



**STORMWATER COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 9, 2015 ♦ 12 o'clock noon
Surfside Beach Town Council Chambers**

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Chairman Elliott called the meeting to order at 12:00 noon. Members present: Chairman Elliott, and members Beck, and Crouch. Vice-Chairman Mull, and member Mabry were absent. A quorum was present. Others present: Town Clerk Herrmann, and Public Works Director Adair.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** Chairman Elliott led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **AGENDA APPROVAL.** Mr. Crouch moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Beck seconded. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

4. **MINUTES APPROVAL.** Mr. Beck moved to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2015 meeting as submitted. Mr. Crouch seconded. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – Agenda Items. There were no public comments.

6. **BUSINESS. Budget Recommendations for FY2016-2017 Stormwater Projects, Water Quality Monitoring, etc., Director Adair.** Mr. Adair thanked the members for the kind letter presented at the last Town Council meeting. He did not expect to hear that and it really touched his heart. It was not often that public servants received such praise. It meant a lot to him. Chairman Elliot said he was more than welcomed. Mr. Beck said it was written, because they thought he did a really nice job. Mr. Crouch said it was seldom that anyone met a public servant who did the quality of work that Mr. Adair did day-in and day-out. Mr. Adair said again that he appreciated the comments, and they were unexpected. Too often only complaints were heard in customer-service oriented businesses.

Mr. Adair presented the following recommendations for consideration:

- Regular budget items: lake maintenance; membership in the consortium, participation in which is required for the NPDES permit; annual fees to be paid; two water quality monitoring stations, etc.
- Future stormwater funding: stormwater costs will continue as the infrastructure always needs maintenance and repairs, and eventually upgraded. Cost would include hardscape, construction, engineering services, or equipment. He proposed a recommendation to Town Council for a sustainable funding source moving forward. Options were discussed to collect monthly stormwater fees versus a dedicated tax millage, and how those payments might be made. The general process would be
 1. Survey all properties to determine residential, commercial, and/or vacant land.
 2. Determine average impervious size on the residential lots. The average amount becomes the ERU, Equivalent Residential Unit.
 3. The ERU is the foundation for decision making, the value of which is calculated by taking the proposed budget over a 5- or 10-year period and dividing it by the ERU total to determine the value for each ERU per year.
 4. Commercial and industrial uses calculate fees based on a multiplier of the ERU.
- Horry County stormwater manager Tom Gerigan, and his assistant Tom Fosse feel that the entire county should be based on impervious surfaces, not a flat fee. There is not as much equity with a flat fee, because everyone pays the same amount. Also, there were no incentives for people to use pervious materials and reduce the building footprint. Horry County implemented its fee in 2000. Charges are \$29/year on its tax bill for single-family residential property; commercial and industrial fees are calculated by impervious surface, and undeveloped property pays at a lower rate.

Stormwater Committee Meeting
November 9, 2015

56 Mr. Beck asked if adopting such a policy would create a situation where businesses would remove
57 asphalt and use pervious materials. Mr. Adair said that would be a business decision, but some strip malls
58 now use pervious materials in the outlying, less used parking spaces to get credit for additional pervious
59 material.

60
61 Mr. Crouch asked if the real issue was to encourage homeowners from whom the most complaints
62 were heard when new fees were adopted, to use pervious materials at a little higher cost, but save in the long
63 run because of improved stormwater runoff. Mr. Adair said that was Horry County staffs' opinion. If people
64 had a way to control the cost, they would be more likely to move toward green infrastructure and low impact
65 development. He already considered the relationship between the current stormwater ordinances that
66 requires a stormwater management plan for every developed lot, but he believes everybody is now being
67 treated equally. The matter of funding future stormwater projects is a separate issue. Mr. Crouch said it
68 reinforced the fact that if you are going to have a program, you want one that encourages people to go
69 pervious instead of impervious materials. Mr. Adair said it would certainly encourage new developers. He
70 was shocked to learn that there are still over 500 undeveloped lots in town, which is a about 12-percent
71 undeveloped. Copies of the map are available in the building department.

72
73 Chairman Elliott said Horry County has the stormwater fee on its tax bill. She asked if the town would
74 have to have a referendum on the election to create a new tax. Mr. Adair said this particular fee could in "no
75 way, shape or form be called a tax." It is a user fee. Many municipalities were sued based on that distinction,
76 and the Supreme Court has upheld the opinion that the tax was unfair. The Court upheld that a user fee
77 based on discharge or usage is legal. Any fee would be discussed at public meetings; has to be adopted by
78 ordinance at two separate readings; public notice published in the newspaper, and a public hearing prior to
79 second reading. This discussion is to consider a funding mechanism.

- 80
81 • Tracy Jones from Georgetown County said a stormwater fee was implemented in 2007. Ms. Jones
82 said the ERU is 3,770 square feet. The charge is \$52 per ERU for single family homes. Commercial
83 and industrial property have a multiplier for the ERU. Georgetown County does not charge for
84 undeveloped property. However, if there is any structure that measures 400-square feet or greater in
85 size on the property, an ERU is charged. There are no exemptions in Georgetown County.

86
87 Mr. Adair said that both Horry and Georgetown Counties round up to the next whole ERU when using
88 the multiplier for commercial and industrial properties. Mount Pleasant, Myrtle Beach, and North Myrtle Beach
89 were also contacted, but he had not yet heard from them. The Mount Pleasant website shows that it collects a
90 base fee of \$60 per year. Surfside Beach is one of the few municipalities in South Carolina that does not have
91 a utility fee established. He expects to hear similar information from the other cities, except with different
92 amounts. Based on information received from advisors and distributed at conferences professionals should
93 assist with implementation of a stormwater fee. Mr. Joe Fersner, the town's stormwater consultant, was asked
94 to write a proposal to develop a plan, a copy of which is attached. Mr. Adair asked the committee if it would
95 recommend the plan that proposes development of a 5-year stormwater budget/resource allocation plan;
96 develop an interim stormwater management utility program and ordinance, and project management at a cost
97 of \$7,500.

98
99 Chairman Elliott asked if this would be presented at the vision meeting in preparation of the 2016-2017
100 budget year. Mr. Adair said this expenditure would need to be approved as an amendment to the 2015-2016
101 budget to develop a plan to implement in 2016-2017. A dedicated funding source is necessary for the "legacy
102 expenditures" for infrastructure. Known areas that need improvement are:

- 103
104 • Bulkheads at Myrtle and Floral lakes
105 • Wooden bridges at Dogwood and Myrtle lakes
106 • Wooden bridge culvert on Ocean Boulevard, which is about 45-years old
107 • Completion north side drainage project that began last year with Phase 1. There are three more
108 phases, but the main issues may be resolved after completion of Phase 2.
109

Stormwater Committee Meeting
November 9, 2015

110 Mr. Beck asked if the budget would include annual revenue payments that would be reserved for
111 specific expenditures that occur every 5- or 10-years like dredging, or cleaning out pipes. Mr. Adair said the
112 budget would be based on recurring and nonrecurring expenses that would amortized so funds would be
113 available when the project needed to be completed. The ERU could be adjusted every 5-years based on
114 upcoming budget needs. Mr. Adair said the end result may be different from the proposal, but this structure
115 moving forward was probably the right process, and he would appreciate the committee's support.
116

117 Mr. Crouch supported an organized, carefully constructed and well thought-out program. He saw
118 short- and long-term cost to be what he does monthly with his personal budget. There would have to be an
119 option for adjustments, because no matter what materials were used for construction, at some point
120 maintenance would be necessary and more costly. Mr. Adair said that replacements and repairs to town
121 infrastructure would always need to be done. He believed spending \$7,500 now would be well spent to ensure
122 the town is prepared. Mr. Adair said the rain event last month proved that previous councils and
123 administration spent the town's money wisely to ensure the town was prepared. But, there is much that could
124 be done to protect the town.
125

126 Chairman Elliott agreed that this should be presented to Town Council so the study could be done for
127 a 5-year plan to protect the town. She did not like stormwater revenue being placed in capital projects. She
128 believed it would be better to place it in a separate fund to keep the money from being co-mingled. Mr. Adair
129 explained that capital projects has three separate funds: street paving, stormwater, and beach renourishment,
130 each with a separate budget. It would be up to Town Council to determine the fund where revenue would be
131 placed. Mr. Crouch suggested that the committee recommend that stormwater user fees shall not be
132 expropriated for any other use.
133

134 A discussion ensued about various infrastructure problems and potential problems that might be
135 caused by storm events; cost versus cost under emergency circumstances; the theory "pay me now or pay me
136 later," and collection methods if an ERU is adopted.
137

138 Mr. Adair said neither he nor the town's stormwater engineer were proponents of deep-ocean outfalls
139 off the town's beach, because the town has less density, fewer impervious surfaces, and its lakes have clean
140 water. Mr. Crouch said that made sense. The town is a small community and does not have problems like the
141 larger area cities. Mr. Adair said another matter he is working on is that the town discharges about 20 acres of
142 water runoff into Garden City. The goal is to divert that water into town, which would remove any liability on
143 the town's part when the county determines improvements are needed or impaired water is identified in
144 Garden City. The town's engineer is considering options to divert that water and he is confident it will be
145 successful.
146

147 Mr. Crouch moved to recommend to Town Council an expenditure of \$7,500 to Bowman Consulting to
148 develop a 5-year stormwater budget and resource allocation plan as presented by Mr. Adair. Mr. Beck
149 seconded. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.** Mr. Adair said the proposal would be presented to Town
150 Council at the visioning meeting on Thursday.
151

152 **7. DISCUSSION.** Any items of Interest or Concern to Committee Members.
153

154 Chairman Elliott asked if the grass carp were endangered, because of fishing in Floral Lake. Mr. Adair
155 said it was possible and probable that some would be caught. Chairman Elliott asked if the lake could be
156 posted "catch and release" or some other manner that would protect the fish. Mr. Adair said the bodies of
157 water had to be treated the same. Mr. Crouch said wildlife also preys on the fish. Mr. Beck said most
158 fishermen catch and release in the lakes based on his observations. The grass carp hover near the bottom
159 feeding, and were not attracted so much to lures.
160

161 Mr. Adair said he was trying to have bathymetry completed for the town lakes, which is an analysis of
162 the lake's bottom topography to establish a benchmark storage capacity in each lake. The information will
163 help determine losses and gains over time and facilitate in the dredging schedule. The cost is expected to be
164 under \$3,000.

Stormwater Committee Meeting
November 9, 2015

165
166 Chairman Elliott asked if revenue had to be used in the specific funds during the year in which it was
167 received. Mr. Adair said no; sanitation funds are managed through an enterprise fund, which is treated as a
168 separate business. Its funds carry forward. Chairman Elliott said a stormwater user fee could be accumulated
169 and saved for future projects. Mr. Adair said it could be.

170
171 Mr. Crouch said this was a great time for the town to adopt a stormwater user fee, because of the
172 potential savings on flood insurance premiums due to the town's Community Rating Service program.
173 Neighboring jurisdictions have implemented stormwater user fees.

174
175 Mr. Adair said the bottom line is that the town needs a sustainable funding source for stormwater
176 maintenance and projects. There are always improvements and maintenance to be done on infrastructure.
177 Everybody is responsible for discharge; i.e., parking lots that certainly affect stormwater runoff exist, because
178 of consumer demand.

179
180 Mr. Beck believed they had been erroneous in saying it would be collected on the water bill. He read
181 from the public record, "Stormwater utility fees appear on real property tax bills and are collected by the Horry
182 County treasurer with your property taxes. Billing is done by the Equivalent Residential Unit, or ERU that
183 represents the average gross area in development and density factor for a typical single family residential
184 property." Mr. Adair said the fee could be collected in a number of ways. Mr. Crouch said that was how Horry
185 County collects, and he recommended the town do the same. Mr. Beck said collecting through the tax bill
186 would also include vacant properties that do not have water service.

187
188 **8. PUBLIC COMMENTS.** There were no public comments.

189
190 **9. COMMITTEE COMMENTS.** There were no committee comments.

191
192 **10. ADJOURNMENT.** Mr. Beck moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:10 p.m. Chairman Elliott
193 seconded. All voted in favor. **MOTION CARRIED.**

194
195 Respectfully submitted,

196
197
198 _____
Debra E. Herrmann, CMC, Town Clerk

199 Approved: _____

200
201 _____
202 Sandra Elliott, Chairman

203
204 _____
205 Tabitha Mull, Vice Chairman

206
207 _____
208 Alan Beck, Committee Member

209
210 _____
211 Ron Crouch, Committee Member

212
213 _____
214 P. L. Mabry, Committee Member

215
216 *Clerk's Note: This document constitutes summary minutes of the meeting and are not intended to be a complete
217 transcript. Appointments may be made with the town clerk to hear recordings or you may provide your own flash drive to
218 obtain a copy. In accordance with FOIA, meeting notice and the agenda were distributed to local media and the email
219 public subscription list. The agenda was posted on the entry door at Town Council Chambers, and meeting notice was
220 also posted on the Town marquee.*