

The Town of James Island held its regularly scheduled meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Town of James Island, 1122 Dills Bluff Rd., James Island, SC Thursday, March 18, 2021 by Zoom. Councilmembers present: Boles, Mignano, Milliken, Mullinax, and Mayor Woolsey presided. Also, Town Administrator, Ashley Kellahan, Town Attorney, Bonum S. Wilson, Finance Director, Merrell Roe, Public Works Director, Mark Johnson, Island Sheriff's Patrol Sgt. Shawn James, Deputy Chris King, and Planning Director, Kristen Crane. This meeting was held in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of James Island. Information was provided to the public for participation in this meeting.

Roll Call: Town Administrator Ashley Kellahan called the roll. A quorum was present to conduct business.

Public Comments: Ilene Turbow, Charleston Jewish Federation Remembrance Co-chair thanked Council for the 2021 Yom Hashoah Holocaust Commemoration Proclamation. She said during this year's program the names of those with family ties to Charleston will be read virtually on April 11. The theme, "Why We Remember", recognizes the importance of honoring the memory of those who perished in the Holocaust through the generations, so those horrible actions are not forgotten and repeated. The featured speaker, Herschel Greenblat, was born in the caves of Ukraine and says he only survived because of the resourcefulness and determination of his parents innovating the Nazis. Ms. Turbow encouraged Council to light a candle on Yom Hashoah to remember the 6 million Jews and the 5 million others who were murdered by Nazis. For further information about the event contact [remember@jewishcharleston.org](mailto:remember@jewishcharleston.org). She encouraged everyone to contact their state representatives and senators to pass hate crime legislation because we are one of three states that does not have a hate crime law. She thanked Council for their commitment to Holocaust remembrance, its awareness and in fighting hate.

Consent Agenda:

Minutes: February 18, 2021 Regular Town Council Meeting: Motion to approve was made by Councilman Milliken, seconded by Councilwoman Mignano.

Vote

Councilman Boles	Yes
Councilwoman Mignano	Yes
Councilman Milliken	Yes
Councilman Mullinax	Yes
Mayor Woolsey	Yes
Unanimous	

Information Reports:

Finance Report: Finance Director, Merrell Roe, gave an overview of revenues and expenditures. Hospitality check received in January (\$45,000) franchise fee of (\$8,000) from Bell South and (\$37,000) from Comcast. We have made budget for business licenses of (\$90,000). Ms. Roe also gave an overview and explanation of the capital projects.

Administrator's Report: Town Administrator, Ashley Kellahan shared good news that the American Rescue Act was signed into law March 11. She said the Town's share looks to be around \$4 million and we are set to receive about 75% of our Pre-COVID budget which would be our Fiscal Year 19-20 Budget, about \$3.26 million. Mrs. Kellahan said guidance on the Act continues to be rolled out and the funds will come to us from the State. The Town will have three years to decide how to use the money. Brantley Park Phase 1 is currently out for bids due on April 1. A meeting was held with six homeowners on the Regatta Rd. sidewalk project. Small adjustments were made to a couple of the properties and we are working on temporary construction easements to present to them. Charleston County Community Services Board has recommended the Town's request for \$16,000 for funding some of the Repair Care Program. This request will be heard by the County Council Finance Committee tonight and County Council is set to approve those

recommendations on Thursday. Lighthouse Point sidewalk and drainage project is out to bid with the County and due on March 30. An encroachment permit has been submitted to SCDOT to install the radar speed signs for the traffic study on Lighthouse Point and Ft. Johnson Rd.

Presentation of Annual Draft Budget for FY 2021-2022: Mrs. Kellahan presented the draft budget noting that the Budget Workshop was held on March 9. A Public Hearing/First Reading is scheduled for April 15 with a Second/Final Reading in May. Mrs. Kellahan explained that the budget is an ongoing request from citizens, departments, committees, Council and is monitored throughout the year with adjustments made if necessary. She said that we did not have to make budget transfers or amendments during this fiscal year. Mrs. Kellahan said last year during COVID we anticipated having to do a transfer-in from the Reserve Fund, but we did not have to do that. The Town continues with a property tax millage of 20 mills. After review and explanation of the budget, Council had opportunity to ask questions and make comments.

Councilman Milliken asked about the \$3.26 million that the Town would receive from the American Rescue Act and is it true that we could use the money for drainage projects. Mayor Woolsey said we sought clarification about this, and the early indications found was no. Councilman Milliken said the list said it could be used for drainage improvement/infrastructure. Mayor Woolsey said the list said needed infrastructure that included water projects, sewer, and one other, but not specifically drainage. Councilman Boles said the third item was broadband access. Mayor Woolsey said he was unsure why Congress specifically added sewer and water infrastructure, but that may have had to do with the damage done in Houston by the winter storm. He thinks the broadband relates to education and at home learning, but our most important need is drainage, so he checked to see whether this was included. Councilman Milliken asked if it could be used for water generally defined and Mayor Woolsey said the responsible thing to do is to get preclearance to make sure drainage is recognized as a possible expenditure. He noted if any Council has relationship with Rep. Clyburn to impress that resources be interpreted to include drainage for the low country and this district. However, he said early indications did not include drainage.

Mayor Woolsey went on to explain the need for sewer projects related to the James Island Creek Water Quality Program. He said there are areas of the Town that are not sewer and has septic tanks that drain into the James Island Creek. He thinks given all of our priorities and the need we have for drainage projects it would be great and he will try to get clarification and pursue efforts to have drainage recognized as a possible expenditure. Councilman Milliken said that is good and the Mayor hit upon a big need that we have, which is to get some of the septic systems on sewer, and if the money could be used for that, maybe we can ask for that preclearance as well. Councilman Milliken asked if we had an estimate of what it would cost for the number of properties in the Town. Mayor Woolsey said yes, and an estimate for the Clarks Point neighborhood in the James Island Creek basin is \$6 million, so all of the money would make a significant contribution, but it would not cover all of it. Mayor Woolsey said he had information that he would share with Council. Another area in the Town, a candidate for sewer is Oak Point. Mayor Woolsey said over the next few months we need to get clarification on what we can spend the money on and look at into figures in detail, as well as talk with the PSD and the City. He has asked the Planning Director for exact figures of how much of Clarks Point is in the City and he hopes the City would make some contribution.

Councilman Milliken said at the Budget Workshop that he expressed an interest in having solar as an option on the Arts and Cultural Center building and on the shed at Pinckney Park. If we could build that into this budget it would be a nice reflection and affirmation of our budgeting process for the Climate Referendum passed in December. Mayor Woolsey said some time ago he instructed the Town Administrator to get information on costs for all Town buildings. He thought we had an estimate for the Town Hall and would see how that would affect the budget. Councilman Milliken said he is concern that if we do not begin to include it in the budget, we might not get around to doing it. Mayor Woolsey said he thinks the Arts and Cultural Center is eligible for hospitality as is some of the parks.

Councilwoman Mignano spoke in favor of solar for more green options, but we need to consider the new Dominion rules about sell back and penalties and need to consider battery backup, so we are not impacted by those changes. Councilman Milliken said this is something that the Energy Subcommittee is considering now. He noted a monopoly on energy money in the State and think it is going to be up to our legislators to make the right call on that. Discussion continued on solar energy, surplus, rates and recouping our money by having solar. Mayor Woolsey said we would look into battery backup as an option. Mrs. Kellahan answered Councilman Milliken's question about the \$100,000 under Hospitality Tax Funded Projects re: Fort Johnson Park.

Public Works Report: Public Works Director, Mark Johnson gave an overview of the written report. Mr. Johnson responded to Councilwoman Mignano question about the work done on Dills Bluff Road.

Island Sheriff's Patrol Report: Sgt. James gave an update on recent crime activities and the Island Sheriffs Patrol report. Councilman Milliken thanked Sgt. James and Deputy King for the work they are doing.

Requests for Approval:

Gravel for Santee Parking Lot: Mrs. Kellahan requested approval for gravel for the Santee Parking Lot. She said a picture of the current state of the parking lot was included in Council's packet, but the lot is in need of being graveled. The cost is \$4,600 from All Seasons. Motion in favor by Councilman Milliken, seconded by Councilman Mullinax. Councilman Milliken said since we have a tractor and grader if we could do the work ourselves. Mr. Johnson said the estimate is for the delivery and staff will spread it. Councilman Milliken thanked Mr. Johnson and commented that is what he wanted to hear. Councilwoman Mignano asked if we tried to grade the lot before ordering the gravel. Mr. Johnson said 'no, the grading is fine, but the lot needs a layer of rock. Councilman Boles asked who uses the parking lot and Mrs. Kellahan said the businesses: Sweet Water Cafe, Food Fight, Smoke N Brew, and it is also parking for the public. Councilman Boles asked if any of the businesses requested the resurfacing and Mrs. Kellahan said no, but the owner that leases the lot to the Town has made comments about it. However, we looked into getting an estimate for the gravel because the condition of the lot was unnoticed by just running by there. Councilman Boles asked if the cost of gravel had increased as other construction materials has. Mr. Johnson said the cost has increased but not as significantly as for lumber, or drywall; most of the costs reflects transportation of the gravel. Councilman Boles said he wonders if this is something that could be done at another time; what he notices as he drives pass the lot is employees park there and asked if anyone is complaining. Mrs. Kellahan said she has not received any direct complaints from the businesses; but Mayor Woolsey said he has complained. Councilwoman Mignano asked if there is an option to smooth out the surface to get rid of the ruts and holes before putting the gravel down. Mayor Woolsey asked Mr. Johnson when was the last time gravel was put down and he said two years ago. Mayor Woolsey added that the gravel is mostly to fill the potholes and he is concerned about the holes that fills with water when it rains. He said it is inappropriate for the Town's public parking lot to be poorly maintained and he is not waiting for complaints from businesses or the public to say that the Town does not maintain its parking lot leaving it with mudholes and potholes. We should do a good job by maintaining it.

Vote

Councilman Boles	No
Councilwoman Mignano	No
Councilman Milliken	Yes
Councilman Mullinax	No
Mayor Woolsey	Yes

Failed

Lean-to at Pinckney Park Shed: Mrs. Kellahan requested approval for a lean-to need for the new shed at Pinckney Park to store the Town's equipment. Three estimates were received, and the low estimate was from Tuft Shed, the company that installed the garage doors. The cost \$6,700. Motion in favor by Councilman Mullinax, seconded by Councilman Milliken. Councilwoman Mignano said she thought the shed that we have is supposed to hold all equipment. Mrs. Kellahan explained that the tractor was a few inches off in measurement. She said we could raise the height of the door for the tractor to get inside; however, the shed is pretty full already. Mr. Johnson explained that the shed houses everything that was in the storage unit as well as equipment for JI Pride, Helping Hands, and items from Town Hall. It has rapidly filled up and there is little room for anything else. Councilwoman Mignano said she did not want to be difficult but is concerned because at first it was a shed, then a fence, and now a lean-to and wonders if more would be coming. Mr. Johnson said this would be it. Councilman Milliken said he was a little disappointed that we could not get a local company to build the lean-to. It was verified that the company is out of North Carolina but does a lot of work here. She said Oxford and Massenberg Construction are local companies, but their estimates were higher. Councilwoman Mignano asked if the lean-to would tie into the roof and is it open on all sides. Mrs. Kellahan answered that it would be open on three sides with a sloped roof for water runoff.

Vote

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Councilwoman Mignano	Yes
Councilman Milliken	Yes
Councilman Mullinax	Yes
Mayor Woolsey	Yes

Unanimous

Driveway Apron Repairs: Mrs. Kellahan requested approval for three driveway apron repairs: one on Quail and two on Waterloo. The three repairs together totals \$18,817. She said the request is grouped together but could be broken out. Mr. Johnson has inspected the sites and can answer questions. Motion in favor by Councilman Milliken, seconded by Councilwoman Mignano.

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Councilman Mullinax	Yes
Mayor Woolsey	Yes

Unanimous

Award of On-Call Contracts for RFP#1-2021 ROW Acquisition Services: Mrs. Kellahan reported that our contracts with our ROW acquisition service agents has expired so the Town solicited requests for proposals. Seven responses were received. The Evaluation Committee scored the firms and recommended awards to the top two firms: Maser Consulting and AE COM. Motion in favor by Councilman Boles, seconded by Councilman Milliken.

Vote

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Councilwoman Mignano	Yes
Councilman Milliken	Yes
Councilman Mullinax	Yes
Mayor Woolsey	Yes

Unanimous

Committee Reports:

Land Use Committee: No report.

Environment and Beautification Committee: Councilman Milliken reported that the special Riverland Drive litter pick up was held on February 27 with adults from JI Pride collecting 38 bags of litter. Special thanks to Sgt. James and Deputies King and Johnston for their blue light escort to ensure the safety of the volunteers. Thank you to Mark Johnson for his help with traffic control and the removal of trash bags after their off road challenges. An island wide Adopt A Highway litter pickup was held this past weekend with a great turn out from the JI Charter HS Junior Air Force ROTC, Hurricane Boxing Club, and Exchange Club. With the help of these groups and citizens they were able to clean several roadways including Folly, Harbor View, Dills Bluff, and Fort Johnson Road. By partnering with the Triangle Neighborhood group and clearing the vacant lot between Greenhill and Seaside Lane, a total of 67 bags of litter were removed from the island. Volunteers and groups are needed to assist with the Helping Hands program. Grass is beginning to grow, and help is needed to keep the yards of our older citizens. Stan Kozikowski is the contact for Helping Hands. This is a great opportunity for church and community groups to provide a needed service to their community. Please contact Stan at 860-847-0544.

Children's Committee: No report.

Public Safety Committee: Councilman Mullinax announced the next meeting on March 25 at 7:00 p.m. with Sgt. James as the featured speaker on crime and safety.

History Committee: Mayor Woolsey announced that the History Committee has been meeting on Zoom and is looking forward to opening of the exhibits at the JI Arts and Cultural Center. A kickoff meeting with Brockington will be held at the site for the next meeting.

Rethink Folly Road: Mayor Woolsey announced that tentative plans are being made to have a public meeting to tie together the groundbreaking of Brantley Park and plans for the Phase I sidewalk perhaps with the opening of some businesses along the Folly Rd. corridor, including the new Cuda Co Seafood Market.

Drainage Committee: No report.

Business Development Committee: No report. Councilman Boles commented that CudaCo is a delicious place to eat.

Trees Advisory Committee: Councilman Milliken reported that the Trees Advisory Council met on March 9<sup>th</sup>. They have been working with Mark Johnson in Public Works to develop a program to produce a survey of trees in public spaces on James Island. Three interns are now in the process of cataloging all of the trees and they have been doing a great job. At the last check, they were making great progress down Ft. Johnson Rd. which is a scenic byway, and it is such because of all of the trees. The Tree Council also is beginning preparations for a Town sponsored tree planting event, i.e., planting acorns in pots. The goal is to gather and plan approximately 200 pots for distribution to James Island residents. A date has not been determined for the distribution.

James Island Intergovernmental Council: Mayor Woolsey announced that a date has not been determined for the next meeting yet.

Proclamations and Resolutions:

Proclamation for 2021 Yom Hashoah Holocaust Commemoration: Motion in favor by Councilwoman Mignano, seconded by Councilman Boles.

Vote

Councilman Boles	Yes
Councilwoman Mignano	Yes
Councilman Milliken	Yes
Councilman Mullinax	Yes
Mayor Woolsey	Yes
<u>Unanimous</u>	

Proclamation for Donate Life Month, April 2021: Motion in favor by Councilman Milliken, seconded by Councilwoman Mignano.

Vote

Councilman Boles	Yes
Councilwoman Mignano	Yes
Councilman Milliken	Yes
Councilman Mullinax	Yes
Mayor Woolsey	Yes
<u>Unanimous</u>	

Proclamation in Honor of Ralph H. Johnson: Motion in favor by Councilman Mullinax, seconded by Councilwoman Mignano.

Vote

Councilman Boles	Yes
Councilwoman Mignano	Yes
Councilman Milliken	Yes
Councilman Mullinax	Yes
Mayor Woolsey	Yes
<u>Unanimous</u>	

Emergency Ordinances

Emergency Ordinance: E-07-2020 Providing for Required Face Coverings in Public Places due to COVID-19 Virus and Exceptions Thereto: Expires 03-18-2021: Motion to extend the Emergency Ordinance to April 15, 2021 was made by Mayor Woolsey, seconded by Councilman Milliken.

Councilwoman Mignano spoke that the Governor has changed the guidelines for wearing masks and also the Town of Summerville and suggested that the Town follows the Governor since case numbers has come down significantly. She has been watching the numbers every day and maybe we can move it back to a business decision instead of enforcement.

Councilman Boles asked if the City and County's ordinances are still in place. Mayor Woolsey said yes, and Mrs. Kellahan said the City's ordinance is in place to their April meeting and the County is through the first of May. Councilman Boles said Councilwoman Mignano made some good points. As he looked at the Town's zoning map, he thought it would be wise to have one rule for the entire island since the numbers are down and believes masks has something to do with that. He said one rule for the entire island may be easier for everyone to follow instead of a patchwork of rules that apply across. Councilwoman Mignano agree that it would be easier if everyone has the same rule. But who would make that rule? She said we cannot enforce it because we have one Code Enforcement Officer. Councilwoman Mignano said that was her point at the beginning and if the businesses enforce wearing masks we are still covered. Mayor Woolsey stated that we do enforce it and businesses that do not require wearing masks are in violation and our Code

Enforcement Officer speaks to those businesses. He said we do not have an ordinance to enforce individuals to wear masks and the Town's ordinance matches the County. There was discussion between Councilwoman Mignano and Mayor Woolsey about the early discussions of mask wearing and enforcement on individuals. Mayor Woolsey explained that it referred to a proposal that our Code Enforcement Officer would cite individuals for not wearing masks, but the Town does not do that. It is done by the City of Charleston. The Town follows the same approach as Charleston County. If a business does not meet the requirements we enforce it against the business. There are a limited number of businesses in the Town that is subject to this ordinance, not through spot checks, but through complaints. Mayor Woolsey said he hopes to be inclined at the next meeting to vote against extending the ordinance further. The most recent report showed 96 active cases on James Island.

Vote

Councilman Boles	Yes
Councilwoman Mignano	No
Councilman Milliken	Yes
Councilman Mullinax	Yes
Mayor Woolsey	Yes

Passed

Ordinances up for Second/Final Reading: None.

Ordinances up for First Reading:

Ordinance #2021-01: Proposed Revision to Town of James Island Comprehensive Plan: Mrs. Kellahan announced that Kristen Crane, Planning Director, is also present to answer questions. She said the changes that Town Council made at their January meeting was sent back to the Planning Commission and they have recommended adopting those changes. Motion to approve made by Councilman Milliken, seconded by Councilwoman Mignano.

Councilman Milliken thanked the Planning Commission for their hard work on the Comp Plan. He said in reading through the Plan that he has the same concerns as when he first looked at it. Given that we have a Climate Resolution, he would like to see an Energy Element added. He understands that this a work in progress and the Planning Commission would be adding to the Plan once they get updated population figures. However, he hopes in the meantime, they could add an Energy Element and consider a way to measure energy used on James Island for municipal purposes; also, to estimate residential use and come up with a plan for reducing those numbers. Another idea that he has, Page 18, Natural Resource Element Goal #5: Continue to manage defined trees through the Tree Preservation Ordinance. He would like to add this potential line: *and plant new trees to perpetuate our urban forest*. Councilman Milliken said these are edits he would like the Planning Commission to consider for the next iteration of the Comp Plan. These will be recommendations for the Planning Director to bring before the Planning Commission.

Vote

Councilman Boles	Yes
Councilwoman Mignano	Yes
Councilman Milliken	Yes
Councilman Mullinax	Yes
Mayor Woolsey	Yes

Unanimous

New Business: None.

Executive Session: Not Needed.

Announcements/Closing Comments:

Councilman Boles thanked staff for their time and putting together all of the data.

Councilman Milliken thanked staff, particularly Mark Johnson, for taking the initiative in getting the interns trained for the tree survey. Thank you to Ashley Kellahan and Kristen Crane for helping with what is going to be a wonderful resource assessment management tool. They have done a great job in getting it off the ground.

Councilman Mullinax commented as he was driving through Stiles Point one morning he noticed a downed stop sign and called Mark Johnson. The sign was replaced within the hour and he appreciates Mark and Douglas getting this done quickly.

Mayor Woolsey urged all citizens who are currently eligible (55 and over), those with special health conditions, and those in essential positions to get vaccinated. He believes that we can expect the group of people eligible to expand in the next few weeks, so please get vaccinated so that we can repeal the mask ordinance.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the body, Mayor Woolsey called the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

Frances Simmons  
Town Clerk

