

The Town of James Island held its regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, July 20, 2023 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 You-Tube Channel.

The following members of Council were present: Boles, Mignano, Milliken, Mullinax, and Mayor Woolsey, who presided. Also, Niki Grimball, Town Administrator, Merrell Roe, Finance Director, Mark Johnson, Public Works Director, Bonum Wilson, Town Attorney, Lt. Shawn James and Deputy Chris King, Island Sheriff's Patrol, and Frances Simmons, Town Clerk. A quorum was present to conduct business. This meeting was held in accordance with the SC Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of James Island. Notification provided to the public.

Opening Exercises: Mayor Woolsey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Councilwoman Mignano offered a Moment of Silence for the military and police who cares for our nation every day. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Public Comment:

John Peters, 1301 Hampshire Rd: Mr. Peters stated he provided comments last month about the proposed development adjacent to Whitehouse Plantation (along Dills Bluff Road). He expressed concern about flooding, crime and traffic and would propose green space rather than development. He noted that green space would be beneficial to the Town residents and would improve the quality of life on James Island. He understands that the plan will be heard before the Planning Commission, BZA and Town Council. The plan should be something better than what it is zoned to be.

Affordable Housing Research Update: Attorney Joe Qualey gave a summary of his research on Affordable Housing at the request of Councilman Mullinax. The presentation included Charleston County's growing concern for affordable housing; the establishment of the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization (HNR) for the Charleston County area and its merger with the Charleston County Department of Community Development and Revitalization (CDR). Mr. Qualey reviewed abandoned and dilapidated properties that owners may be interested in selling to the Town and potential funding sources. He explained that Charleston County had dedicated their allocation of the American Rescue Plan funding towards this effort and had been in development of a program to provide affordable housing across the County. This program has identified two phases, the first of which includes two properties in the Town to be rehabilitated and offered for individuals meeting the qualifications. The County has also worked to establish a continual funding source beyond the initial ARPA funds to ensure the program is sustainable. He encouraged the Town to meet with County staff to begin a process by which to pursue potential properties that may be available in the Town and establish a relationship with the County so they are fully aware of the Town's interest in participating. Mr. Qualey also recommended establishing goals and form a subcommittee of staff and himself or the Town's attorney to monitor the County's progress and to look further into other options as they may become available.

During questions, Councilman Milliken spoke about needing to have affordable housing for people that want to live here, and it is our responsibility to do something.

Councilman Mullinax thanked Mr. Qualey for the presentation and noted he is pleased with what the County is trying to do as they had made a lot of progress developing a program and then it appeared to have stalled. (Full Presentation Attached).

Consent Agenda:

Minutes of June 15, 2023, Regular Town Council Meeting: Councilman Milliken moved to approve the June 15, 2023 meeting minutes, Councilman Mullinax seconded. Passed unanimously.

Information Reports: Finance Director, Merrell Roe, provided an overview of the monthly Budget Report. She reported this is the final budget report for fiscal year 2022-2023, but it is not complete because additional revenue is expected for the month of June. The annual audit is scheduled to begin the first week of October.

Town Administrator's Report: Town Administrator, Niki Grimball reported that the Brantley Park Dock Repair permit was issued by SCDHEC. Staff will obtain estimates from contractors to stabilize it for public safety and bring it back to the Council for approval. The SC General Assembly granted the Town \$1 million from its 2023-24 Appropriations Act to help fund the restoration of the JI Creek Watershed; receipt of that funding is expected in the fall. She thanked

Senator Campsen who helped to secure this allocation on behalf of the Town. The Town has hired two staff members in the Public Works Department: Michael Cryan (Facilities), and Ja'Dyn Sumter (Groundskeeping). Postcards promoting the Town's new citizens request app (MyTOJI) was mailed to residents last month. Ms. Grimbball reported that plans for traffic control needed for the Camp Road Tree Preservation Project have been submitted to SCDOT. Pending their acceptance and approval of the plan, work should begin as soon as possible. The Quail Run and Woodhaven Drainage projects are set to begin in August and completed by May 2024. The Greenhill Drainage project is also set to begin in August and be completed by the end of December. Camps and community classes are ongoing at the James Island Arts and Cultural Center and new programming will be announced for the fall.

Public Works Report: Public Works Director, Mark Johnson's reported on the staff's participation in the second quarter SCASM meeting; meeting with various jurisdictions to discuss the City's new Hazard Mitigation Plan; attendance at the 2023 SC Chapter of the American Public Works Assn. and had the annual kick-off meeting for storm debris removal at Charleston County. The Quarterly Drainage Committee meeting will be held on August 9. Staff continues to monitor the Oceanview-Stone Post drainage project for the culvert placement. 13 new inspections were performed in June for septic tanks; one of which was a failure. 76 total have been inspected to date. 12 failed and 138 remains to be serviced.

Island Sheriff's Patrol: Lt. James announced the National Night Out Event on Tuesday, August 1 in the parking lot at Town Hall, 6-8 p.m. He encouraged everyone to attend. This year's activities includes the SWAT truck, Bomb Squad, Dive Team, the Traffic Motor Unit, PSD Fire Truck. This year, a new attraction is added. Cypher, a canine in the Sheriff's Department, will be featured. Cypher specializes in detecting electronic storage devices that can provide so much information linked to child pornography and crimes against children. Lt. James said Cypher is trained to sniff very small devices, such as SD cards, cameras, including very small electronic devices.

Lt. James provided the Crime Report and noted a good month. Many arrests were made and cases closed.

Requests for Approval:

Camp Road Tree Preservation Project: Request to Approve a Cost Increase of \$8,250 from Approved Cost of \$15,000: Ms. Grimbball requested approval for an increase to the initial allocation of \$15,000 approved by Council previously. Natural Directions provided a quote to complete the recommended cleanup and maintenance of the trees along Camp Road between Dills Bluff and Ft. Johnson Roads. The total cost is \$23,250; \$9,000 of which covers traffic control. Motion in favor by Councilman Milliken, seconded by Councilman Mullinax. No discussion. Passed unanimously.

Town Hall Municipal Office Modification/Expansion Feasibility Study: Ms. Grimbball requested approval for a Feasibility Study to identify modifications to the Town Hall by Liollo Architecture, for \$14,000. She stated it is her understanding that after the initial construction phase, other options would be looked into for the construction of the second floor. Ms. Grimbball said there are issues to be addressed to satisfy the American Disabilities Act (ADA) for guidelines for accessibility in a public building, such as having an elevator, and the potential for having to install a sprinkler system based on the building, size and occupancy. Since her hire, she has identified several needs that would allow flexibility of space in the office, to add staff, or to reconfigure space to move around. The Feasibility Study would look at different options that could provide more space and room to grow and Council could decide how to move forward. Motion in favor by Councilman Boles, seconded by Councilman Mullinax.

Councilman Milliken spoke about the lot the Town purchased next door on Hillman St. He commented that it would be a good idea to have or include a planning process for that property as well in accordance with things for Public Works and a place to house things. That could be an area where space could be utilized as an organizational standpoint as an add-on but does not know what it would cost. Mayor Woolsey said he suspects that it could be added as a possibility and if the Council approves this feasibility study, the additional cost to include this could be presented to them at the next meeting. After discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Request to Approve Quote to Perform Electrical Work to Reinstall License Plate Reader on Folly Rd. Ms. Grimbball requested deferring this agenda item to the August meeting to obtain additional information from the contractor. The contractor needs to determine how the camera will be powered after being place on the traffic arm before they are able to quote the project appropriately. Motion to defer the request was made by Mayor Woolsey, seconded by Councilman Milliken. Passed unanimously.

Committee Reports:

Land Use Committee: No Report.

Environment and Beautification Committee: No Report.

Children's Committee: No Report.

Public Safety Report: Councilman Mullinax announced that National Night Out Event would be held in lieu of the Neighborhood Council meeting and encouraged everyone to attend.

History Committee: Ms. Grimball announced the next meeting on September 12 at 6:00 p.m. at the James Island Arts and Cultural Center.

- Appointment to the History Council: Councilman Milliken moved for the nomination of Michael Williams to serve on the Town's History Council. Seconded by Councilman Boles. Passed unanimously.

ReThink Folly Road: Ms. Grimball announced that the June meeting was cancelled. The next meeting is scheduled for August 23 @ 3:30 p.m.

Drainage Committee: Councilman Mullinax announced that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 9 @ 3:00 p.m. He shared information about a stakeholders meeting he attended about flooding issues in the James Island Creek Drainage Basin, along with key flooding points. This data will be collected to enable funding to help resolve some flooding issues. A study should be completed by September and a pending public meeting will be scheduled.

Business Development Committee: No Report.

Trees Advisory Committee: Councilman Milliken announced that the Trees Advisory Committee made two awards: the first ever Tree Steward Award was presented to George Hyams @ Hyams Garden Center and a Canopy Tree Award presented to Joe and Pat Jacinto for their glorious Sweet Tea Tree on Darwin St.

James Island Intergovernmental Council: Mayor Woolsey announced the next meeting on Wednesday, July 26 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall. Agenda items are still being accepted.

Proclamations and Resolutions: None.

Ordinances up for First Reading:

Ordinance #2023-05: Ordinance Instating Minimum Work Hour Requirements for Position of Mayor: Councilman Mullinax requested withdrawing this item based upon information he received from the Municipal Association of SC regarding this subject. He thought this was a good idea in concert with the upcoming increase to the Mayor's salary, but what made sense to him was not legally viable for an elected official. He complimented Niki Grimball and appreciates the work she did on his behalf. The agenda item was withdrawn without objection of the Council.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Urban Requalification Agreement Amendments: Mayor Woolsey announced that the Town Administrator requested to add this item and called for a motion to add it to the agenda. Motion made by Councilman Mullinax, seconded by Councilman Milliken. Passed unanimously.

Ms. Grimball presented the Cooperative Agreement between Charleston County and the Town under the Urban Entitlement Program for HUD Federal Funding.

She explained that the Town and other municipal entities (with the exception the City of Charleston) have entered this Cooperative Agreement with the County which allows them to administer HUD funding on behalf of the Town, the original agreement for the Town was dated 2014. She said language had been added for compliance with HUD Regulations under (item #4) and describes how grants are to be used. She quoted from the agreement, "*the grantee*

and all parties (general local government) will take actions necessary to assure compliance and implementation of the Fair Housing Act and regulations and will affirmatively further fair housing". Ms. Grimball said she understands this to mean that Charleston County administers the program and they must meet certain qualifications and show how they are met. It is also her understanding that the Town does not, on its own accord, need to provide documentation showing how the Town is implementing the stated actions. She stated while the requirement is an amazing idea and certainly something that should be done in type of programming, but it is not quantifiable at our size or level of local government and would be the responsibility of the qualified urban County (Charleston County) to provide this documentation if requested. By participating as an Urban County, Charleston County is required to have certain processes, reviews, and goals and they are monitored by the Federal Government on the use of these funds. She understands that this amendment would not cause extra work by staff or that the Town would have to meet any new standards by approving the amended agreement. Motion in favor by Councilman Milliken, second by Councilwoman Mignano.

Councilman Boles received clarification that action required to be carried out would be done by Charleston County. Ms. Grimball furthered by providing information about how the Town participates with Charleston County to administer HUD funds, explaining that the participating municipalities have a seat on the Community Development Advisory Board to review and recommend projects from qualifying non-profits or other applicants to expend the funds annually. Councilman Milliken asked if someone from the Town sits on this Board and Ms. Grimball confirmed that she participates on this Board on behalf of the Town. Passed unanimously.

Executive Session: Not needed.

Announcements/Closing Comments:

Councilman Boles commented it being good to see everyone and to stay cool.

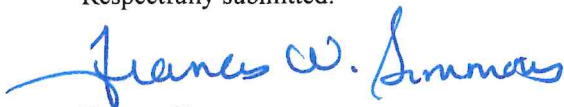
Councilwoman Mignano thanked the Island Sheriffs Patrol, Sheriff's Office, and First Responders for the work that they do.

Councilman Milliken reminded everyone to drink lots of water because of the dangerously hot weather. He encouraged Mark Johnson to tell his Public Works staff to hydrate and stay in the shade as much as possible. This is a good week for training videos indoors because it is dangerously hot. He hopes the Sheriff's Patrol is also hydrating and for everyone to do what they can to stay cool.

Councilman Mullinax thanked staff; especially Niki Grimball for her research of the ordinance because it was very helpful and for coordinating with Joe Qualey to present his research at this meeting.

Adjournment: There being no further business to come before the body, the meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:



Frances Simmons
Town Clerk

MEMORANDUM

To: Town of James Island
From: Qualey Law Firm
Date: 20 July 2023
RE: Affordable Housing Research and Presentation

I. Charleston County's Plan for Affordable Housing – Housing Our Future

In years past, Charleston County Council began noticing that housing affordability was a growing concern and established the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization (HNR) in 2021. The HNR, under the supervision of County Council, has taken a wholistic approach to the funding and implementing affordable housing, both in the short and long term, for the Charleston County area. In the past year, however, the HNR has since merged with the Department of Community Development and Revitalization (“CDR”) for Charleston County.

In implementing County Council's policies, the CDR has set forth the Housing Our Future (“HOF”) plan, which provides affordable housing options to all 16 municipalities in Charleston County and all unincorporated areas with two main objectives: establishing an affordable housing trust fund to support priority activities; and to utilize and bank land to support affordable and mixed-income housing development.

Anticipating the need for affordable housing funds, Charleston County applied for and received \$80 million in American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) funding in 2022. The County Council has since dedicated \$20 million of these funds for affordable housing initiatives, alongside additional funding raised from Property taxes, a Mill Levy, Building Permit Fees, and Accommodations Tax revenues (recently signed into law by Gov. McMasters).

Using resources and funds on hand, and with additional funds being generated, the HOF will allow for both short term and long-term housing solutions for Charleston County in a multitude of ways. Under the HOF, the CDR will use funds and previously acquired properties in partnership with contractors, developers, and builder to provide refurbished single family and multi-family units for rent and purchase and will also use funding to help distressed property owners repair their current homes. The CDR has already identified 16 addresses to improve over four phases.

II. Targeted Properties on James Island

Previous meetings and communications with the TOJI have identified the following properties of interest on James Island. Below, please find the property address (bold), the current owner and his/her mailing address, the taxes assessed in 2021, 2022, current tax status, and appraised value (bold). *(All information originated from the Charleston County Tax Assessor).*

- **1116 Seaside Lane**
J B Washington 1116 Seaside Lane, Charleston, SC 29412
761.95 717.20 Paid **\$179,500.00**
- **1051 Seaside Lane**
John E White 8106 Old London Road, North Charleston, SC 29406
1,439.69 1,314.02 Paid **\$184,900.00**
- **807 League Street**
John H. Ritter, Jr 84 Chadwick Drive, Charleston, SC 29407
1,330.92 1,336.43 Paid **\$200,000.00**
- **1553 Kentwood Circle**
Dennis M Brown 1553 Kentwood Circle, Charleston, SC 29412
3,310.92 3,325.68 Paid **\$271,800.00**
- **714 Harbor View Road**
Joseph Robert Horn, IV 635 Majestic Oak Drive, Charleston, SC 39412
1,159.72 3,745.03 Paid **\$304,200.00**
- **1106 Windward Road**
David J and Byrdie Harder 3940 Columbia Road, Orangeburg, SC 29118
3,934.57 4,605.11 OUTSTANDING **\$379,000.00**
- **923 Godber Street**
John W Shabotynskyj 1902 SE 11th Avenue, Cape Coral, FL 33990
DELINQUENT TAX SALE - AUCTIONED **\$292,500.00**

Our office previously drafted a letter to be sent to the above-referenced homeowners inquiring as to their interest in relinquishing their Property to the Town of James Island. In lieu of direct acquisition of properties and with a better understanding of the HOF plan, we suggest that the TOJI consider offering partnership options to current owners. This will eliminate the need for substantial funding and limit any liability that the TOJI would have in developing affordable housing.

In exchange for access CDR/HOF funding for refurbishing their homes, owners would agree to work through the TOJI in participating in CDR affordable housing initiatives either through selling or leasing their properties at a reduced rate. This would both eliminate unseemly properties as desired and allow the TOJI to increase their affordable housing footprint at no direct cost to either party.

III. Funding Options

As stated above, Charleston County set aside \$20 million of the ARPA funding for affordable housing, which will be allocated before December 31, 2024. The County has until December 31, 2026, to spend these funds. Additionally, Charleston County expects to raise approx. \$4.8 million per year under a mill levy, \$1.5 million annually in conveyance fees, and upwards of \$20 million annually under the new Accommodations tax.

Unfortunately, the application for ARPA funding closed in 2021, which means TOJI cannot make a direct application under ARPA. However, various federal funding measures may arise in the future under the Department of Housing and Urban Development and should be periodically monitored for upcoming opportunities. Various state and local NGOs, philanthropic sources, and the SC Community Loan Fund offer other avenues of financing.

The HOF plan carves out areas for partnership opportunities to help develop affordable housing, identify possible properties in which to invest, and to implement all facets of their affordable housing initiatives. The CDR has taken a lead/follow approach to the implementation of the HOF – taking the lead in some areas and following their partners in others. This approach would allow for the TOJI to help direct the CDR to help current property owners and take advantage of “abandoned” properties within James Island.

Currently, the HOF plan includes two (2) James Island properties in Phase I: these have been identified as 1138 Oxbow Drive and 1316 Garrison Street. A brief conversation with the CDR indicated that other James Island properties would be considered in future phases.

As the HOF plan does include all municipalities, we believe that contacting the CDR would be the best step for the TOJI to establish a partnership with Charleston County under the CDR and HOF plan. LoElla Smalls oversees the general housing initiatives for CDR – her number is (843) 202-6990. Smalls would be the best point-of-contact for any information TOJI would need. Christine DuRant serves as Deputy County Administrator and would also serve as a great reference for broad spectrum County initiatives - her direct line is (843) 202-6970.