



**SURFSIDE BEACH TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING APRIL 10, 2018 ♦ 6:30 P.M.  
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**Town Council Meeting – 6:30 p.m.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER.** Mayor Childs called the regular meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Childs, Mayor Pro Tempore Ott, and Councilmembers Courtney, Johnson, Pellegrino, Samples, and Stevens were in attendance. A quorum was present. Others present: Interim Administrator Duckett; Town Clerk Herrmann; Finance Director King, and Police Chief Hofmann.

**2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE. A. Invocation:** Father Ron Greiser, Church of the Resurrection, gave the invocation. **B. Pledge of Allegiance:** Mayor Childs led the Pledge.

**3. AGENDA APPROVAL.** Mr. Stevens moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Mr. Johnson second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**4. MINUTES APPROVAL. Workshop March 8, 2018 and Regular Meeting March 27, 2018.** Mr. Stevens moved to adopt the workshop minutes of March 8<sup>th</sup> and the regular meeting minutes of March 27<sup>th</sup> as presented. Mr. Ott second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED**

**5. PUBLIC COMMENTS. Agenda Items Only.** (3-minutes per speaker). There were no comments.

**6. COMMUNICATIONS. Administrator's Report.** Mr. Duckett said there was very little to report, but he would be glad to answer questions. There were no questions.

**7. BUSINESS.**

**A. Reading Ordinance #18-0869, Chapter 5 Elections, Clerk Herrmann.** Mr. Courtney moved to adopt first reading of Ordinance #18-0869 as presented. Mr. Johnson second. Mr. Ott said six years ago the mayor pro tempore election was change to require that the candidate with the highest number of votes in the election be nominated as mayor pro tempore. I believe that process showed respect to the people who voted. The decision paper and ordinance copies are on file. Mayor Childs and Councilmembers Johnson, Pellegrino, Samples and Stevens voted in favor. Mayor Pro Tempore Ott and Councilmember Courtney voted against. **MOTION CARRIED.**

**B. Resolution #18-189 Declaration of Results for General Election April 3, 2018, Clerk Herrmann.** Ms. Samples moved to adopt Resolution #18-189 as presented. Mr. Ott second. A copy of the resolution is on file. Ms. Samples congratulated Councilmember Pellegrino and newcomer, Bruce Dietrich on their successful campaigns for office. (*Applause.*) All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Mr. Johnson called *point of order*, and asked if the candidates for the runoff election could be introduced. Mayor Childs said point taken, and invited them to introduce themselves. Ms. Debbie Soles and Mr. Tim Courtney were recognized.

**8. TOWN COUNCIL DISCUSSION.**

**A. Grant Writer Program, Mayor Pro Tempore Ott.** Mr. Ott said I asked for a discussion on the grant writer, because I would like to see citizens throw their names out there, if they're qualified, to be able to write grants. We were never asked for grant money to [pay the writer.] In fact, I prefer to be paid out of whatever appropriate funds for which the grant is related. I, personally, would love to see the big lakes dredged. If we received a grant for that, we could take the money from stormwater [to pay the grant writer.] Payments could come from capital equipment, beautification, or some tax funds, or whatever fund applied. During research, I saw some opinions, but I'd like to see some law or an attorney's opinion on the matter. In general, I want to be very ethical, and open this to the public to get some grants for this town. We have a lot of infrastructure work to be done. We're

Town Council Regular Meeting  
April 10, 2018

57 building one bridge. We've got four more to do. We have more outfalls to do, I don't want it to come out of our tax  
58 money, if we can get some government money, let's look into it. Mr. Stevens said I agree with Mr. Ott 100%.  
59 There's no reason why we can get all kinds grants. There's a lot of people in the town can write grants, and get grant  
60 for us. We could pay them once they get the grant. I don't believe in paying anybody a salary to do the work. When  
61 they actually produce, then we pay them. I like the idea of putting this out to the public. There may be somebody  
62 sitting in this audience that get us a lot of things like that. Mr. Pellegrino said I also agree with the grant writing  
63 program. One thing we do need to keep in mind is many of the government grants are matching grants, and  
64 therefore, when we do have an opportunity for a grant, we need to make sure we go to the budget to ensure we have  
65 the money to match. On a large grant you could have to come up with a very large sum of money to match our  
66 portion. A lot of these items that these grants will be written for might not be in the budget. So we need to consider  
67 that. If we can get projects done from federal money, I'm all for it. That's a positive. Ms. Samples said I, too, agree  
68 that anyone in the community who sees the opportunity for a grant for the town is encouraged, but certainly as Mr.  
69 Pellegrino pointed out, there would need to be a collaborative effort between those individuals and staff, and to  
70 ensure that those items that do need matching funds that the town is capable of doing so, before a lot of time is  
71 allocated to responding to the grant. Staff will certainly have to be involved in that. So I think it's a great idea. In the  
72 research that I've done, and as Mr. Ott pointed out, I'm not an attorney, but Google grant writing and when you pull  
73 up the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, it states that paying a consulting fee from a grant award is not  
74 allowable expenditure and considered unethical practice. Also, if you look at Grant Professionals Association, the  
75 GPA, they state unequivocally no commissions or any form of percentage compensation is to be paid from the grant  
76 award. So it's kind of clear that we have rules to follow and again I encourage anyone who wants to participate in  
77 grant writing to do so. We certainly have to be mindful of what the rules are, and what our auditors will consider an  
78 allowable expense. Again, I think it's a great idea and staff will have to be intimately involved in that collaborative  
79 effort as it relates any grant writing. Mr. Ott said I agree with Ms. Samples. We don't know all the rules. We need to  
80 look at the rules, and as I said, it doesn't sound like it would be ethical to take it out of the money you're getting.  
81 But, I know that that we have some good people on staff that would know where to get the money one way or  
82 another. What I need to know now, maybe from our financial director, or council, or the interim administrator, is  
83 where do we go next? Mr. Courtney said I think it's important that we have a grant writer. It's something that we  
84 should have done a long time ago. As we have these retention ponds, lakes, they need to be dredged, and we should  
85 be seeking grants. We can hire part-time grant writer and we can figure out how to pay them. I'm sure there's a way  
86 around each grant that's written is written differently, so depending on the amount, depending on the grant, they all  
87 come in different shapes and sizes. We put the money up front for our police body cameras, but then we applied for  
88 a grant that was available and got reimbursement. The grant money is out there. We should have someone looking  
89 for it. I can't believe this town does not have a grant writer, so I would concur with Mr. Ott on this and would  
90 definitely look for grant writer. Ms. Samples said let me also add that if that's what council desires to do that is  
91 certainly something that can be discussed at budget as far as allocating another position, but I also stress that a  
92 position description will certainly need to be written and then advertising for that position would have to occur. Mr.  
93 Johnson said if we have a grant writer, we're going to have to figure out how to pay for that position. As far as the  
94 police body cameras, we bit the bullet to purchase those before the grant money was available, [so our officers were  
95 prepared for bike week.] We need to determine where the money will come from for a grant writer. Perhaps the  
96 answer is to raise your taxes. I have a feeling that no one wants to raise their taxes. Although, we have the one of  
97 lowest tax rates on the Grand Strand. Mr. Stevens said he found during his research that there is an Association of  
98 Grant Writers. Those people like to be paid a salary. But we don't have to pay the grant writer out of the grant  
99 money. Let somebody get the grant for us, and we pay that person out of general funds or whatever. You can't gage  
100 the performance of a grant writer. I don't believe in putting another person on payroll; they need to be paid for  
101 performance. Mr. Johnson said I have no problem with that, but we still have to come up with the money. Mr.  
102 Pellegrino said Mr. Johnson is correct. I agree with Mr. Stevens. It's unethical to pay them out of the grant. We  
103 would have to have a fund, but we need to discuss this during the budget process, if we want this for next year. Ms.  
104 Samples said if it is going to be paid out of the general fund, you may want to consider a bid process just to be fair.  
105 Mr. Ott asked the finance director to come up with some ideas for us for our budget meeting. Mr. Courtney asked  
106 grants were done in the past. Ms. King explained that the police department wrote the grant for the police cameras.  
107 In the distant past, a college intern wrote grants. The departments write their own grants and manage them now. If a  
108 department director comes across a grant, they apply for it. In many cases, grants are for schools, meals, hospitals or  
109 things the town doesn't have and wouldn't qualify for. The \$500,000 grant we have now for stormwater from the  
110 Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) is the maximum grant RIA issues, and another grant cannot be requested until  
111 this project is completed. Mayor Childs said this would be discussed further during the budget process.  
112

113 **B. Employee Bonuses and Firefighter Pay Increases, Councilmember Sample.** Ms. Samples said about  
114 a month or so ago when we as a council discussed well-deserved bonuses for our police department, council  
115 concurred to ask our administrative staff about bonuses for all of our employees, and not just our police department.  
116 Council concurred to have the administrator, and the department directors to review their budgets, since we're  
117 coming to the end of the year, to determine if there was some extra funds available so that we could look at bonuses  
118 for all of our staff. I recognize that our interim has been out ill, and that acting interim Ms. King has been extremely  
119 busy, but I do not want to let this get away. I would like to ask Ms. King if she received feedback from our  
120 department directors as it relates to extra funds in their budgets for bonuses for employees. Ms. King said yes,  
121 except from public works and building, zoning and planning. Ms. Samples asked if council would concur to have the  
122 finance director bring recommendations for bonuses to the next council meeting for consideration. Mr. Ott said  
123 finding extra funds in the budget is hard. We need to add this into our budget. Ms. Samples said these bonuses are to  
124 be taken out of this year's budget. Ms. King said that was correct. Mr. Courtney thanked Ms. Samples for the idea.  
125 We did talk about it at one of the workshops, but I think it's more important that we take a look at manpower and  
126 what we really need. Yes, we've established that our police officers need to get better pay. Every time I've talked to  
127 the fire department staff over the last two years, it wasn't about bonuses or pay raises; it's been about having extra  
128 firefighters. We should be looking at proper staffing instead of giving out bonuses at this time. We need to bring our  
129 uniform forces on parity with other departments. Mr. Pellegrino said I agree with Ms. Samples a 100%. It also  
130 brings up the point, certainly in this year's budget cycle, we should sharpen our pencils for next year. We have all  
131 these extra expenses; as always the first draft of the budget for the upcoming year is in the red, so we need to look  
132 where we're going to cut to compensate for that. As far as Mr. Courtney's comments, we're comparing apples and  
133 oranges. There cost of bonuses is a very small amount versus \$600,000 a year to staff up the fire department, which  
134 is something we may have to do in the future. But, that needs a lot more planning. It's not something we could just  
135 do next year, even though the SAFER grant would be nice to use that would result in a pretty quick tax increase,  
136 possibly the next two cycles. Anyway, I do support the bonuses in this in this budget cycle. Thank you for that, Mr.  
137 Pellegrino, you're exactly right. This is a small effort on our part and it's certainly our job. I know the budget very  
138 well. There's some money there to do some good with, and if we have to take it away from council's travel budget,  
139 let's do that. I believe we're going to be getting maybe 1% back from the state retirement system. We have things we  
140 can do, if you look at the budget, and you know the budget, there's going to be some money there. Before we  
141 prepare for the new budget, let's take advantage of that. If we don't invest in our people, we're not gonna get  
142 anywhere. We did for the police department. Let's do it for the rest of the departments. Ms. King has said she's  
143 already heard from the majority of them. I bet you she can provide us with some specifics at the next meeting for  
144 recommendations for employee bonuses. I just think it is incumbent upon us as elected officials to look at providing  
145 service to our employees, and this is one way we can do that and say, 'hey, we appreciate you.' Mr. Courtney  
146 appreciated Ms. Samples' and Mr. Pellegrino's comments, but said going back to the fire department, it we don't  
147 start budgeting now, you keep on pushing this off. You don't have to hire six firefighters now, but you had hired one  
148 every three or five years, we wouldn't be in this position. Same for the police department. If there had been  
149 incremental raises, we wouldn't be in this position. We need to invest in employee safety and employees first by  
150 making them sound and whole to keep them here. I'm all for the bonuses, but again we need to start budgeting for  
151 future needs when our current staff nears retirement. Ms. Samples said again we're talking bonuses and we're  
152 talking budget. They're two different things. I would ask that we have the finance director provide us with  
153 recommended bonuses at the next meeting. **Council CONCURRED.**

154  
155 Ms. Samples said the second part of my discussion is about firefighters' pay increases. Just for information,  
156 we have in the Town of Surfside beach six full-time firefighters, plus a chief, plus one part-time fire inspector. Many  
157 fire departments, including Horry County and Myrtle Beach are short staffed. Specifically Horry County that has  
158 about 25 vacancies and that does not include the 22 firefighters that they have in training right now. They're looking  
159 for firefighters and are actively recruiting. We do not have overtime for firefighters in our department; we do not  
160 authorize overtime payments, which was surprising to me. Quite frankly, because I'm sure that there have been times  
161 and opportunities when we needed them to work some overtime. I know that it's a controversy with Horry County  
162 and Myrtle Beach. We gave the fire staff a 3% increase cost of living increase last year, and that was it. We have no  
163 vacancies in our department. Firefighter pay in the town ranges from \$31,500 to \$44,500. Horry County starts from  
164 \$35,000 to \$51,000. Myrtle Beach firefighters from \$38,600 to \$43,900 or if you're firefighter-paramedic it's  
165 \$43,900 to \$68,000-plus. They are paid pretty well compared to the Town of Surfside Beach who is sitting with no  
166 vacancies. We have loyalty here. We have people who like their jobs and want to keep them. In preparation for the  
167 budget, and because we're talking about, and I support increases for our police department, as well, and this is no  
168 impact on you and what you want your budget to be, I'm hopeful that this council will also take a look at our

Town Council Regular Meeting  
April 10, 2018

169 firefighters to correct the disparity in their pay between Horry County and Myrtle Beach, and other cities that are  
170 similar to ours. I will not be participating in the upcoming budget, [since my tenure on council will end,] I'm getting  
171 my comments in now and I'm hoping that this council will certainly take a look at the disparity in pay for our  
172 firefighters. Mr. Johnson said what I'm hearing is perhaps a tax increase, because we have a pretty bare-bones  
173 budget. Mr. Pellegrino said certainly I support looking at this, and I will bring it to the budget meetings. We have to  
174 consider this, because we're already dealing with police department pay increase, and there are other costs we know  
175 are coming: the pier, which requires us to put money up front even though the grant will reimburse us; again, this  
176 next budget meeting is going to be difficult. This group up here will have to make some big decisions, because every  
177 time we make a decision to invest in our employees, which is almost always the right decision, we may have to give  
178 up some other service or some other activity or some other task to have a balanced budget in the end. If we don't  
179 have a balanced budget, then as Mr. Johnson said, a tax increase might happen. We don't want that. I agree with  
180 pursuing this, because we're lagging way behind Horry County, and Myrtle Beach. Mr. Courtney said I agree with  
181 everyone that's on council and I don't have a problem with this. I want to make it very clear, if you speak to our  
182 firefighters they will say they are seeking one thing, manpower. They're not seeking raises. They are getting  
183 overtime. There was an overtime shift that was given out last week. I was told by firefighter. We are short  
184 firefighters. The chief and the fire inspector both live out of town. So I just want to be cautious with this budget  
185 giving out bonuses every year. I understand that we've gotta bring up certain departments to certain pay. I get that,  
186 you know there's gonna come a time as Mr. Johnson and Mr. Pellegrino said about taxes. You start giving out 3%;  
187 3%; 3% every year it's going to impact us eventually. I'm all for sending it to the budget and letting them decide.  
188 Mr. Ott said this this is the same discussion where we found extra money. I heard the words extra money. When I  
189 hear extra money, I pay attention. This is in consensus and it's going to council. I think we're happy with that. Ms.  
190 Samples said I do want to make two points. Mr. Courtney, I'm sure if you were to ask any one of those firefighters  
191 they would not say they're not seeking a raise, because I've spoken with them, so I disagree with that comment. But  
192 also, the reason why I'm bringing this up is so we do not look at departments individually, and that you look at the  
193 budget as a whole. If we're going to be looking at giving raises to our public safety, then let's look at the whole  
194 product of public safety, and not just the police department over here, and the fire department over here. If we're  
195 going to do it, let's be fair and let's be equal. That's the only reason I brought it up. Mr. Pellegrino said one last  
196 comment since we're talking about the budget and how this fits in to all this is revenue growth is the key. As a  
197 council we shied away from revenue growth in the past. Mr. Courtney is probably right. He has experience, and at  
198 some point we may need more firefighters. But we need to increase our revenue, so we can pay for them. That's an  
199 investment. If we don't have revenue for this upcoming budget, we have revenues from the current resources and  
200 rentals and business we have. But until we start increasing businesses year over year over year, we can't increase  
201 pay. When revenue increases, then we can bring on more firemen and do a lot of things. We need to take that risk  
202 and make the investment to try something different to increase revenues. That's a very important key. I'm going to  
203 be pushing that during the budget, just like I have the past four years. That's the key to making this all work. Right  
204 now we've had a couple good years as far as tourists. We had those years back in 2008 and 2009 when our revenue  
205 was shrinking. If we don't have other revenue sources, or we will really struggle. Mr. Courtney said our public  
206 safety consists of two departments, fire and police. Those guys work weekends, holidays, and shifts. They have to be  
207 careful what they do. They're first responders and they put their lives of the line. I'm not comparing them to other  
208 departments. I've seen the vision; the future, and what we haven't done in the past. Before you start handing out  
209 money, we need to be very careful about money. So, I agree with Mr. Pellegrino. We will see what happens at the  
210 budget. Mr. Stevens said I've heard everybody speak, and there are a lot of good points. If you live in a two-story  
211 house and have a fire, you want those people there to save your life. I also agree with Mr. Pellegrino that we have to  
212 increase revenues. We need to do it by creating more businesses in town that bring in revenue for us. It's like a  
213 double-edged sword. We can keep spending money, but we've gotta create revenue at same time. That's what we  
214 have to really look at it. We as a council need to start really looking at the business community, and how we can  
215 help them and how we can bring new businesses into town. We've got the pier; Highway 17 will be repaved, and  
216 we've got opportunities coming at us like crazy that we can really create a lot of business revenue. I hope that we  
217 have a business friendly council, whoever's sitting on the council, I hope they're business friendly, and they think  
218 about the fact that we need these extra revenues. Public safety is most important thing. We've got the third safest  
219 town in South Carolina, and a fire department with an ISO 1 rating. Mr. Ott said I appreciate everybody's thoughts  
220 on this, and go through a period of time where we will not have any pier there while it's being torn down. We're  
221 gonna lose a lot of good revenue, because the restaurant is not going to be there for a while. We have to consider  
222 that in our in our budget. When we ask for a fireman to be added, we're told the cost is \$100,000; but the salary is  
223 \$37,000. It's confusing, because what is it? I would like this answered at a future meeting. Mayor Childs asked if  
224 there was consensus to discuss this again at the budget meeting. **Council CONCURRED.**

225  
226  
227  
228  
229  
230  
231  
232  
233  
234  
235  
236  
237  
238  
239  
240  
241  
242  
243  
244  
245  
246  
247  
248  
249  
250  
251  
252  
253  
254  
255  
256  
257  
258  
259  
260  
261  
262  
263  
264  
265  
266  
267  
268  
269  
270  
271  
272  
273  
274  
275  
276  
277  
278  
279  
280

**C. Any matters of concern or information to be discussed.** There was no other discussion.

**9. PUBLIC COMMENTS. General Comments.** (5-minutes per speaker)

Ms. Diana Taylor, 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue North: Who do you call when you need a question answered about our town? Debra Herrmann. Her knowledge about this town goes deep. She attends all meetings in this town, actually making sure that all venues are open and set up properly. She opened the voting polls at '0 dark hundred,' I didn't see anybody else there, providing food and drink for all who worked. She also checked on everyone throughout the day. Plus, I can't even count her other duties she does for this town. She certainly puts in long hours to make everything happen above and beyond the call of duty. As a community, let's take some time to thank our town clerk, Debra. I think applause would be appropriate. *(Applause.)* Mayor Childs said I think we all feel the same way, [Ms. Taylor.]

Ms. Holly Watson, North Oak Drive: I am flabbergasted tonight. I cannot believe that you don't like free, when you have an opportunity to get grants for things that we already need that are in the budget or things that you have been told by your directors that you need, but yet you won't allow someone to go find grant money for it. If you'll recall, I brought you the name, the phone number, the email address, and all the specifications on the Myrtle Swash grant, and that grant was worth \$500,000 that we did not have to pay as taxpayers. This town is losing millions of dollars in grants and funds and sponsorships that we can have, and no wonder we have to keep raising our taxes. North Myrtle Beach and Myrtle Beach, you know, we see them get them get beach renourishment dollars; \$10 million for beach renourishment. We don't get anything. I mean, what do we get? When you're talking about a grant writer for other towns, they get anywhere between \$80 and \$140,000. I came to you in March of last year when a consideration was to tack on a fee to our water bill, because we needed \$3 million worth of stormwater projects. I gave you at that time a full entire list of places that we could go for everything from community development grants to stormwater structures and all kinds of other things that other townships all over the state were getting. But did we apply for any of them? Not that I know of. And as far as you are concerned about they're a matching grants, there are thousands of grants that don't require any match, if you know where to go to look for them. I am so; I just can't believe that you don't like free. What is it about free that you don't like? The argument that it's unethical is a moot point. It's not unethical to pay someone for their time. Grant Writers Association are salaried people, but they also pay a bonus based on how much grants the writer gets. So which is it? You don't pay performance or you pay performance. So I'm gonna give each one of the South Carolina procurement code where you can do a sole source procurement along with your written determination that that provider has specific and unusual expertise and you can pick a grant writer that you feel like can get the job done. I came to you with an offer, it wouldn't cost you a dime, unless I brought home a grant. Now you've gotta remember that thousands of grants take a lot of time to apply for. That would be my dime, my time. If you don't want me, find somebody else with the same deal. I offered to finance the commissions. I offered to wait for you to pay the commissions. It's up to you. Like I said, here's a copy of the procurement law. There's one for every one of you. Right on page 2 of this along with page one, it tells you all my qualifications. The same thing that I outlined, and they're seven reasons why I felt like I should do this and my qualifications to you, because I know this town. I've been here for 32 years. I know all the stuff that's under the rug, and you don't want me to bring it out tonight. I guarantee it. Now grant specified procurements are exempt. You can read all about it. I did not expect you to pay me out of grant proceeds, ever. If it's a stormwater structure, pay me out of the two mils. If it's a sponsorship, then pay it out of A-Tax or some other place, but these are items that you could go for that you've already put in the budget. Things that we need. Do you honestly think that I would go out there and look for something that we don't need? It doesn't make any sense. Anyway, thank you, and I hope you get one somewhere. Oh, and the other thing you might want to consider I would pick one. I would not pick several people working against each other for the same grant. That doesn't make any sense, either. Thank you.

Mr. Don Reed, 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue South: As I told you before, I have no agenda, just think it's important that our politicians and our public servants be honest and be transparent to the public. So I have a couple i's and a couple t's to cross tonight. I'd like to respond to a couple comments from the councilmembers at the end of the meeting that they presented. First, I would like to take a moment to speak for all of us who choose to write your comments down in advance of the meeting, and read their comments to stay on point, to stay within the time allotment, and for me, keep my emotions in check. Because we read our comments does not mean we are not passionate about our comments, nor are we any less spoken as it was spoken from the heart. A person was offended to think that at least

281 one councilmember thinks that comments from the person who reads his presentation is less important or genuine  
282 than comments from someone who was able to speak without notes. Now, I did talk to that councilman. I do  
283 appreciate his comments that he had, but I think it's important that everyone behind me understand that whether you  
284 read your comments, or you speak 'em they should be received equally and are genuine from the heart. Second of  
285 all, I would like to offer a clarification to another councilmember. A 4:3 vote is a simple majority, and that's the way  
286 we run our business. It becomes a gang of four when you vote on your emotion; it's ramrodded through; there's  
287 abuse of power, and when outside parameters of ethical and sound governance are not followed. At the last meeting,  
288 I asked that we learn from our experience, and that the board should never repeat their abuse of power as they  
289 demonstrated in the process. Now, I'm not saying that what they did was wrong; it's the process they used in firing  
290 the town administrator. I estimated that the cost was about \$55,000. That represents everyone in this room's taxes  
291 went to this (\*\*). A 138 of the average tax bill is \$400; it's 138 taxpayers. So everyone in here contributed to that  
292 error. Yet, one of the board members proudly proclaimed that he would again demonstrate the same abuse of power;  
293 again waste the 138 of our taxpayers' money, and the same board member stated that we probably saved money. I  
294 asked him to present the facts that back up this statement or was it just another ego boosting political blurb? You  
295 have the floor. Thank you.

296  
297 **10. TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS.**  
298

299 Mr. Johnson: I have no comments other than thank you all for coming out. I can't wait to see you next  
300 time. Be sure and get out and vote on the next Tuesday for the runoff election. Thank you.  
301

302 Mr. Pellegrino: Thank you for coming. As far as the grant writer program, I'm all for moving forward. I  
303 think we had consensus, too. I don't think we had a specific task that was generated from that to move forward. So  
304 we'll talk to the administrator and see how we need to move forward with that, but I think all of us up there were in  
305 agreement to move forward with that. As far as revenues, I mention them all the time, and that's one thing I'm  
306 passionate about. There's five keys going into the budget that I'm going to push. First of all, the tourist experience is  
307 a key; that's where we get most of our money, obviously from tourists. Help our existing businesses to grow, and fill  
308 up the storefronts. Mr. Stevens talks about that all the time. We have a lot of opportunity there. Then you've got the  
309 other two opportunities that are commercial annexation is an opportunity that we haven't chosen to move forward  
310 with, and the pier is a huge one. We did make some decisions on the pier. We did make a decision to build three  
311 buildings. We can keep talking about that and, you know, there's opportunity to grow and change things up, possibly  
312 to the two stories later on. If we're not going with annexation, then the pier is our big money maker in this town. So  
313 that's critical that we go through that process. Finally, I just want to thank all my supporters who voted for me and  
314 thank Ms. Herrmann and the Election Commission for running the election. I definitely don't thank Surfside Strong,  
315 whoever they are. I don't need that type of support. I know they sent stuff out for me from information from four  
316 years ago with the picture my kid, and my address, which I don't agree with. That was that was a pretty horrible  
317 flyer they sent out, and I don't know who it is, but I hope we find out, and I will give 'em an ear full when we do,  
318 because that's unacceptable, and I don't need their support. Finally, please vote on April 17<sup>th</sup>. We struggle to get  
319 voters out on runoff [election days]. So please, please get out next Tuesday and vote. Have a great day.  
320

321 Mr. Courtney: Yes, I'd like thank everyone for coming out. Ms. Holly Watson, I do like the idea about  
322 getting a grant writer, and about getting it free. There's gotta be some kinks there to be worked out; questions that  
323 have gotta be answered as far as who pays for it. I will also say that whatever actions were taken by this council, by  
324 these members, were legal and proper. It was in the best interest of the town. There was a majority vote. It's very  
325 simple. You've got seven councilmembers up here. You got four that vote in favor. You've got three that vote no. It  
326 is what it is. It can be rolled any way on any decision, on any business item. I want to say that I am actually  
327 surprised. I went through the last election, and I'm gonna talk about the flyers, because nobody's mentioned it. Yeah,  
328 they were pretty nasty. [Mr. Pellegrino] brought it up. He doesn't know how his name got or how his family got on  
329 the flyer, but they were pretty nasty, and came on Easter Saturday, on the Easter Holy Weekend. It was an  
330 embarrassing to this town was an embarrassment to this town. It was an embarrassment to the residents, their  
331 families when they came to sit down to dinner, they got a hold up that card as one woman told me, she held this card  
332 and said to see this beautiful town? This is what makes it ugly, and she held at that flyer. It send a bad message to  
333 our tourists. This is not who we are. Let's see if we can see we can make it a week without any bad fliers. I doubt it,  
334 but you'll see that nobody up here asked for an investigation, did they? Last election, oh, boy, they wanted to call the  
335 FBI in. Then they did, right? Nobody asked for investigation on who Surfside Strong is. But they had a lot of  
336 money, I'll say that. On annexation, I'm totally against it. Sorry, I'll never change my mind on that. I'd also like to

Town Council Regular Meeting  
April 10, 2018

337 say whatever happens after this election, I ask that all of you be kind to each other. Be civil. When you walk around  
338 this town these are people that we live with, alright? I want to be able to say to you, regardless of whether I'm on  
339 council or not, say hello to you, and not have to look the other way. But remember, be civil when you walk out these  
340 doors. This has gotta stop. You're actually being bullies out there some of you by putting out these fliers. It was  
341 awful. On a good note, the beach sweep, we have a beach sweep coming up, and I believe one of our beautification  
342 members... Can you please tell me the date, please? Ms. Mull responded from the audience, Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup> 10  
343 a.m. at the pier. Mr. Courtney said please come out and help us clean up our beaches. Even if you can pick up a  
344 couple plastic a day, it makes a huge difference. It shows who we are that we love our beaches. That's it. I'd like to  
345 say thank you. God bless you. Have a good night.  
346

347 Mr. Ott: Let me proudly say one thing, Ms. Herrmann is my friend. She's been my friend for a long time.  
348 When I call her, she's always cheerful. I don't know if it's for me, but I think she's cheerful for everybody, and  
349 sometimes in her job it's not cheerful. So God bless Ms. Herrmann. We're gonna miss her when she's gone. She's  
350 gonna retire, and we're gonna miss her. Free? Nobody likes free. We'll get it and we're gonna get it and it'll cost a  
351 couple bucks, but most of it, it could be free. I don't know. Thanks for coming out. You're gonna get home early  
352 tonight. Thank you.  
353

354 Mr. Stevens: I realize that some money went out for \$55 thousand for 138 taxpayers. I remember when I  
355 saved the town \$760,000. That 1,906.9 taxpayers I saved money for. When Mr. Childs and I got together with Mr.  
356 Servant, and the town wanted to spend \$70-some thousand to pick up garbage an extra day, we got garbage picked  
357 up for about \$8,000. We saved another 50 to 55 to 60 taxpayers' money there. So, we don't always throw away  
358 money. We try to save money every chance we get. Now, I've done that. As far as what Ms. Watson said, I agree,  
359 there ain't nothing better than free. I like that, and I think that this council would be foolish not to look into what she  
360 said. This was the opportunity to get money and have somebody working for the town that's a citizen that cares  
361 about the town. She wouldn't offer this, if she didn't care. She cares. We need to step up to the pumps and think  
362 about this, and talk seriously about it. As far as Surfside Strong that's about as low a flyer as I've ever seen in my  
363 life. At the bottom of the septic tank. To know that 10-year-old girl had to walk out there and pick up something  
364 about her father comparing him to Saddam Hussein is so low, I don't know how anybody could sink so low. I hope  
365 that this type of gutter lying politics is gone forever. I hope they don't rear their ugly head in this runoff. Whoever it  
366 is they ought to be ashamed of himself. They ought to leave this town. They're not worthy of living here. *(Applause)*  
367 Now other than that, we still got great town. We're the third safest town in the state of South Carolina. We got a fire  
368 department that does a great job. I don't see Mr. Adair here, but he picks up our garbage every week, and that's  
369 really what, you know, we've got three things that we have. So we've got a good town. Thank you for living here.  
370 Thank everybody who's interested in this town. Please get out and vote on April 17<sup>th</sup>. Cast your vote regardless of  
371 who wins, it doesn't matter. Get out there and vote. That's your duty as a citizen of the United States. Thank you.  
372

373 Ms. Samples: Thank you all for coming. Mr. Mayor, I'd like to take a moment of personal privilege, if I  
374 may since my time is short up here on council, and so there some thoughts that I would like to share since we're  
375 having a short meeting, if you will indulge me. Ugly, nasty political flyers are bad enough. Just as bad, are the ugly,  
376 nasty, false accusations, especially when they come from town leaders, and you wonder why there is division on this  
377 council? It's sad, and frankly desperate when you accuse someone of something without benefit of proof. I had  
378 experienced a nasty flyer myself when I ran almost two years ago. That flyer was not only designed to impact my  
379 support, but to hurt my livelihood. My 20+ year business. I was told state law conflicts with federal law and pretty  
380 much anyone could print anything they wanted, especially if you are a public official or running for office. Let me  
381 tell you what I did. I consulted an investigator who not only provided me with documented proof of who produced  
382 the nasty flyer, but also who paid for it. They different, believe it or not. I've not shared that information even  
383 though a lot of you have asked me to do so, but I haven't shared it publicly, because I believe the impact to the town  
384 would have been epic and negative and I did not want to do that. It just wasn't worth it. During last Tuesday's  
385 election we had town residents calling the news media with false accusations of voter fraud and our town clerk who  
386 is the epitome of grace and who possesses unmatched knowledge and skills was subjected to implications of  
387 wrongdoing. Come on. We are better than that. Who does that? And finally, and finally, there's been a lot of  
388 speculation as to why I chose not to seek reelection. I've never tried to make it about me when I sat up here, but  
389 again personal privilege, I have so enjoyed my public service and governing. For me it's been easy. Nothing hard  
390 about it. The job requires preparation, research, and asking lots of questions; respecting staff, and responding to  
391 town residents, and town businesses. I personally believe that this council has been paralyzed by indecision and the  
392 inability to grasp the big picture of our proper roles as councilmembers. God willing and the creek don't rise, as my

Town Council Regular Meeting  
April 10, 2018

393 grandma used to say, I will return in two years. It is been an honor. It has been a privilege, and Mr. Mayor nothing  
394 but respect for you. Thank you. (Applause)  
395

396 Mayor Childs: You know, a couple up here mentioned flyers, and I just want to say one thing. Most of you  
397 have known me for about, I've been here eight years, now. I've never, ever, ever, and I underline never been  
398 involved in dirty politics, and I resent the fact that I was blamed. I have been cussed out, threatened, and I had  
399 absolutely nothing to do with those mailers. No proof, just go ahead and hang him; public hanging. What's the proof;  
400 no proof, let's just do it anyway. You know when people that are supposed to have a background investigating  
401 people, yet they will blame somebody; the easy target. It's unbelievable. It could happen to anyone of you there. I  
402 can make a charge to anyone. It's gonna be up to you to prove your innocence. You're guilty, you're guilty and I  
403 had people; one person told me how very smart they were. How smart they are, and they went after me, but they  
404 didn't think to investigate. There's no evidence that I have anything to do with that. Not a bit, and that's why there is  
405 none. I did not do it. I had nothing to do it, and it really upsets me that people would just think that. It's just  
406 absolutely unconscionable that anybody would think I did that when I've got eight years of service for this town  
407 without any negative politicking. The former mayor and I are to this day good friends. He didn't negative politic on  
408 me and I didn't negative politic on him. Thank you very much.  
409

410 **11. ADJOURNMENT.** Mr. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. Mr. Pellegrino  
411 second. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**  
412

413 Prepared and submitted by:

414 \_\_\_\_\_  
415 Debra E. Herrmann, CMC, Town Clerk  
416

417  
418  
419 Approved: April 24, 2018  
420

**Surfside Beach Town Council**

421	VOTE:	Yes	No	
422		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
423				Robert F. Childs, III, Mayor
424		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
425				Ron Ott, Mayor Pro Tempore
426		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
427				Timothy T. Courtney, Town Council
428		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
429				Mark L. Johnson, Town Council
430		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
431				David L. Pellegrino, Town Council
432		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
433				Julie M. Samples, Town Council
434		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
435				Randle M. Stevens, Town Council
436		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
437				
438		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
439			<input type="checkbox"/>	
440		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
441				
442		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
443				
444				

445 Clerk's Note: This document constitutes minutes of the meeting that was digitally recorded, and not intended to be a complete transcript.  
446 Appointments to hear recordings may be made with the town clerk; a free copy of the audio will be given to you provided you bring a new,  
447 unopened flash drive. In accordance with FOIA §30-4-80(A) and (E), meeting notice and the agenda were distributed to local media and  
448 interested parties via the town's email subscription list. The agenda was posted on the entry door at Town Council Chambers. Meeting notice  
449 was also posted on the town website at [www.surfsidebeach.org](http://www.surfsidebeach.org) and the marquee.