

MINUTES  
March 7, 2018  
ANNUAL GOAL SETTING RETREAT  
10:00 A.M.

Town of Edisto Beach  
Town Hall  
2414 Murray Street  
Edisto Beach, SC 29438

Present: Jane S. Darby, Mayor, Crawford Moore, Mayor Pro Tempore, Susan Hornsby, Jerome Kizer, and Patti Smyer, Council Members; *Quorum of Council Present.*

**Departmental Requests/Concerns**

Administration

Iris Hill, Town Administrator, addressed Council. She expressed a need to have a policy to address dunes. There are some beach accesses that have walkovers. When the berm was restored, the contractor attempted to make sand walkovers at other beach accesses so that people could access the sandy beach easier. Contractors with experience have told Administrator Hill that a strong, healthy dune with vegetation and a policy on crossing the dune is more effective. Sand fencing is to be installed followed by plantings on the dunes before summer. In order to maintain a healthy dune, pedestrian access must be addressed. Administrator Hill asked for direction from Council on establishing the policy. A walkover similar to the ones already in place costs approximately \$70,000. Geotextile material, which is also ADA accessible, is available. Geotextile material does disintegrate and would need to be taken up prior to storms to maintain the integrity of the material. The issue with the hard structures is that when the beach accretes or erodes, the ramp must be adjusted to account for the change. Mayor Darby told the Administrator and those in attendance that it would come down to a matter of funds, and until accesses were repaired to pre-Irma state, nothing could be done. Mayor Darby recommended meeting with Patrick Brown and developing a generic plan to address the dune walkovers, and as funds become available, the Town move to provide improved access on accesses that are the most populated. The sand fences and plantings will be covered under Irma damages. Administrator Hill told those in attendance that the Town would make plants available to those who are interested. Patrick Brown said he would research the use of geotextile materials in parking areas to see if that was feasible and ADA compliant.

Administrator Hill provided to Council information distributed by the Municipal Association of South Carolina that outlines how Council is reimbursed. The Town's current policy is vague concerning reimbursement of Council. It would be in the best interest of the Town to develop something more concrete so that there is no confusion. Administrator Hill will check with other municipalities and present the information to Council.

Building

Mayor Darby asked if Mr. Brown was working on the fence ordinance with the Town Attorney. Mr. Brown replied that he thought Mr. Duffie was incorporating Council suggestions into a new revision of the Ordinance.

### Fire

Fire Chief Denney Conley was present to answer any questions or concerns Council had.

### Police

Mayor Darby asked how many golf cart permits had been issued. Chief Brothers stated that approximately 400 permits had been issued.

### Public Works/Utilities

Mayor Darby announced that the lawsuit that had been delaying the reverse osmosis water system has been dropped. The building has been removed from the address on Lee Street. The final design for the plant is in the design phase. Administrator Hill provided Council with an updated schedule from Wharton & Smith on the water project. Mayor Darby thanked Tommy Mann, Archie Johnston, Town Administrator Hill and Council for their assistance with the Myrtle Street drainage and paving project. It will be let May 1, and Lybrand Street at the Myrtle Street intersection will be closed temporarily for construction. A detour will be in place at that time. Tommy Mann asked that the Myrtle Street property owners be notified.

### Special Events

Administrator Hill addressed the rates for the Civic Center, which have not had an increase since inception in 2015. Costs associated with the upkeep of the Civic Center have steadily increased, and administration feels the rental rates should increase as well. Councilwoman Smyer asked that before the rates are increased that Council be given an expenditure report showing funds being used for upkeep. Administrator Hill suggested including inflationary costs in new contracts when they are negotiated. Councilwoman Smyer stressed the importance of keeping the rates reasonable so that the facility will continue to be used. Administrator Hill told Council that there will most likely be a need for further study of the parking lot drainage, and suggested that Carla Harvey, County Engineer with Colleton County may be able to assist the Town. Administrator Hill said she would speak with Ms. Harvey.

### **Council Topics**

Mayor Darby – Mayor Darby told those in attendance that a Bill in the Senate, S945, which is currently in committee would allow the Town of Edisto Beach more flexibility in providing support for events. Administrator Hill said there is \$20,270 in the alcohol permitting fund, and approximately \$600 is added per quarter. This fund has been used to fund sponsorships in the past. Mayor Darby asked Council what festivals they were interested in sponsoring. Councilwoman Hornsby suggested sponsoring the festivals that bring the most benefit to the community. She suggested the Governor's Cup, the Shag Festival and the Shark Tournament. Councilwoman Smyer mentioned the events that do not ask for sponsorship but ask that park fees be waived. She suggested continuing this practice. Administrator Hill noted that the cost for upkeep of Bay Creek Park has increased \$10,000 in the past year. The Town is not meeting the revenue demands for the park and the rental fees may need to be adjusted. Councilwoman Hornsby asked if a nominal fee schedule to cover electric, cleaning, garbage, police and fire could be developed for Bay Creek Park and brought to Council.

Councilwoman Hornsby – Councilwoman Hornsby suggested a periodic review of Town committees. If the committee has achieved its intended purpose, it should be dismissed. Since the Town cannot make improvements but must concentrate on restoring certain things to pre-Irma conditions, Councilwoman Hornsby suggested temporarily recessing four committees: Beachfront Management Committee, Scott Creek Committee, TIDE Committee and the Water and Sewer Committee. The aforementioned committees may be called back by Council or the Town Administrator if and when the need arises. These committees are taking an inordinate amount of staff time that should be directed toward completing hurricane recovery tasks. Councilman Kizer asked when the recovery process might be completed and the committees could be recalled. Administrator Hill stated that the 2015 storm has yet to be closed out. Mayor Pro Tem Moore suggested Council revisit the subject twice a year. Administrator Hill agreed with the six-month timeline. Councilwoman Smyer stated that she would like to revisit the issue in six months as long as the dissolution of committees was not considered. Councilwoman Smyer considers the four committees “watchdogs for issues and I want to make sure we keep these people....” Town Attorney Bert Duffie suggested voting on the recess of committees at the next Council meeting.

Councilman Kizer – Councilman Kizer referred to a report done by the University of Florida that was included in the retreat packets. He stated it would be a good idea to “get away from mandating human behavior, and go towards mandating technology.” Councilwoman Hornsby readily agreed that it would be easier to control the technology or the light bulbs in particular than the renters that come in every week. Amber, LED lights have been shown to not distract the nesting turtles or hatchlings. Councilman Kizer stated he didn’t think the homeowner knows what is available to correct the issue. He suggested the Town provide a link to buying the correct lightbulbs and fixtures, which was also found in the report from the University of Florida. Model ordinances were included in the report as well. Councilman Kizer said he could find no reference to wavelength of lighting in the Town’s ordinance. Mayor Darby suggested Councilman Kizer discuss with Patrick Brown the updating of the lighting ordinance. Administrator Hill told Council that after the most recent nourishment, the permit required the Town complete two lighting surveys. Councilwoman Smyer said it would be beneficial to include information on flashlights to renters too. She would like information on turtles and lighting included on the Beach Rules/Regulations signs. Administrator Hill suggested the stores on the beach distribute the stickers to put over the flashlights to make them red. Turtle Patrol hands them out early in the morning when they are out on patrol, but it would help if other places helped get the word out. Administrator Hill suggested a cost share with the Turtle Patrol to fund the stickers.

Councilwoman Smyer – Councilwoman Smyer discussed the topic of drainage. The assessment and listing of problem areas was her first concern. As the Town looks at the drainage problem, Councilwoman Smyer wants to make sure it is not being done piecemeal and wants to include all the problem areas in the solution. A list was included in the packets of problematic areas. Councilwoman Smyer asked for other areas of concern from Councilmembers. Council discussed the area at the 800 block of Palmetto, which initially was addressed with the sidewalk project, but not satisfactorily. Administrator Hill said the issue can be addressed again, but Palmetto has been resurfaced, and the sidewalks were improved, and DOT will probably want to wait until either resurfacing or replacing of the sidewalk takes place. The solution to the problem was not something that DOT wanted to allow. The ditches have been reshaped in that area, and there are pipes all the way to the outfall, which helps with the standing water. Mayor Darby stated that DOT would want a hydrology study performed at the Town’s expense prior to construction. Mayor Darby asked Administrator Hill to research the cost of a hydrology study. Councilwoman Smyer wanted to add the 3500 block bike path to the list of areas of concern. Other areas on the list were Myrtle Street (in process) and Billow and Arc Street ditches.

Councilwoman Smyer suggested that the Town find a way to establish a fund specifically for drainage. "This is too big of a problem for us to say, 'Well, we need to do it, but we don't have the money right now.'" Administrator Hill asked if Council would like to see, contingent on the bills passing, that the Town designated a certain amount to a fund in the upcoming budget year. Councilwoman Smyer said she would like for that to happen. Council would like to consider how much to put in this fund after getting a cost on the hydrology study.

Councilwoman Smyer provided pictures in the retreat packets of algae on the lagoons. In one picture a tree was shown that had fallen into the lagoon. Councilwoman Smyer commended the homeowners and Town staff that cleaned the lagoons after Matthew. It does appear, however, that there is remaining debris in the lagoons, including garbage cans. Councilwoman Smyer told Council that because of the algae, "we have lost our fish, we've lost our bird population, turtles, all of that has gone by the wayside since there has been so much inundation in our lagoons." Councilwoman Smyer stated she knew that some of the lagoons were privately owned, so there are things the Town can not do. In the past few weeks, it does seem that something has become unblocked so the water is flowing more freely, but it is still blocked. Vaughn Carroll spoke to Council about the lagoons. He asked Council to be proactive in the maintenance of the lagoons. Councilwoman Smyer said she'd like to pursue having a citizens group that would be willing to do some of the work. Administrator Hill asked Fire Chief Denney Conley to spearhead the volunteer cleanup campaign. Mayor Pro Tem Moore offered to work with Chief Conley on the volunteer project. Mr. Carroll also offered to help.

Councilwoman Smyer reminded Council and those in attendance that the Town is a member of the South Carolina Beach Advocates, and that Administrator Hill is on the Board of Directors. She suggested the Town remain a member of that organization since they are actively lobbying for a dedicated source of beach nourishment funding for the entire state. Administrator Hill stated there is \$11 million dollars earmarked for beach nourishment in the proposed budget.

Councilwoman Smyer next addressed a written plan for completing the cleaning of, and planning improvements for the beach accesses. Councilwoman Smyer stated she had asked the TIDE Committee for a prioritized list and "would still like to see that." Councilman Kizer said the TIDE Committee had provided that, and listed, "1, 2, 5, 6, 20 and 29. That would be the priority that we would be working on." Mayor Darby said she understood that list to be for increased parking. Councilwoman Smyer said she would like the TIDE committee to include parking as well as any other improvements they wish to see made at each beach access. Councilwoman Smyer went on to say that after the Irma improvements are all made, the Town should focus on completing all recommended improvements to beach accesses from a prioritized list, one at a time. The consensus of Council was that this would be a project in the future and would be taken one access at a time.

### **More than one Council member**

Water System Update – Mayor Darby recapped the update given earlier: the timeline was distributed to Council and the contract has been signed.

Front Beach Sewer - Councilwoman Hornsby said she had spoken to the State Park several years ago about partnering by using ATAX money to build restrooms on State Park property. The Town would build the restrooms and the State Park would own and maintain them. At the time, the Park was agreeable, but wanted to complete another project prior to the restrooms being built. The fact that the Town does not have sewer in that area would be problematic. It would be cost prohibitive to run a

sewer line from the grocery store to the State Park. Mayor Darby said that she was hesitant to do anything with front beach sewer until the jurisdictional lines issue was settled. Councilwoman Hornsby said that many had expressed an interest in keeping new development to a minimum. The lack of front beach sewer will keep new development to a minimum.

Review of Ordinances – Building Code ordinances have been reviewed and updated recently, but the majority of other ordinances have not. Mayor Darby suggested reviewing one chapter at a time to be sure it agrees with state law. Administrator Hill stated there was no intent to add or subtract information from the code, just to review the code for accuracy. Administrator Hill suggested having Town Attorney Bert Duffie go through the Town's Code chapter by chapter to make sure it is in accordance with state law.

Day Visitors – Council is concerned the number of day visitors that visit Edisto after the Spring Grove Development is completed may overwhelm our facilities and public service employees. Councilwoman Smyer went to a Planning Commission meeting in Charleston, where the planners of the development were present. Councilwoman Smyer asked the development planners to consider mitigation for Edisto Beach and Edisto Island, since Spring Grove residents would be utilizing roads and services. Mayor Darby mentioned the Resolution passed by Council that voiced concern surrounding the impacts of Spring Grove.

### **2018-2019 COUNCIL GOALS**

Drainage (hydrology study). Maintain flow in lagoons.

Support Legislation that provide flexibility in using tourism taxes

Turtle lighting (manage technology, not people). Ordinance, public outreach

Maximize Civic Center/public properties use/analyze costs to keep rentals affordable

Beach Accessibility/ADA

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by common consent.

*The media/public was duly notified of the date, time and location of the Annual Goal Setting Retreat on Friday, March 2, 2018.*

APPROVED BY TOWN COUNCIL



Deborah Hargis, Municipal Clerk  
April 12, 2018