



**SURFSIDE BEACH TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING Civic Center, 115 US Highway  
17 North, Surfside Beach, SC 29575 [www.surfsidebeach.org](http://www.surfsidebeach.org) - ☎ (843) 913-6111 📠 (843)  
238-543**

## **TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, June 8, 2021, • 6:30 pm.**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** Mayor Hellyer called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Mayor Hellyer, Councilmembers Drake, Holder, Keating, and Pellegrino, and Mayor Pro Tempore Scoles were in attendance. Others present, Town Administrator Shanahan, Town Attorney Crosby, and Town Clerk Sheri Medina. Absent was Councilmember Dietrich.
- 2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
  - A. Invocation: Okey Landers, Pine Drive Gospel Church, gave the invocation
  - B. Pledge of Allegiance: Mayor Hellyer led in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3. PUBLIC HEARING - ORDINANCE 21-0932, AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE BEACH TO ADOPT THE 2021-22 FISCAL YEAR MUNICIPAL BUDGET AND TO SET THE TAX MILLAGE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2022.**

Councilmember Drake stated, is there any way, with taxpayers' hardship in 2020, that we can roll that back the property tax two mills? Is there any place to save to help at least break even?

Director King stated I don't think there's any place to get \$100,000 or \$150,000 right now with what's going on. Plus we have some unknowns that we don't know what's going to happen. I don't think there's anything extra to allow this. You can get the pier done and then possibly roll it back. It will be time for re-evaluation then anyway.

Councilmember Drake stated everybody went through a lot of hardship, and can we try just a little more.

Director King explained that there's not anything in the budget that's extra. You want to create new positions to employ people that are also not within the budget. The two mills would be about \$150,000 in lost revenue. Don't forget, retirement funding goes up every year, and so does health care.

Councilmember Pellegrino stated I wouldn't recommend it. This is the wrong time to look at this. I understand the hardship, and all the discussion needs to be done at the start of the budget process. Right now, we're voting on the budget that needs to be in effect July 1st. It is impossible in my eyes.

Councilmember Keating stated I agree with David. I don't think it's practical to try to implement a property tax reduction at this point. If this was something we wanted to address, we should have brought it up before starting the budget process. I think it's appropriate to put it on the table for consideration the next time. I also appreciate the position that we've taken in this budget. We have some unknowns - we still have the pier to finish. We have the mold remediation in several of our buildings to take care of that we still don't know which way to go or what that's ultimately going to cost. We also have the estimates and forecasts of what we will receive from the County on the H Tax settlement that could be grossly overstated. We have no way of knowing until that happens.

Councilmember Keating stated that Ms. King had spent some time with me over the last couple of weeks to make sure I understood what we were budgeting and what the differences were between the April preliminary budget and this one. I appreciate the time that Ms. King and Mr. Shanahan have spent with me going through this. I also want to acknowledge that this final version of the budget does account for the total cost of the pier. So, all the expenses that we anticipate having to pay this year are included. The Total revenue stream from the FEMA grant is included. That's why there are some significant changes from what we saw in April to what we see today.

Director King stated we'd been told what that number is going to be on the H-tax settlement. We're hoping it's correct. We may be making a budget adjustment come October to change that number. Hopefully, we'll change that number be higher. We don't know, but we at least have all of those things we know are coming in the budget.

Councilmember Keating stated that new positions are not included in the budget. If you were part of the original workshop we had, there are about four additional positions or open positions to be filled. Not all of them are funded in this budget, so we will need a budget amendment to accommodate those costs if we choose to fill those positions. Also, we don't know which way we're going on the mold remediation, and we don't know if that's going to be totally in the budget for next year or if there's something to be paid between now and July 1. It's going to be a budget amendment once a direction and expense is determined. Overall, I think this is a very comprehensive budget, and I appreciate all the work that Ms. King did and the multiple times she met with me to answer all of my questions. I appreciate the education on just how to do municipal budgeting.

There were no public comments.

**4. MOTIONS RELATING TO AGENDA - None**

**5. MINUTES APPROVAL** Councilmember Scoles made a motion to approve the minutes from May 25th, 2021 regular meeting, May 27, 2021 special meeting. Councilmember Keating second. All voted in favor. **Motion Carried.**

**6. PUBLIC COMMENTS – Agenda Items Only - None**

**7. COMMUNICATIONS**

**A. PB&Z Monthly Report** – Ms. Carol Coleman presented the Planning Building & Zoning report.

Councilmember Keating asked about revising the tree ordinance and if it was anticipated that it would go to the Planning Commission soon such that it would be coming to Council sometime in June as an ordinance change. What's the status of that? Are we still on that timeframe?

Ms. Coleman stated we had a workshop, and what I've done is pulled together a little more information. I've gone back and made a comparison around the State with other coastal towns and other resort towns to show what other places are doing. Comparisons show that most areas are more stringent, a few places are slightly more relaxed. Ms Coleman stated that the ordinance would likely be brought to Council no later than July.

Mayor Hellyer asked to protect the interests of the Town and to help the residents in making a decision, wouldn't it be more beneficial instead of having each resident have to get their arborist for the Town to perhaps have an arborist that will come in and do the evaluations. This would save a resident from paying \$125 to have a letter written. The arborist can go buy an address and can sign off on the permit without having that letter.

Ms. Coleman stated you wouldn't necessarily have to have someone full-time. It could be someone that you contract with that comes in and does it. We're also looking at some of the practicality of our ordinance. For example, the smaller lots where you have a five-foot setback, you can't reasonably plant a tree and a five-foot setback because you need a tree to be a minimum of six feet from a structure. So, we're creating an inability for people to work within the Ordinance. It doesn't do any good to create an ordinance that nobody can work with.

**8. BUSINESS**

**A. SECOND READING, ORDINANCE #21-0929, ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE RECOVERY OF COSTS BY FEES FROM USERS OF FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.**

Councilmember Keating made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance #21-0929. Councilmember Holder second.

Mayor Hellyer stated the one thing I'd wanted to bring up is that everybody's saying that they don't want to be charged twice. As residents, they already pay taxes for emergency services, they don't believe that they should be taxed for stuff that the fire department does. I have explained it to them, that we have an agreement with the company that will charge insurers and that no resident will be charged for this. When we did this Ordinance, and this is the second reading of it, it was on with the understanding that no resident will be billed independently for this service. In addition to that, whatever your insurance should be raised, because of the accidental incident, that's not going to change because we're asking for money that's already set in stone.

**All voted in favor. Motion Carried.**

**B. SECOND READING, ORDINANCE #21-0930, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AGREEMENT FOR MANAGING VENDOR MEMORIAL PARK CRAFT MARKET.**

Councilmember Keating made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance #21-0930. Councilmember Drake second.

Councilmember Keating, I have one comment to be clear. I had met Ms. King and Nicole about the business license that the vendors obtained. There was an issue that the vendors were not happy having paid the business license for the Thursday events were now being asked for additional fees being applied for an additional one day a month. Between the four of us, with Mr. Shanahan, we agreed for this year, we would go with just the way the agreement is written that the vendors will obtain a business license at a reduced rate. The fact that we're extending for one additional day per month, they would not incur any extra cost on their business license. Maybe next year, we can start looking at how we address business licenses for all the various vendors participating in the events throughout the Town to make sure that we are treating everyone equally.

All voted in favor. **Motion Carried.**

**C. SECOND READING, ORDINANCE #21-0931 ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE BEACH TO AMEND THE FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 MUNICIPAL BUDGET.**

Councilmember Keating made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance #21- 0931 implementing certain changes to the 2020-2021 budget as previously approved by the Council. Councilmember Holder second. All voted in favor. **Motion Carried.**

**D. SECOND READING, ORDINANCE #21-0927 AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE BEACH TO AMEND CHAPTER 5, ELECTIONS OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES FOR THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE BEACH.**

Councilmember Keating made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance #21- 0927 to make certain updates and changes to Chapter 5 - Elections, wherein we remove the runoff form of the general election. Come November, we will vote to elect our officials once and not twice. Councilmember Drake second. All voted in favor. **Motion Carried.**

**E. FIRST READING ORDINANCE #21-0932 AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF SURFSIDE BEACH TO ADOPT THE 2021-22 FISCAL YEAR MUNICIPAL BUDGET AND TO SET THE TAX MILLAGE FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2022.**

Councilmember Scoles made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance #21-0932 to adopt 2021 - 2022 fiscal year municipal budget, and set the net tax millage for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2022. Councilmember Keating second.

Director King stated there is no tax increase, which is, of course, is what everybody wants to hear. We also didn't raise the stormwater fee. A few things on this budget; if we look at the facts, we had the workshop in April and advertised it in the newspaper. So we're compliant with that. We had the public hearing just now. The budget is presented for the following year - from July 1 to June 30. If you look at the attachment to the Ordinance, Attachment A and B, access capital equipment expenses over 5,000, and the acquisition of capital improvements. These are two things that always are the most important items in the budget. On page 7 of 7, you see our biggest capital expense that would be the pier at \$13.1 million. This is just a summary schedule, so everybody knows what the most important items are in the budget.

The A tax budget was done in January, which was before we knew how the summer would go. My suggestion is that you look at it in January or December to see whether there's money that can be added back to the budget for requests for funding that were removed. Remember, this is a working budget; almost everything needs to be looked at again in November and December because we know how the summer went.

All voted in favor. **Motion Carried.**

**F. Request for funding to the CAN Organization** Councilmember Keating stated, as you know, we welcomed Richard Sexton at the completion of his 30-day 750-mile run, carrying a 25lb pack supporting Autism and the Champion Autism Network (CAN). Since Surfside is marketed as autism-friendly, I think it would be appropriate for the Town to provide some funding to the CAN to offset some of the costs for their event that concluded here. What I received from the organizer is

they've spent well over \$16,000 on this event in advertising, hotel rooms, support staff, et cetera. The expenses for the portion of the event within the Town of Surfside was several thousands of dollars that would normally been part of our events budget. In looking at the April Finance Report that Ms. King gave us, our events budget is well underspent by approximate \$65K. It appears that we have tens of thousands of dollars in there to provide a reimbursement for the costs of this event that we have otherwise put forward. Right now, the Town has done nothing but allow the street to be closed off to support this event. So, I propose that we provide funding for cost reimbursement to the CAN for at least \$8000. That also brings them up to their revenue goals for the event itself.

Councilmember Keating made a motion that the Town provides funding to the Champion Autism Network in the amount of \$8000 to offset the costs incurred for the CAN Ruck run that completed in Surfside Beach, the end of May. Mayor Hellyer second.

Councilmember Pellegrino stated I'm all for supporting charities, but we don't have a process for this. There's probably a lot of organizations that would like Surfside to give them money. The Town has a considerable amount of unknown costs coming up, both with the mold remediation, building buying, and all this other stuff. I know it's only \$8000, but I disagree with it.

Mayor Hellyer stated my point on it is that the Town of Surfside claims to be autistic friendly, and we support and solicit people to come to our Town who are autistic. We need to support it. Supporting the organizations that help support our cause on what we've done, so I am for it. I understand when talking to the rest of the people on Council that some people aren't for it.

Councilmember Keating stated when CAN approached the Town on whether or not they would host the finish line celebration, the Town agreed. But, we've not put up any funding for that event at all even though we're supposedly supporting an autism-friendly town. The other thing is they went through considerable effort to reroute and change his entire run to make sure it could end in Surfside Beach. This was not their original plan. Thank you for that. We should be supporting the organizations that support our Town, and this is one that truly stands behind the Town and promotes Autism-friendly on behalf of the Town as well. I think it's well worth the investment. If we had done the event ourselves it would have cost us almost \$5000 to do the event ourselves. So, I don't see how it's any different than some of the other things we do, and I think it's an opportunity to show our good faith and appreciation in organizations that can just consistently support us.

Councilmember Drake stated I am all for CAN, I think they do a great job. But I also agree that we have got to be very mindful of our money right now. We've not finished the pier, we've got huge problems with mold in our buildings, and we're going to have to do something about that. So maybe this is not the year to do it; maybe next year we can take a look at it and provide support at that time financially.

Councilmember Keating and Mayor Hellyer voted in favor. Councilmembers Scoles, Holder, Drake and Pellegrino voted against it. **Motion Failed.**

## **9. PUBLIC COMMENTS – Town Services or Business Conducted (5 minutes per speaker)**

**A.** Diana Taylor, Seventh Avenue, North. This is just one of my things, but the taxes here are very low. Let's face it. If you want to lobby for anything to lower expense to the residents, lobby for the wind and hail insurance premiums. That's like 4 or 5 times what most of us pay for flood insurance. Until the State of South Carolina took over, it was much less and wasn't as hard to collect.

## **10. TOWN COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND/OR COMMENTS**

**A. Councilmember Scoles,** I like to thank everyone for coming out tonight, and those that called in this evening. Thank all of the people that gave reports and keep us abreast of everything going on in Town. I feel like we have a great staff, and they're doing a great job to keep us moving in the right direction. Everyone, take care, and we'll see you in a couple of weeks. Thank You

**B. Councilmember Holder,** I want to thank everybody for coming out tonight. I've just heard on TV this week, towns across the nation are paying \$2000 or more for people to move their Town. I think there is a list of over 100 towns doing it. We don't have to pay anybody and they're coming every year. So it says a lot about our Town. I think that's a good thing. I also wanted to say I enjoyed the Memorial Day golf cart parade and thanks to Bill for the Memorial Day service. We had a lot of residents there. Have a great week. Thank you.

**C. Councilmember Keating**, I want to thank everybody for taking their time to come out tonight, listen, or watch the live streaming. As you can see, we're marching through some of the ordinances and some of the changes essential to the Town. We still have several pending. I previously mentioned Chapter 4 and Chapter 9. Chief Hofmann and I are still working on Chapter 9 to get that conversation started about what potential changes we would like to put forward. In speaking with Ms. King and Nicole, we've put Chapter 4 on the table for a while since there are some significant across the board changes coming out of the State that will affect how and what we do with business licenses. It doesn't make sense to try to implement something now and then have to rewrite the whole ordinance again in October because the State wants us to do something different. We'll put that one on the wayside for now. As we heard from Ms. Coleman tonight, hopefully, will be while bringing the tree ordinance up soon. There are several other components of Chapter 17 that need to be addressed, and as soon as we can find some staffing with 10 minutes, maybe we'll start addressing some of those issues. Again, I want to thank everybody for all their kind words and their support, and we will see you in a couple of weeks.

**D. Councilmember Pellegrino**, thank you for coming tonight. First, I want to thank Mrs. King personally. I know she has a good staff on our finance team, and she has directors and Mr. Shanahan helping her. This is my 8<sup>th</sup> budget cycle, and she says she makes a conservative budget, and she does - we never go over budget, and we have money left over in some cases. So, she owns that down for the next year and tries to get it more accurate. She gives me the exact information I need, and it's very nice, and I appreciate it. We have a true asset in finance for this Town with Ms. King. It's going to be rough when she decides to retire. You can call her with a question, and she can give you the exact report with exact numbers. I want to thank her because I've worked with her a lot over the last eight years. It's a pleasure working with her because she has so much knowledge and skill in her field. Thank you.

**E. Councilmember Drake** Thank you for coming out tonight. Mrs. King did a good job on the budget. The CAN program is a good program for disabled kids, and I do want to see it continue. The farmer's market is doing great. The craft market is doing great. I want to keep things rolling. Thank you.

**F. Mayor Hellyer**, I want to thank you guys for coming out, we've got a lot of stuff going on in this Town. We've got our pier being built. We've got the swash been built. We've got mold remediation that we're going to have to take care of, and we haven't figured out how we're going to do it yet. So, many issues are coming about. We're working hard and diligently trying to make sure that everything gets covered. The golf cart parade was great. We got another one coming up for July 4, that's great too, and I hope to see everybody there, and I like when residents get out and start working together and doing stuff. Thank you

11. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act §30-4-70(a)(2), discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of a property.

Councilmember Keating made a motion to convene an executive session pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, Section 3-4-70(a)(2) to discuss negotiations incident to a proposed contractual arrangement and/or propose sale or purchase of a property.

All voted in favor. **Motion carried.**

12. **Council may take action related to matters discussed in Executive Session**  
Councilmember Keating made a motion to reconvene the public session for Tuesday, June 8th. All voted in favor. **Motion Carried.**

Councilman Pellegrino made a motion to authorize the town administrator to initial actions to perform the due diligence process to evaluate alternatives for town hall due to the need for mold remediation. All voted in favor. **Motion Carried.**

13. **ADJOURNMENT**  
Councilmember Keating made a motion to adjourn at 8:13 pm. Councilmember Drake second. All voted in favor. **Motion Carried**

**Surfside Beach Town Council**

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Robert Hellyer, Mayor

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David L. Pellegrino

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Bruce H. Dietrich, Town Council

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Cindy Keating, Town Council

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Michael Drake, Town Council

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Debbie Scoles, Mayor Pro Tempore

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Paul Holder, Town Council

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_

Sheri L Medina, Town Clerk

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