

**TOWN OF KIAWAH ISLAND**  
**2020 Council Strategic Planning Retreat**  
**Kiawah Town Hall Council Meeting Room**  
**Thursday, January 30, 2020**

**MINUTES**

**Call to Order:** *Mayor Weaver called the Council Retreat to order at 8:24 am.*

**Present at the meeting:** Craig Weaver, Mayor  
Chris Widuch, Mayor Pro Tem  
Maryanne Connelly, Councilmember  
Dan Prickett, Councilmember  
Klaus Said, Councilmember

**Also Present:** Stephanie Monroe Tillerson, *Town Administrator*  
Dorota Szubert, *Town Treasurer*  
Joe Wilson, *Town Attorney*  
Petra Reynolds, *Town Clerk*  
Bruce Spicher, *Development Services Director*  
Jim Jordan, *Town Biologist*  
Stephanie Braswell Edgerton, *Communications Manager*

**Major Town Issues and Priorities (2019):**

• ***Sea Level Rise and Storm Water Management***

Mayor Weaver indicated the topics of global warming and Sea-Level Rise is very predominant in the media. Whether the scientific or political debate is believed the concept is a significant issue in coastal communities on the east coast. Concern that the property values could be severely affected at some point in the future motivates the Town, along with the Community Association and other island entities, to look at what the issues are, and how to best address them.

Mayor Weaver reviewed the findings of the Sea-Level Rise (SLR) Sub-committee report. He indicated the work done pointed to the issues of stormwater management and flooding as a focus for the long-term along with a viable road system, ensuring public services, utilities, protecting and adapting residences and landscapes, beach preservation, salt marshes preservation, groundwater reservoir, community, and the Town's risk exposure assessment and management. He noted some of the actions taken by the Town to date:

- Endorsed the findings of the Sea Level Rise Sub-committee
- Adopted 1 ½ to 2 ½ foot sea level rise planning assumption over 30-40 years
- Incorporated some elements of SLR findings and actions into the Comprehensive Plan
- Considered, but deferred, elevating portions of the Parkway
- Emphasizing-native plant initiative
- Partial funding of two Kiawah Conservancy led projects (Marsh / Groundwater)
- Considering the purchase of a tidal monitoring station at Kiawah River bridge

Actions which have been taken by the Community Associations to date:

- Endorsed findings on the Sea Level Rise Sub-committee
- Hired "resilience specialist"
- Created a task force to consider infrastructure investments to address existing flooding and future stormwater and SLR impacts
- Evaluating private property demonstrations projects; resident consultation
- Beginning evaluation of neighborhood-specific recommendations

Mayor Weaver reviewed questions of where to go from here; if the Town has done enough, if reasonable progress has been made addressing obvious priorities, if there is a need for greater coordination, and if efforts and commitments are sustainable. Councilmembers engaged in an in-depth discussion of their views on the alternatives, pursuing future initiatives, creating a framework for the future, and recommendations for the next steps that should be taken.

- ***Community and Town Risk Exposure Assessment and Management***

Councilmember Prickett stated that Mayor Weaver requested he identify the key risks the Town may face over the next decade. The following nine risks were identified, and an assessment made regarding the Town's current preparedness;

1. Bridge Failure on Parkway
2. Island-wide Power Outage
3. Major Fire (Hotel, Clubhouse or Large Home)
4. Sea Level Rise and Flooding
5. Water Supply or Sewer Treatment Interruption
6. Crippling Hurricane
7. Significant Revenue Shortfall
8. The transition of Current Development Partners
9. Lack of Qualified Candidates for Elected Offices or Committees

In order for Councilmembers to better understand these risks and the Town's ability to help manage them, Councilmember Prickett reviewed and discussed a summary of each of the nine risks identified. (The complete summary can be viewed on the Town's website)

### **Identifying Potential Activities and Priorities (2020)**

- ***Funding to Charleston Visitor Bureau***

Mayor Pro Tem Widuch stated that the Town pays approximately \$500,000.00 from State Accommodations Taxes (SATAX) to the Charleston Visitor's Bureau. He indicated State regulations require that 30% of the SATAX funding received by the Town must be expended for promotion. Historically the Charleston Visitor's Bureau was selected by the Town to receive those funds exclusively but does not feel it gets a great deal of Kiawah specific promotion for the funding. He suggested that a different vehicle, within State requirements, could be selected that would be more beneficial to Kiawah. Councilmembers agreed to move forward in looking at promotion alternatives.

- ***Town Council Compensation Discussion***

During the discussion of the "Lack of Qualified Candidates for Elected Offices or Committees," It was discussed if members that serve Town Council should receive monetary compensation as a symbol and respect for the professional nature of the role. Mayor Weaver noted that most communities do provide compensation for their Council, and that may increase the interest in serving on Council. Also discussed was increasing to four-year staggered terms.

- ***Review of the Town's Noise Ordinance***

Mayor Weaver discussed the current noise ordinance and the concerns with language that states "sound that is audible beyond the real property boundaries of the dwelling unit where sound emanates is prohibited between the hours of 11:00 pm and 7:00 am daily". The concern was prompted by complaints from Duneside homeowners next to Timbers stating that noise from the facilities is unacceptable, the Town is not supporting residents by not enforcing the current ordinance, and an attorney was engaged by the residents.

Mr. Wilson indicated the language in the current ordinance is not workable and should be addressed. He presented minimal changes to the language that would set a precise decibel level, which could be objectively measured would be more enforceable.

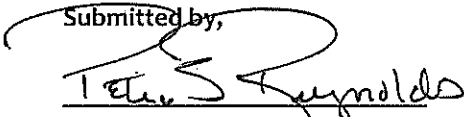
Discussion included decibel readings taken by Mr. Spicher at different locations, including inside the residences, Timbers having already taken actions to mitigate the complaints, and Timbers willingness to continue working with residents.

Councilmembers discussed concerns and possible repercussions with changing the language of the current ordinance but agreed that there was a need to make the suggested changes.

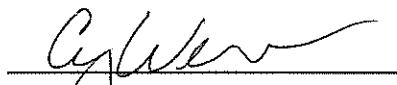
Ms. Tillerson asked Mr. Spicher to give an explanation of the term "freeboard." He stated that FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) requires that a home be built at the base elevation of the property. The "freeboard" is the additional space required above the base elevation. He noted that Kiawah, like most other municipalities, has adjusted the freeboard by requiring an extra foot. The changes to the freeboard are directly in association with the new flood map that is to be adopted at an unknown time later this year. The new flood maps for Kiawah will reduce the base elevation, some drastically. Most municipalities have raised the freeboard to compensate for the elevation reductions and feels that the Town should address the issue in the future, possibly after the marsh study is completed.

*The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 am.*

Submitted by,

  
Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,

  
Craig E. Weaver, Mayor

3.6.2020

Date