



SURFSIDE BEACH TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES
Tuesday, February 19, 2013, 10:00 a.m.
Surfside Beach Fire Station Conference Room

1. CALL TO ORDER. Mayor Samples called the workshop to order at 10:00 a.m. Mayor Samples, Mayor Pro Tempore Mabry and Councilmembers Dodge, Smith, Stevens and Kohlmann were present. Councilman Johnson was unable to attend. A quorum was present.

No town staff members were present. Council had previously agreed to summary minutes taken by a citizen volunteer and that they would proceed informally during the workshop as if the Rules were suspended.

2. BUSINESS.

1. Council confirmed that Minutes of the January 15, 2013 Workshop had been approved.

2. Councilman Smith requested that one item be added to the working list. Council agreed to add "Outfall Pipes on Beach" (now Item #31 on the attachment).


3. Guest Bob Hanson asked if Council had reviewed the draft Comprehensive Plan for 2012-2021. That draft has not yet been presented to Town Council.

4. Councilman Stevens noted for the record that Minutes from Town Council meetings of November 27, 2012 and January 8, 2013 are not publicly available at this time.

5. Mayor Samples provided a brief recap of the January 15, 2013 Workshop on Visioning/Team Building and offered several suggestions to add some structure to discussion of the working list of issues (attached). Council then entered discussion, deciding on courses of action as noted in the attachment.

3. ADJOURNMENT. Mayor Samples declared the workshop closed at 1:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Mary Ellen Abrams

Revised List: Black is from 1/15/2013 workshop. Red is from 2/19/13.

List of Items Suggested by Councilmembers and sorted by area of responsibility.
(The following were taken off the table as completely agreed upon by Councilmembers :)
Like the Town the way it is.
Sense of Community
Great Services
Family Orientation (including height limits on buildings)

Town Council Specific:

1. Communication - matter of TC subcommittees communicating to full Council. (More at #17). Have we appointed chairmen for the Council subcommittees? That is who should be reporting to full Council. Discussion of how Council subcommittees could do a better job of keeping full Council informed of the issues, if not the details. It was noted that casual conversation between councilmembers is also a good way to keep each other informed.

Should this topic be broadened to include all town-sponsored committees? Some do report regularly to Council; some do not. Require negative reports? The procedural structure needs to be addressed.

Decision/action: Task the Town Clerk to write reporting procedures for all town committees. This action was completed by letter from the mayor to committees dated 2/20/13.

Additional discussion about communication among members of Council: Email communication should be for the purpose of conveying information, not for discussion of opinions. E-mail statements such as "I share your concern" are acceptable for Councilmembers. Emails airing disagreements over Council issues are not acceptable. There is a perceived need for more opportunities for discussion of issues among councilmembers.

2. Trust. Acknowledged as critical but intangible -- set aside for now.

3. Respect. Acknowledged as critical but intangible -- set aside for now.

4. Economic Development. Discussion about making the town more attractive to small businesses. Don't disregard manufacturing -- Sandy Lane is the appropriate place for that. Mail order businesses? Has the issue of the Jammin' Leather space been resolved by the lawyers? Our primary business is tourism, but we should consider others. Need to put out (in magazine?) the information that commercial property is available in Surfside Beach (the 14 acre tract, for instance). Find out why cash buyers come here. Survey? Designate someone as point of contact to find out why. Town should survey successful businesses in town. Town should court chain businesses. Town should consider types of family-oriented businesses. Town should also look for ways to take care of existing businesses.

What benefits would be attractive to businesses? Consider the "flip side" -- a negative would be too much competition (for example, too many golf cart businesses already in town.)

Economic Development is a very large issue with sub-elements that include branding (#24), esthetics (#15) and business "club" (#27). Attitude (#16 and #18) is important because public perception is a significant factor. Rock Hill has a pamphlet about starting a new business there. Surfside Beach has a checklist that could use some work.

Guest Bob Hanson offered the wording "...to attract quality businesses".

Decision/action: Economic Development to be discussed with Department Heads through the Town Administrator. Council needs to hear staff side of the coin and discuss all issues before tasking.

5. Working Together **Acknowledged as critical but intangible – set aside for now.** (Editorial comment: Suggest Council consider noting at the next workshop that visioning/team-building workshops are specific actions taken by Town Council related to Item #5, Working Together.)

6. Transparency (One item under this should be Town Council Minutes.)

Decision/Action: Direct the Town Administrator/Town Clerk that any items for which Town Administrator needs consensus will be listed on the agenda under Administrator's Report. They may be general statements without a lot of detail. This direction was given on 2/19/2013 by email from the Town Clerk to the Town Administrator.

7. Fiscal Responsibility

Sub-topic: Prudence is too vague. Need 5-7-10 year plans.

"Fiscal Responsibility" is too vague.

Decision/action: Defer to next Budget Retreat.

There was consensus that the Budget Retreat should be held in town.

Advise committees that if they have budgetary items they need to be funneled to the Budget Retreat through the Town Administrator. (Done. See town clerk memo of 2/20/13)

8. Dumping of leaves (by commercial entities). Probably needs ordinance rewrite. This is a multi-faceted issue involving illegal dumping, enforcement, possible bagging of leaves, clearer laws, etc.

Decision/Action: Refer to Town Administrator. Ordinance 04-0518, section 7-29b to be expanded, improved. Coordinate with Public Works and Police Department.

9. Increase Revenue - discussion included millage and special funds.

Decision/Action: Consensus that this is a matter for the Budget Retreat.

10. Underground Wiring: Need to better understand the engineering (big electric vaults).

Decision/Action: This has been answered. Big vaults are necessary for main lines. A graphic representation has been requested.

Town Council and Administrator:

11. Be Opportunistic (example: HWY 17 repaving)

Decision/Action: This is simply a matter of watching for opportunities.

Administrator:

12. Tours of Departments (ask Dept. Heads about open-house). This had multiple sub-ideas:

For the general public? Open house might be better. **Agreed on open house.**

For new Council members, town clerk should arrange appointments with department heads.

Tie to the 50th Anniversary? **Agreed to this; however, should do a "dry run" in 2013.**

Ride-along's? **Agreed these should be available.**

Decision/Action: Refer to Town Administrator. Need to discuss with Department heads.

Multiple responsibilities:

13. Highway 17 – PW, Admin, TC, Committees, GSATS, SCDOT

Frontage roads

Crossovers

Mayor Samples explained the importance of GSATS and stated that the modernization of Hwy 17 is critical to long term business prosperity of Surfside Beach.

Would be nice to have a layout of the whole 2-mile plan.

Decision/Action: Refer to Town Administrator to send a letter to SCDOT asking them to provide a preliminary conceptual design of the improvements planned for the Hwy 17 corridor, including the Frontage Roads and crossovers. If SCDOT wants to charge for this, Council will react to that when it is known.

14. Water Tower. Install the Town Logo with the words A FAMILY BEACH on the North and South sides of the water tower so that they are visible for drivers on Hwy 17 Business. – TC, Admin, PW, GSWSA.

This was discussed under Economic Development (#4) and is an example of Branding (#24).

Decision/Action: To be a consensus item for Town council agenda: Direct the Town Administrator to obtain permission from GSWSA and to take action to place the town logo and words on the water tower before the town's 50th anniversary. It is understood that the town will provide the logo and the labor/materials. Action-Town Administrator.

15. Esthetics (lighting, signs, landscaping) – Administrator, PW, Committees and Santee Cooper.

Signage: Lengthy discussion about words vs. symbols and size of lettering. This item ties to #21 and #22.

Action/Decision: Signs need to be in place by the 50th Anniversary. Several groups are working on signage. Need to continue with the efforts currently under way. Needs to be in the budget. Will need to work with SCDOT. Town should first obtain designs, and only then introduce a package.

16. Public Service Attitude – Administrator and all Departments, particularly Police.

Acknowledged as critical but intangible. Set aside for now.

Town Council and Staff:

17. Communication (more at #1)

See discussion of multiple aspects of communication in Item #1. (Editorial comment: Suggest Council eliminate this item and put it all together in item #1.)

18. Attitude. This item ties to #16 as critical but intangible.

Agreed that the public perception of Town Hall is important.

19. Stormwater – North end (with Public Works)

Action/Decision: Refer to Town Administrator to ensure that Public Works has a plan to present at the Budget Retreat.

Public Works:

20. Pot holes in town roads.

Action/Decision: Refer to Town Administrator to ensure that Public Works has a plan to present at the Budget Retreat that includes specific dollar amounts for potholes and individual roads in the town. The plan will include the CTC funding amount and Council will make decisions about moving more money into road maintenance.

21. Surfside Drive – more palm trees and year round lights on palm trees. Install isolated medians on Surfside Dr. from Poplar Dr. to Yaupon Dr. Plant two or three Palmetto Palms in each isolated median.

Decision/Action: In regard to year round lights on palm trees, direct Public Works (through the Town Administrator) to put the white lights back up on Surfside Drive palm trees – number of lights/trees at PW discretion.

Decision/Action: In regard to the vision of medians or islands with palm trees all the way down to the pier, direct Public Works and the Fire Department to scope out the idea, including fire truck turning radius issues.

The discussion broadened to include all “gateway” areas of town including the pier area. One suggestion was to start with Surfside Drive, then Ocean Boulevard, then other roads in town. Another idea was to add lighting to the pier and pier ADA ramp area.

Items #15 and #21 are part of a larger conceptual issue. Piecemeal improvements lose impact.

Action/Decision: There will be no additional directives to Public Works at this time without a broader plan in place. The “gateway to the pier” area should be addressed as a whole. Town Council to budget for a conceptual design for the gateway to the pier (Surfside Drive) and pier area.

22. Ocean Blvd line of sight. This has been addressed by new parking legislation.

23. Trimming bushes over sidewalks.

Ties to the larger issue of beautification, dressing up the pier and gateway areas. Decision/Action: Direct Public Works to prepare for the Budget Retreat at two part plan – 1) what can be done this year in terms of landscaping Ocean Boulevard and the pier area? and 2) what can be done next year? Meanwhile, Public Works should ensure that the town continues to maintain line of sight either by requesting that property owners trim bushes on their property or by Public Works taking action on public rights of way.

Administrator and Committees:

24. Branding. (See discussion under Economic Development #4 and Water tower #14).

Police Department:

25. Crime Watch (also bicycle patrol and dogs).

Town Council should express support for any Crime Watch initiatives. Harbor Lights is starting its own Crime Watch.

The Police Department now has a dog. No longer an issue.

In general, Council needs to better understand how the Police department covers and works and manages its personnel. Council also needs more specific information on crimes that are committed. (There was some disagreement about this. Town presently has a focus group working to select a Police Chief and has two people working on a “designer drug” ordinance. It was suggested that this group could be re-focused on the Police Department in general.

Council discussed use of a “beach vehicle” for a proactive presence on the beachfront year round. Perhaps use an existing public works vehicle with magnetic Police signage. **Action/Decision: The proposed “committee” (focus group above?) should know the answer and convey it to Council. They should also consider budget implications and the hiring of additional personnel.**

Action/Decision: Bicycle patrol to be referred to the “focus group” mentioned above.

Police dispatchers need to be aware of Lanier’s jurisdictional area so that they can properly refer callers. **(Suggest adding at next meeting: Action/Decision: Direct acting Police Chief to see that this happens.)**

Planning, Building & Zoning Department:

26. Residential “overlay” – (appearance requirements for residential properties). **Action/Decision: Refer to the Planning Commission to prepare a conceptual paper on residential design overlay.**

Business Committee:

27. Start a business “club.” (It is not clear if the town could effect this; town is beginning to feel out MB C of C to help promote our “family beach” niche. They tend to resist fragmenting the “MB Area” concept.) **Action/Decision: Refer to the Business Committee for their input.**

28. Fifth Avenue North – stagger the traffic signal? Closing frontage road? Close the North side of the frontage road only at 5th Ave N to improve safety. (Send first to Business Committee and then to Infrastructure subcommittee of TC.) **Action/Decision: Refer to the Business Committee for their input.**

29. Business friendly – **Acknowledged as critical but intangible. Set aside for now.**

Recreation and Events Committee:

30. Hold events in central business district and in Veterans’ Park. The Recreation and Special Events Committee has plans under way for Martin Park activities. They will continue to focus on the Central Business district and Veterans Park.

31. **Outfall pipes on beach. Can’t afford all at once; investigate financial considerations. Look at big picture. (This new item added on 2/19/13). Town Council-specific.**

Discussion of areas for future consideration at Visioning/Teambuilding workshop:

A. Should Town Council consider allowing property owners to purchase their right-of-way area? Pro’s and Con’s include utilities, landscaping, maintenance.

B. Increase available golf cart parking near the beach by removal of bushes (not trees) to triple the number of golf cart parking spots in some crossovers. Bushes could be redeployed to other public areas.

C. How to have shorter Town Council meetings (this could go under #1 Communication or #5 Working Together if you wish.)

-Use Pre-meeting workshops to try to pull together agreement before first reading.

-For Proposed ordinances:


1. Start with a well thought out, near-perfect draft.
2. Hold a pre-meeting workshop as mentioned above.
3. First Reading
4. Second Reading


-Make more use of Special Council Meetings for items that are time-critical.

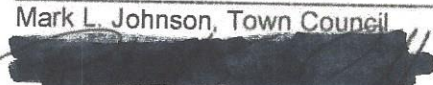
D. Action/Decision: Task Public Works to look at Seaside Drive North for ways to protect street light poles from cars. (Editor: Suggest this item needs to be attached somewhere. #15?)


Approved: March 12, 2013



Douglas F. Samples, Mayor


Mary Beth Mabry, Mayor Pro Tempore


Ann Dodge, Town Council


Mark L. Johnson, Town Council


Elizabeth A. Kohlmann, Town Council


Roderick E. Smith, Town Council


Randie M. Stevens, Town Council

Town Clerk's Note: This document constitutes minutes of the meeting. This meeting was not audio taped. These meeting minutes were taken and prepared by Ms. Mary Ellen Abrams, a volunteer. In accordance with FOIA, meeting notice and the agenda were distributed to local media and interested parties. The agenda was posted on the entry door at the Fire Station, the bulletin boards outside Town Council Chambers and in the Town Hall reception area. Meeting notice was also posted on the Town marquee.