

The Town of James Island held its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, January 18, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in person at the Town Hall, 1122 Dills Bluff Rd., James Island, SC. This meeting was also live streamed on the Town's website, [www.jamesislandsc.us/livestream-townmeetings](http://www.jamesislandsc.us/livestream-townmeetings).

The following members of Council were present: Boles, Dodson, Mignano, Mullinax, and Mayor Lyon, who presided. Also, Bonum S. Wilson, Town Attorney, Merrell Roe, Finance Officer, Mark Johnson, Public Works Director, Lt. Shawn James, Island Sheriff's Patrol, Deputy Chris King, and Frances Simmons, Town Clerk.

Opening Exercises: Mayor Lyon called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilman Boles offered a moment of silence and followed with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Presentation of Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Audit: Gary Bailey, Love, Bailey CPA presented the Town's 2022-2023 Annual Audit and credited the Town with a modified opinion, which is a clean report. Mr. Bailey gave an overview of the Town's revenues, expenditure, and controls which were consistent and within proper administrative procedures. He said the Town is financially stable and credited Finance Officer, Merrell Roe, for doing a good job and being passionate about her job. The audit was accepted as information. A copy of the audit is available for public review.

Public Comment:

John Peters, 1301 Hampshire Rd., spoke in opposition to the 6.52 acres adjacent to Whitehouse Plantation and submitted a letter to be entered into the public record.

James Luby, 1330 Whitehouse Blvd., addressed the concerns of his friends and neighbors of the potential fate of the grand trees existing on the 6.52 acres of green space adjacent to Dills Bluff Rd. behind the Dollar General Store. He said JT Properties is proposing a commercial and residential plan that involves construction of 10-15 single family homes and a three-story 50,00 square foot storage facility. Mr. Luby described a grand tree as any variety of tree that is 24-inches or more in diameter and explained what flooding does to its root system. He showed a diagram display to Council.

Danielle Cribbs, 795 Brown Dr., is attending tonight's meeting for the first time and is appalled. She talked about a storage facility that was built behind Pet Helpers after a moratorium had ended. She does not know all of the details but after everyone fought against it, it was still built and all of the trees were cut down almost overnight. She watched this happen because she worked at Public Storage. We all see what happens with carwashes. They are eyesores, hurts the environment and causes flooding. No one uses them anymore. Why build another storage facility that won't be used and is more than we need? Why are we causing flooding issues for something to eventually become an abandoned building or sold? We need to take care of our environment. We worry about coyotes and endangered species and don't want flooding but keep building things we don't need on the island that doesn't benefit us; specifically a storage facility. The Dollar General parking lot is full of water every time it rains and now the "sponges", aka trees behind there are being taken away creating greater flooding problems. She implored Council to find a more sensible thing to do rather than another storage building.

Ken Godwin, 950 Valley Forge Dr., spoke in opposition to the Marsh Walk proposal. He feels that the drainage problem in Whitehouse Plantation will be exasperated by the development of this property. It would also cause a loss of trees and animals and wildlife would have to go someplace else. He said a possibility, whether planned or unplanned, of a connection between this development and Whitehouse Blvd. is something they don't want to happen. This would cause the neighborhood to be a cut-thru to avoid the traffic lights at Camp and Dills Bluff. He does not see numbers relating to dimensions of the residential lots and does not know how much room there will be for driveways; so that means the possibility of on-street

parking. If there is on-street parking that would cause response time problems for EMS, fire, and police getting to residents. He asked Council to please take those things into consideration.

Ruby Kvestad, 1277 Hampshire Rd., she is expressing her views along with John Peters, James Luby, Ken Godwin and others against the development of the Marsh Walk property, especially the encroachment into Whitehouse Plantation. She said if Council had opportunity to drive through the neighborhood after the storm they would see that the flooding was horrible. She said a neighbor's car went into a ditch because the water was so high she couldn't tell where it was. The cut-through will affect people in the neighborhood and homes are already under water when there are storms. She is also concerned about the response time of emergency personnel trying to get around parked cars. Getting out of Mt. Vernon off of Camp Rd. is dangerous and she has seen many accidents there. She hopes Council will intervene and not let it happen.

Wendy Teal, 1290 Hampshire Rd., expressed her concern about the Marsh Walk development. She said it is disheartening to see the large footprint of the storage unit because the flooding is a real issue and greenspace is critical for water absorption. She said housing is needed and adequate space for infrastructure and natural areas for water absorption and our wildlife because once it's gone, it's gone and we cannot get it back. The self-storage unit would change the character of the neighborhood and bring significant traffic. There are multiple storage facilities already on Folly Rd. She heard the possibility of a thru-road connecting into Whitehouse Plantation Blvd. She urged Council to give this careful consideration.

Henrietta Martin, 1235 Hepburn St. community representative for Seaside Lane (Grace Triangle Assn) thanked the Mayor and Council for the speed humps that were installed on Seaside Lane. So far, the residents are seeing speeding and traffic slowed. She thanked Mayor Lyon and Councilwoman Mignano, Councilman Boles, and Mark Johnson for keeping hope alive. She was unable to attend the November and December Town Council meetings but thanked Councilwoman Mignano, and Lt. James for an outstanding food drive during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. She said several members of the community expressed their appreciation with tears of joy. She thanked Council for a job well done.

Megan Dean, 1243 Cornwallis Rd., expressed her views on the Marsh Walk Development stating in a perfect world this would be greenspace... a park for her six-year old, four-year old, and other kids in the community to play; walking paths or a playground. There are grant funds available to do this and she offered her service as a contracts and grants administrator with the government to help the Town find opportunities. As a resident of Whitehouse Plantation for over 15 years she loves her neighborhood. For the most part it's safe, traffic is limited, and the wildlife is beautiful. She worries that the development would open the community to a lot of traffic. She expressed disappointment with the behavior of people that attends these types of meetings to be adults in discussions. She urged the Town to listen to the people and work with the JIPSD and buy back the land for what it was sold. She urged Council to stop the development and make it greenspace.

Patrick and Robert Flynn, 97 Montague Ave., father and son attended the meeting for the son's merit scouting badge.

Mayor Lyon announced that 12 letters were received all expressing opposition to the Marsh Walk Development and the proposed storage unit.

#### Consent Agenda:

Minutes of December 21, 2023 Regular Town Council Meeting: Motion to approve the minutes of the December 21, 2024 meeting was made by Councilman Mullinax, seconded by Councilman Boles and passed unanimously.

Minutes of January 4, 2024 Special Town Council Meeting: Motion to approve the minutes of the Special Town Council meeting held on January 4, 2024 was made by Councilman Boles, seconded by Councilman Dodson and passed unanimously.

Information Reports:

Finance Report: Finance Officer, Merrell Roe, stated the audit was presented as a part of her report. Council complimented Ms. Roe for doing a great job on the audit.

Town Administrator Report: Mayor Lyon reported that last night Council held a workshop on Short-Term Rental (STR) and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) with great citizen participation and discussion. Mayor Lyon said Council is working towards establishing a consensus that would benefit everyone as best we can and reach a consensus. She noted that we may not be able to make everyone happy but hope to develop an ordinance that works well for our citizens and Town with compromise.

Dominion Energy will host a drop-in on Wednesday, January 24 @5:00-6:30 p.m. at the Town Hall where citizens may speak with arborists and Dominion officials on tree trimmings. Mayor Lyon encouraged everyone to watch for announcements on the Town's website, Facebook, and the Town's email notifications.

Mayor Lyon announced that we are very excited about the speed humps on Seaside Lane that were recently installed. Additionally, the speed humps were completed on Pauline Ave. Drainage projects on Stonepost and in the Quail Run subdivision are coming along. We hope to have these projects completed soon. Mark Johnson will be available to speak more in depth in his report.

Island Sheriff's Patrol Report: Lt. James gave an updated crime report. He noted that no serious crimes occurred over the Christmas holidays.

Public Works Report: Public Works Director, Mark Johnson, reported that the staff participated in the quarterly meeting for the James Island Creek Water Quality Task Force; Quail Run Project's contractor, IPW Construction is continuing its work in Quail Run. Staff continues to monitor the Ocean-view Stonepost Drainage Project. Mr. Johnson gave an updated on septic tank inspections. Councilwoman Mignano was directed to send her request regarding Chuka Court to Mr. Johnson for investigation.

Requests for Consideration by Staff: None.

Requests for Consideration by Council:

Soil Testing Quotes for Flagpole Installation at Harbor View Road: Mayor Lyon announced that prior to her and Councilman Dodson's election to Town Council, a budget of \$15,000 was established and it was determined that a soil test would be necessary because of the depth of the flagpole and its proximity to Folly Road and the traffic. She said the original quote of \$5,250 would've put us several thousand dollars over the budgeted amount. Mr. Lockridge, the contractor for the JI Arts & Cultural Center, has reached out and requested two additional bids. One has been received which is higher than the original we received but he is attempting to get one more quote. Councilman Mullinax entertained brief discussion about the necessity of having a soil sample and Mayor Lyon stated it is for safety reasons to make sure it holds up in adverse weather conditions. With the increase cost architectural drawings would be required, which would add an additional \$1,500. The project would honor all branches of the military. Mayor Lyon asked Council if there is discussion whether to approve the extra cost. Councilman Mullinax suggested waiting to see what the third quote would be and he offered to defer this request to next month's meeting. Councilman Mullinax explained to Councilman Dodson where the flagpole would be located at the Carolina One sign on Folly Road.

Mayor Lyon brought forth a correction to the agenda to change the flagpole installation to Folly Road; not Harbor View. Motion to correct the change was made by Councilman Mullinax, seconded by Councilwoman Mignano.

Vote

Councilman Boles	Aye
Councilman Dodson	Aye
Councilwoman Mignano	Aye
Councilman Mullinax	Aye
Mayor Lyon	Aye
Passed unanimously	

Councilman Boles moved to approve the original soil testing bid of \$5,250, plus \$15,000; seconded by Councilman Mullinax. Councilwoman Mignano said she would like to see this done before summer traffic begins with tourists coming this would be beautiful.

Vote

Councilman Boles	Aye
Councilman Dodson	Aye
Councilwoman Mignano	Aye
Councilman Mullinax	Aye
Mayor Lyon	Aye
Passed unanimously	

Committee Reports:

Land Use Committee: Mayor Lyon announced that no Planning Commission and BZA meetings were held this month.

Environment and Beautification Committee: No report but James Island Pride will host a litter pickup on Saturday at 9:00 a.m. and a pizza lunch will be served afterwards.

Children's Committee: No report.

Public Safety Committee: Councilman Mullinax announced that the Neighborhood Council will meet on Thursday, January 25 @ 7:00 p.m.

History Committee: No report.

ReThink Folly Road: No report.

Drainage Committee: No report.

Business Development Committee: Councilman Dodson announced that he is working towards staffing this committee.

Trees Advisory: No report.

James Island Intergovernmental Council: Mayor Lyon announced meeting on Wednesday, January 31 @ 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. Agenda notices will be sent by the Chair.

Accommodations Tax Committee: Councilman Dodson announced that he is working towards staffing this committee.

Proclamations and Resolutions:

Resolution #2024-01: Appoint Poet Laureate for the Town of James Island: Councilman Mullinax spoke that he had proposed appointing Eugene Platt to this position at the December Town Council meeting. He said Mr. Platt served as a five-term member of the James Island PSD and has given community service to James Island and Folly Beach as well as other areas. Mr. Platt ran for Congress in 1986 and served as the Poet Laureate for the Town in 1993 and would do well in serving again. Councilman Mullinax said the appointment was deferred last month so terms to be established, which is for one-year. Councilman Mullinax moved to appoint Eugene as Poet Laureate for the Town of James Island for a one-year term, seconded by Councilman Boles. No discussion.

Vote

Councilman Boles	Aye
Councilman Dodson	Aye
Councilwoman Mignano	Aye
Councilman Mullinax	Aye
Mayor Lyon	Aye
Passed unanimously	

Resolution #2024-02: Island Sheriff's Patrol Deputy of the Year, 2023: Mayor Lyon called Deputy Chris King forward and read a proclamation recognizing him as the Island Sheriff's Patrol Deputy of the Year for outstanding service to the Town, its residents and the community. Lt. James complimented Deputy King for a job well-done in working for the Town often while on off-duty. He said there are only 4-5 deputies and this program is vital for the Town. Deputy King was hand-picked for this position and has done an exceptional job. Deputy King spoke expressing his appreciation for working for the Town and thanked the Council for allowing him to do so.

Ordinances up for First Reading:

First Reading: Ordinance #2024-01 Amendment to Ordinance #2018-16 Pertaining to Environmentally Acceptable Packaging Products to Clarify to Definitions of Reusable Carryout Bags: Mayor Lyon stated the purpose of this ordinance is to stop the use of the "heavy" plastic bags (i.e., that Wal-Mart and Lowe's uses). She called for a motion in order to discuss. Motion was made by Councilman Boles, seconded by Councilman Dodson. Councilman Boles asked if this would require businesses in the Town to use paper bags. Councilwoman Mignano spoke not to cause hardship on our businesses, but the flimsy plastic bags are more detrimental because they break apart and can go into the waters and be eaten by fishes. She asked how Town businesses would be impacted. Mayor Lyon stated that the only businesses she know that uses them are Wal-Mart and Lowe's and hasn't seen them at Lowe's lately. Most of the businesses she frequents in the Town uses paper bags. Councilman Dodson said he helps write some of these ordinances. He said the Surfrider Foundation and Waterkeepers go to businesses and ask them to help with regulation of plastics because it would help to keep them out of the ocean. He said we are a coastal community and need to protect our oceans because it is an asset for living here. This was a request from Surfriders and Waterkeepers. He said paper bags are recyclable, reusable and sustainable. Councilman Dodson offered clarification to Councilwoman Mignano on the thickness of the bags that Wal-Mart uses.

Vote

Councilman Boles	Aye
Councilman Dodson	Aye
Councilwoman Mignano	Aye
Councilman Mullinax	Aye

Mayor Lyon Aye  
Passed unanimously

Ordinances up for Second/Final Reading: None.

Old Business:

2024 Town Council Meeting Schedule. Council discussed opportunities to change the date and time of the Town Council meetings and each gave their preferred date and time. After some discussion, a motion came forth from Councilman Boles to consider the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m., seconded by Councilwoman Mignano. This would take place for the February meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

Vote

Councilman Boles Aye  
Councilman Dodson Aye  
Councilwoman Mignano Aye  
Councilman Mullinax Aye  
Mayor Lyon Aye  
Passed unanimously

Executive Session: Mayor Lyon announced that Town Council would enter into an Executive Session in accordance with 30-4-70(a) Code of Laws of South Carolina regarding contractual matters, real estate and litigation. Upon returning to open session the Council may act on matters discussed in the Executive Session. Councilman Boles moved to enter into executive session, seconded by Councilman Dodson at 8:20 p.m. and passed unanimously.

Return to Regular Session: Mayor Lyon asked for a motion to return to regular session. Councilman Mullinax moved that Council return to regular session, seconded by Councilwoman Mignano at 9:37 p.m. and passed unanimously. Mayor Lyon announced that no votes were taken during the executive session.

Councilman Dodson made a motion to direct staff under the guidance of the Mayor to prepare to create an inventory of properties in the Town of James Island for the possibility of open space; seconded by Councilman Boles. No discussion.

Vote

Councilman Boles Aye  
Councilman Dodson Aye  
Councilwoman Mignano Aye  
Councilman Mullinax Aye  
Mayor Lyon Aye  
Passed unanimously

Councilwoman Mignano made a motion to hire Pagliarini Law Firm for the purpose of providing legal advice related to real estate acquisition; seconded by Councilman Boles. No discussion.

Vote

Councilman Boles Aye  
Councilman Dodson Aye  
Councilwoman Mignano Aye  
Councilman Mullinax Aye  
Mayor Lyon Aye  
Passed unanimously



Mayor Lyon informed Council that an action taken earlier needed to be revisited. The motion made earlier to change the Town Council meeting date and time is not governed by ordinance, however the order of business and the agenda is. In order to do this, it would require a first and second reading which means the February and March meetings would remain on Thursday at 7:00 p.m. In order to comply, the new date and time meetings would begin in April. Councilman Boles moved to amend the original motion that Town Council meeting begins in April @ 6:00 p.m. assuming the ordinance passes; seconded by Councilwoman Mignano. Motion passed unanimously.

Announcements/Closing Comments:

Councilman Boles, thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and for their input.

Councilman Dodson stated that a lot of information was heard today from the residents about the development on Dills Bluff. He said unfortunately, the Town of James Island has no control over this. He asked residents to please seek out their James Island PSD Commissioners because they are the ones who are in charge of this. The Town creates zoning regulations and people have to operate within those regulations. To be fair, he said, you cannot pick and choose what happens within those zoning regulations. He encouraged the residents to write letters to the developer, the JIPSD, and also to the Town Council but to direct their energy to those who can make a difference.

Councilwoman Mignano thanked the citizens that showed up and voiced their opinions. She concurs with Councilman Dodson that their focus has to be on the JIPSD that has the outcome of this. She congratulated Deputy King for being named Island Sheriffs Patrol Deputy of the Year. Hope everyone has a safe evening.

Councilman Mullinax wished everyone a safe evening.

Mayor Lyon thanked everyone for coming out this evening and sharing their comments and input.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the body, the meeting adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Frances Simmons  
Town Clerk

# James Island Town Council Public Comment

January 18, 2024

**John Peters, 1301 Hampshire Rd. Charleston, SC, 29412**

**Subject:** Expressed Concern and Opposition for the 6.52 Acres adjacent to Whitehouse Plantation under a Proposed Development along Dills Bluff Rd. identified as TMS Parcel ID: 4251200185 and TMS Parcel ID: 4251200298.

I have lived adjacent to this property for the last 6 years. Last week I was invited by a James Island Public Service District, (JIPSD) Commissioner, to walk the property with them. We explored its beauty and potential. I recommend that each of you go to this Dills Bluff Property and walk it, to explore and experience the special feeling you get knowing something so beautiful exists here on James Island. I ask each of you to intervein with the contract between the JIPSD and the Developer. Please do not ignore this and let it go.

The potential future of this hand holds 5 stormwater retention ponds at an elevation above a designated flood zone. Why are there 5 stormwater ponds? Is this to disperse a potential flooding problem. What if the HOA dissolves 10 years from now, who manages the stormwater with potential drainage and flooding problems. HOA fees can become expensive with 12 residences maintaining 5 stormwater ponds. We can all tell this is not going to be affordable housing.

James Island currently has 6 Storage building locations, 5 of them are along Folly Rd. Do we require another storage unit on James Island, and is Dills Bluff Rd really the right place for one?

Does the future hold walking out the front door of Town Hall and looking up to see a tree canopy or will we all be looking up at the top half of a storage building. Now is the time to rethink Dills Bluff Rd.

I support the JIPSD, but I do not want the current contract of this property to succeed, I believe in James Island as a whole and know we can be smart about our resources. I ask that the Town of James Island purchase the land from the JIPSD with Greenbelt funds and establish something beautiful for James Island. How we proceed is how we define our community values. Again, I ask you to intervein with the contract between the JIPSD and the déveloper.

As I have expressed in the past, as community leaders, in your positions of power, comes the expectation that you will hold yourself to the highest ethical standards in the public's interest.

I appreciate your service to our community.

Thank you,

John Peters  
843-730-1901