

From the Mayor's desk – 2/21/25

Happy Friday! A long cold week and more of the same for the weekend upcoming. Hope you are all staying warm and shaking the **Winter Blahs!** It's a real thing and can affect people when the sun stays behind clouds, the temperatures dip, and being outside just isn't much fun. It causes mild to severe depression. Many can pull back from social situations, others get downright grumpy and lash out more than normal. Recognize this, and show each other some grace and understanding when they may speak or act badly. We all get a little bit more cranky when the weather smothers us with clouds and cold. As always, please take care of each other out there!

Public Works:

Overdue water bills to Village of Surfside: Thanks to those who have taken action to settle their overdue bills. Again, we ask that you either pay your overdue bill in full or agree to a payment plan with the Village of Surfside Beach by the end of March. City Hall has been very lenient with overdue collections and water shut offs due to hurricane related personal finances which we all know are real. However, we need to start getting back to standard practices. Thanks in advance!

We are still operating with zero water flow from Freeport in the system, so again, please contact City Hall Public Works Department if you experience any issues. We want to stay on top of this, thank you.

Human Resources:

Seasonal employment for Beach will be hiring. If interested please contact City Hall.

EMS Director position is still open for applicants. If interested please contact City Hall.

New & improved HR policies were rolled out today at an all employee meeting. These included: Resignation-Separation + Termination Forms, Attendance, Probationary Period, and Grievance & Appeal processes. Supervisors/Directors will review and approve policies, then be responsible for training and sign off for all of their employees. These new HR policies will go into effect March 1st.

Building:

Progress at both the crabbing pier and Stahlman walkover continues. The walkover will be ready for use this weekend with the Surfside Beach Marathon in town.

The four current A-Frames, what many feel to be Surfside iconic structures, have completed demolition on the "fourth one" closest to the water and will soon rebuild the "third one" that sustained significant damage from Hurricane Beryl. Three of the four A-Frames will remain post Beryl.

Beach & Parks:

Gearing up for the Beach season with hiring upcoming for seasonal trash pickup, booth attendants, and walking trash pickers.

Road repairs will begin soon, when the weather heats up enough to allow for proper curing of materials. We will contract out large replacement projects and perform most repairs on the many potholes using city Beach & Parks staff.

We will begin a series for working meetings soon to plan for the management of our beach through the busy season. This will include every aspect from traffic, trash, safety, patrol, maintenance, cash collections and beyond. City Staff will have a unified plan and strategy to operating our large scale tourist attraction. This will be communicated publicly, and we will be evaluating our weekly success vs. that plan every Monday as a team throughout the season.

Other Items of Interest:

Update on the Groin Project: Amanda represented the Village of Surfside Beach in our regularly occurring update meeting this week with GLO, US Army Corp of Engineers, and Coast & Harbor. To catch everyone up, the Groin project currently requires an extended time permit to progress. In order to obtain that permit, the USACE must complete a biological assessment and then a biological opinion prior to reauthorizing the permit. They are working with other agencies to assess the impact the project may have on endangered species, of which two are currently being evaluated, the Green Sea Turtle and the Giant Manta Ray (this one is new!). The current update by USACE was, the biological assessment was completed, and the biological opinion was projected to be completed in April. If USACE meets those completion dates, then GLO projects the reauthorization date for permit completion would be by May 31st. Coast & Harbor in conjunction with GLO offered to review the permit for the Village of Surfside Beach prior to us signing off. Once the permit is completed, then Coast & Harbor can begin. Engineering is completed, and they would bid the project and move forward with construction. The rough estimate to start remains August 2025. Working with multiple government agencies is not without its challenges and frustrations, but we will continue to press them to complete this important project to curb erosion. Expect to see these updates from me monthly on behalf of Amanda, who is spearheading the efforts on grants/projects.

Next week, we should have an update on the HGAC & GLO Grant project to replace one of the three sections of our AIRVAC sewage system. Our recurring update meeting is schedule for Monday with both GLO & HGAC. Again, expect to see monthly updates here on this project as well. Thankyou to Amanda for focusing her attention on both of these important projects as well as partnering with non-profit grant writing professionals to search out more funding to address our serious infrastructure deficiencies.

Have a great day and I hope to see you around the island this weekend! Good luck to anyone running (or walking) the Surfside Beach Marathon on Saturday.

Thanks,

Zach