

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
APRIL 19, 2011; 3:00PM
KIAWAH ISLAND MUNICIPAL CENTER
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

I. Call to Order: Ms. Wermuth called the meeting to order at 3:00pm.

II. Roll Call:

Present: Fran Wermuth, Chairman
Dick Sula
Joe Pezzullo
Keller Staubes
Buzz Waltman

Absent: Douglas Dodge
Jim Broadus

Also Present: Joe Croughwell, KICA
Captain Brady, CCSO
Yvonne Johnstone, KIGR
G. Steven Orban, Mayor
Tumiko Rucker
Rusty Lameo

III. FOIA: Notice of this meeting has been published and posted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of Kiawah Island.

IV. Approval of Minutes:

A. Public Safety Meeting Minutes of April 19, 2011

Mr. Sula made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2011 Public Safety meeting. The motion was seconded and the minutes of April 19, 2011 were approved unanimously.

Mr. Jack Regan reported that the Ways and Means Committee unanimously recommended the approval of the CERT Team budget.

V. Old Business:

None

VI. New Business:

A. What Your Burglar Won't Tell You

The Committee reviewed a handout on "What Your Burglar Won't Tell You" which was submitted by Mr. Broadus.

B. Pedestrian Traffic on Emergency Vehicle Access

Mr. Rob Edgerton, of the Town's Beach Patrol, explained that the current Town ordinance allows for pedestrian traffic on the emergency vehicle access roads. He stated that this is a hazardous situation that has become a problem over the past two years. Mr. Edgerton recommended that the ordinance be amended to prohibit pedestrian traffic in emergency vehicle access areas.

Mr. Waltman requested to know who would enforce the proposed change. Mr. Edgerton responded that the change could be enforced by Beach Patrol and Town Code Enforcement Officers. He stated that they are currently leading pedestrians to the public boardwalk areas and advising them that it is not a good idea to travel through the emergency access areas.

There are five emergency vehicle access roads which are located at Beachwalker Park, Eugenia, the Sanctuary, the Beach Club and the Ocean Course. Mr. Lameo stated that three of the most dangerous access areas are Beachwalker County Park, Eugenia and the Sanctuary. He noted that the Beachwalker Park access road has several curves which makes it difficult to see people walking ahead. The Eugenia and Sanctuary access roads go up a hill and drop down to the beach which can place pedestrians in the driver's blind spot.

Mr. Sula commented that that the problem seems to be related to speed and quality of the access roads. He suggested that the roads be improved for safer use. Mr. Lameo stated that two of the roads are cleared every year; however they are refilled by shifting sand. He also stated that vehicles must travel at least 10-15 miles per hour to gain enough speed to go up the hills and pedestrians are usually not visible until the vehicle reaches the top of the hill.

Mr. Waltman requested to know who utilizes the access roads. Mr. Edgerton stated that access roads are used by Island Beach Services and the Resort for beach service vehicles, the Beach Patrol, Beachwalker County Park and the Turtle Patrol. The EMS and Fire Department utilizes these roads for emergencies, holidays and during firework displays.

Mr. Staubes requested to know if the access roads could be widened. Mr. Lameo stated that they are built to 10 ft. which is the maximum allowed in the easement.

Mr. Edgerton commented on instances when people setup on the beach right at the end of the emergency access road. He stated that this creates a dangerous situation and a liability for Beach Patrol and the Town.

Mr. Waltman requested that the proposed changes apply only to emergency personnel vehicle access.

Mrs. Johnstone commented that the Sanctuary emergency access road is straight; however, she has witnessed some near misses on the secondary road which is curved and dangerous. Mrs. Johnstone stated that the Resort has cleaned up the area and tries to maintain it. She will request that the Resort place signage in that area to direct pedestrian traffic.

Mr. Lameo offered to take Committee members to the access areas so that they can better understand the issues.

There was a concern with the chained gates at both ends of the Beach Club access road. Mr. Lameo stated that these gates are chained but not locked.

Mr. Sula suggested addressing the issue of groups setting up on the beach at the end of the emergency access areas. Mr. Lameo stated that a 20 ft. pathway must be left open at the end of each access.

After much discussion, Mr. Waltman agreed to review the issue of pedestrian traffic on emergency vehicle accesses and report back to the Committee.

C. Charleston County Sheriff's Office Activity Report

Captain Brady provided the Committee with an updated report from November 2010. He stated that number of calls for service was consistent from January through March, and traffic contacts have increased from prior months. Captain Brady provided an update on the recent burglaries on the Island. He stated that he spoke with the lead detective and was advised that they are awaiting DNA results to make proper charges. Some of the stolen merchandise was recovered at pawn shops; however, the Solicitor's Office was not comfortable enough to say that the individuals who pawned the items were involved in the burglary. Warrants were served on suspects to obtain DNA and fingerprint analysis, and one of the suspect's fingerprints was matched to one of the residences. Mr. Brady stated that they wanted to obtain proper evidence to make the arrest so that they would not lose the case. The Solicitor's Office is currently reviewing the case and some charges should be made by the end of the week.

D. Report from KICA Security

Mr. Croughwell commented that there will be a lot of people on the Island during the upcoming Easter weekend. He stated that the biggest issue will be not allowing contractors to work on the Island on the Saturday before Easter. Mr. Croughwell stated that in February a contractor was caught stealing construction materials from a home after hours. He stated that the ARB provides after hour passes to contractors and KICA Security was unaware of who was obtaining the passes. Effective April 21st, KICA Security will begin issuing the after hour passes and passes will no longer be issued by the ARB.

Mr. Croughwell commented that KICA's Eyes and Ears Program was active in reporting this incident. Mr. Brady added that the suspect was caught and charged for the crime.

E. Report from St. Johns Fire District

There was no representation from the St. Johns Fire Department.

F. Review of Beach Patrol Performance

Mr. Lameo stated that the Beach Patrol is approaching their busiest season. Beginning on the upcoming Easter weekend, there will be two Beach Patrol Officers on the beach during the day from 8am to 6pm.

Mr. Waltman asked if the Beach Patrol Officers ever stop to talk and assist people on the beach. Mr. Edgerton stated that they do stop and talk to people on the beach. Mr. Lameo commented that the main duty of the Beach Patrol is to provide information and assistance on the beach.

Mrs. Johnstone reported that KICA Security responded to a call for assistance at 12:50 am this morning in which two villa registration employees were assaulted by an intoxicated man. The suspect was handcuffed and held down for 35 minutes until police arrived from Folly Beach. On behalf of the Resort, Mrs. Johnstone requested that the Town consider additional police coverage for late nights. She also commented that a domestic violence incident happened a couple of months ago and the response time for the Sheriff's Department was 1 ½ hours. She stated that the Resort Security and KICA Security are unarmed and have limited capabilities during such incidents. Mrs. Johnstone also requested to know if Charleston County has a mutual agreement with the City of Charleston for police coverage, and if not could this be considered. Captain Brady explained the makeup of the Sheriff Department's coverage district. He stated that more officers are stationed in areas that tend to have the most calls. He commented that the only solution to address this issue is more manpower.

Mrs. Rucker stated that the Town discussed expanding deputy coverage during their Budget Workshop. The Town looked at having two deputies for a minimum of three shifts, and four shifts during the summer months; however, this option depends on availability of off-duty deputies. Captain Brady commented that he does not see a consistent need to have coverage after midnight or around the clock on a routine basis.

Mrs. Johnstone stated that the Resort and KICA Security are registered under the SC Law Enforcement Division and have the authority to make arrests; however, they cannot transport. She noted that the suspect was charged with two counts of assault and battery and one count of disorderly conduct.

Mayor Orban stated that the Town will work with Mr. Croughwell to review the amount of incidents over the past year. The manpower schedule will also be reviewed to determine if it is adequate.

Mr. Waltman asked if the Resort is free to hire their own Sheriff Deputies and Mrs. Johnstone responded that they are.

G. Disaster Awareness Day

Mrs. Rucker stated that the 2011 Disaster Awareness Day hosted by the Town of Kiawah and the Town of Seabrook will be held on June 9th from 10am to 3pm at the Sandcastle with an anticipated attendance of 100-150. The event will include panels of emergency representatives, prizes and speakers throughout the day. The Town's Code Red software will also be featured during the event. Mrs. Wermuth requested that someone make a presentation on the weather radios during the event. Mrs. Rucker stated that a presentation can be done during the panel discussion. She noted that the weather radios purchased by the Town are preprogrammed to the channels used on Kiawah.

H. Report from TOKI

None

VII. Correspondence:

None

VIII. Committee Member Comments

Mr. Waltman requested to know what the Town will be doing to protect residents during the PGA Tournament. Mrs. Rucker stated that the Town has an Incident Response Plan in place for the PGA so that all entities involved know how to respond to emergencies. Mayor Orban commented that most people are concerned about the traffic. He stated that the majority of the parking will be at Freshfields and visitors will be transported in and out of the Island by bus. Alternate routes will be made available for emergency vehicles and tournament staff.

Mr. Waltman stated that KICA is reviewing a number of traffic and pedestrian issues in specific areas and asked how issues can be better addressed by KICA and the Town. Mrs. Rucker requested that the issues be communicated to the Town so that the necessary resources can be allocated to address them.

Captain Brady explained how the Sheriff's Department works with KICA Security to address issues on the Island. He stated that many of the complaint calls are directed to the main gate after the Town's normal business hours because KICA Security is available 24/7.

Mr. Waltman requested that the entities work on ways to address more traffic enforcement in the areas identified by KICA. Captain Brady stated that the

radar system has enabled them to identify where and when the most speeding is occurring and officers are placed in the areas with the most activity. He also stated that service calls limit the amount of time spent on traffic contact.

Mrs. Rucker stated that Hurricane Season begins on June 1st. The Town's Emergency Committee will meet in late May or early June. The Town is planning to host a mock disaster exercise for the Emergency Committee members which will be similar to Charleston County's. Mrs. Rucker will provide more information as it becomes available.

IX. Citizen Comments:

Butch Neal, Island Beach Services

Mr. Neal commented that there was a huge increase in the number of people that were on the beach in 2010. He also stated that the number of people on the beach so far this year is much more than this time last year. Mr. Neal stated that many of the problems addressed during the meeting may occur much sooner than expected due to the increase of people and traffic on the Island.

Mr. Lameo stated that two members of the Beach Patrol, Rob Edgerton and Mike Sosnowski, will be attending a beach driving certification class in Myrtle Beach. Once they obtain the certification, they will teach a class for all entities on Kiawah who drive vehicles on the beach.

X. Adjournment:

Mrs. Wermuth motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:25pm. Mr. Sula seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Submitted by,

Lakesha Y. Shannon, Town Clerk

Approved by,

Fran Wermuth, Chairman

Date