

TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL CALL MEETING
Virtually Meeting Via Zoom
January 5, 2021; 11:00 am

Minutes

I. Call to Order: *Mayor Labriola called the meeting to order at 11:00 am.*

Present at the meeting: John D. Labriola, *Mayor*
Dan Prickett, *Councilmember*
Maryanne Connelly, *Councilmember*
John Moffitt, *Councilmember*
Dr. Scott Parker, *Councilmember*

Also Present: Stephanie Tillerson, *Town Administrator*
Joe Wilson, *Town Attorney*
Petra Reynolds, *Town Clerk*
Stephanie Braswell Edgerton, *Communications Manager*

Berkeley Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Tony Vincent – *VP Marketing and Government Affairs*
Bert Walling - *Manager of Government Relation and Key Accounts*
Thomas Barnette – *Manager of Construction and Maintenance*
Scott Bennett – *District Line Superintendent (on Island)*
Tim Mosley – *VP Engineering and Operations*
Libby Roeig – *Manager of Communications*

II. New Business:

A. Update from Berkeley Electric on the Power Outage

Mayor Labriola stated that today's meeting was in response to a request from the Town to have members of Berkeley Electric Cooperative (BEC) address questions on the Kiawah Island power outage, which occurred on December 26th, 2020. Questions were submitted to BEC prior to the meeting, and the public would be able to submit questions during the virtual meeting.

Mr. Walling, with BEC, began by describing the event on December 26th as an "uncharacteristic outage" and introduced the other representatives of BEC who would be participating in the meeting. Mr. Mosley indicated that in response to the questions received, BEC sent a letter to the Town outlining the chain of events leading up to and causing the outage to occur. He and Mr. Barnette reviewed the project of the upgrading of the Legareville Station, which would double its capacity and provide redundancy to the area. They explained that unexpected delays with the anticipated completion of the upgrading project in November, a Seabrook substation power transformer tripped due to overload, and the cold and windy weather conditions contributed to the delay in restoring power.

Council Members asked questions on the decisions made in planning and throughout the upgrading process, underestimation of load demand and weather conditions if the population on the Islands was taken into consideration when making upgrade plans, and placement of a mobile substation at a project site for back-up in the event of an unexpected system failure.

Council Members engaged in an in-depth discussion on communications and the information released by BEC, indicating better communication of the situation, and expected timelines would elevate community frustration.

Mayor Labriola pointed out that Town Council, being responsible for the community's health and safety, was unable to respond to questions due to BEC's lack of communication on the project and possible risks. In response, Mr. Mobley suggested that a BEC representative attend one of the Town's monthly meetings.

Mr. Walling stated on the day of the outage communications were immediately established with those affected and continued throughout the day of the outage by email, text, or telephone and included any information released from Ms. Roerig. Ms. Tillerson confirmed as the point of contact for the Town she was notified and that all public information released by BEC was sent out to the community by the Town via eBlast. She noted that the Town could only send information to those residents who have signed up for the eBlast, and unless the Community Association picks up, the information will not be sent to all residents. Mr. Walling confirmed that both the Community Association and Seabrook were contacted. Mr. Vincent added that information was updated several times that day along. He also reviewed the process by which information is decimated through the *Manager of Government Relations and Key Accounts* directly to a specific point of contact in the entity rather than to individual customers.

Ms. Braswell Edgerton asked about BEC's communications methods and if there was any direct communication with the Kiawah and Seabrook residents who were experiencing the outage. Ms. Roerig discussed the channels through which information is disseminated and can be obtained. She indicated the best way to receive the most up-to-date information was on BEC's social media platforms. Discussion included ways to encourage the use of social media as a primary source of information along with other suggestions to improve the flow of information, including BEC representation attendance at monthly Town meetings.

Ms. Tillerson pointed out a question received from the public referring to a message sent out on December 25th requesting a reduction in power usage and the concern that all customers did not receive it. Ms. Roeig stated the email was part of the "Beat the Peak" subscription-based program. Any member can sign up to receive notifications when BEC expects high usage levels and was unrelated to the outage event.

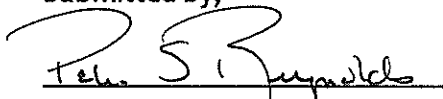
Mayor Labriola reviewed additional questions received from the community to ensure that BEC's representatives had addressed all.

III. Citizens' Comments

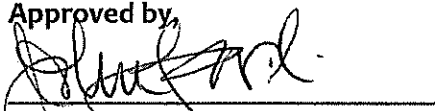
IV. Adjournment:

Councilmember Connelly made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:20 am. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Prickett and was unanimously passed.

Submitted by,


Petra S. Reynolds, Town Clerk

Approved by,


John D. Labriola, Mayor

2-5-2021
Date