get their cars so that they can drive to Palmetto Bay Marina.

Other questions/comments:

Question - Is there a phone number for the new service?

Answer- It will be sent out shortly by the Council.

Question: Will there be more parking spaces?

Answer: Parking issues are still being addressed, including a meeting with the town of Hilton Head to identify additional parking resources. Palmetto Breeze currently administers 27 parking spots. Richard said they have been informed that Palmetto Breeze currently has no waiting list, so DI folks should call now if they want a space; the new contract specifies 35 spots.

Question: How many passengers will the boats hold?

Answer: Depending on which boat is used: 44 passengers, 49 passengers; 86 passengers

Comment: The 5:00 pm departure from HH doesn't quite work for someone who has a job on HH

Answer: We will be evaluating everything

Question: Will the cost of parking be the same?

Answer: Yes, no immediate price changes are anticipated.

Question: Where will people buy tickets?

Answer: The Palmetto Breeze office in Bluffton; Melrose; Daufuskie General Store (at County Landing), and the Charter Office at Palmetto Bay Marina.

Question: Cost of Regular ticket:

Answer: Rack rate: \$35 round trip

Question: Children?

Answer: Children 5 and under are free for the rack rate. Children 3 and under ride free on the County fare.

Question: Parking on this side. Are there any issues with using the Melrose Landing parking lot?

Answer: Checking docks to make sure they are safe; trash service being requested; Melrose will be organizing the parking set-up; right now probably pretty loose

Comment: Not a question, but want to thank HP and Melrose for their willingness to help with this new service.

Question from Councilman Dave Hutton - Starting August 1st, is there any issue with launching the boat service? Is there a back-up plan if a dock is not operable?

Answer: High level of confidence for launching on August 1st; Yes, there are other dock options if for any reason the regular docks can't be used for such reasons as storm damage, etc.

Question: How will community know for sure that the service is starting on Monday, and any special issues?

Answer: Richard stated that he will seek the Council's help in sending out a communication blast through Next Door and other sources.

Question: Haven't you already been running from Melrose dock for Ocean Residence guests?

Answer: Yes

Question: How much is a ticket for a non-resident property owner (e.g., own a lot)?

Answer: Go to Palmetto Breeze website

Note: This information is not actually on the website, so we have included it at the end of these minutes.

In response to a suggestion by a member of the public, the following motion was made by Dave Hutton, seconded by Deb Smith, and adopted by unanimous vote of the Council:

“The Daufuskie Island Council commends Wick Scurry for his years of providing public ferry service to the Daufuskie Island community and providing a marine lifeline to essential services and goods that would not otherwise have been available. His willingness to provide these services is appreciated by the Council and the entire Daufuskie community.”

Other Business

Steve Hill suggested that voter information be developed to acquaint island voters about candidates for public offices relevant to Daufuskie. Deb Smith further suggested that the Council provide additional information in some cases including specific acts of assistance provides by incumbent office holders. Len Pojednic also suggested that biographical information be included.

Steve Hill will be drafting and circulating to the entire Council a resolution relating to the Bailey Bill.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Addendum

Rates for Palmetto Breeze tickets for Daufuskie ferry service (per conversation with Linda at the Palmetto Breeze office on July 27th). Information can be found in Beaufort County's Daufuskie Island Ferry Services Protocol Handbook.

- Full-time resident: (“4 percenter” property owner) \$3 (Pink Card)
- Part-time resident (“6 percenter" property owner): \$7 (Yellow Card)
- Full-time senior residents: \$2 (Orange Card)
- Full-time children residents (high school and under): \$2 (Orange card)
- Full-time rental residents (Non property owner): \$4 (Green Card)
- Non-resident property owners \$7 (Yellow Card)