

2023 Beach Safety

Objective

- Improving Beach Safety

Consider Changes in the Interest of Beach Safety

- 1. Maintain current Franchise
- 2. Amend current Franchise to eliminate lifeguards with dual responsibilities
- 3. Maintain current Franchise – Augmented by 10-15 City-employed lifeguards
- 4. If there are grounds to terminate the Franchise,
 - a. City takes over the lifeguard program or,
 - b. provide no lifeguards

Option 1 – Maintain Current Franchise

- Overview – Franchise recruits and trains lifeguards
- Lifeguards provide water safety services but are also allowed to rent chairs and umbrellas.
- Beach services have policies in place to keep guards focused on the water while also dealing with the public but many lifeguards in the current model have two functions.
 - a) Lifeguards must have buoy/whistle/radio with them at all times.
 - b) Lifeguards must be facing seaward while completing rental transactions.
 - c) Water emergencies are priority, all rental activity will halt for a water emergency.
- Important to note that the current Franchise also requires each Franchisee to employ additional lifeguards that only have water safety responsibilities – 1 for every 6 stands – as well as additional supervisors but many guards are allowed to rent equipment.

Option 1 – Maintain Current Franchise

- Considerations

- Requires no change
- This is the system that has been in use for some time
- Can be achieved for 2023 summer season
- Unpopular because of lifeguard's dual responsibility
 - (chair and umbrella rentals along with Lifeguard responsibilities.)

Option 2 – Amend Current Franchise to Eliminate Lifeguards with Dual Responsibilities

- Considerations

- Requires cooperation of Franchisees to amend existing agreement
- No added expense to City except loss of franchise fee
 - a) This fee has not been collected since 2018 in exchange for increased L.G.O.s
- City remains insured by Franchisees
- Eliminates use of lifeguards with dual responsibilities
- Consistent with the practice of most other beach communities (with exception of beaches without lifeguards).

Option 3 – Keep Current Franchise and Augment with 10-15 City-Employed Lifeguards

- Considerations

- Timing – Not achievable for 2023
- Uncertainty about interplay with Franchise lifeguards and City lifeguards
- Will require full time personnel to establish new command structure along with training curriculum.
- Still utilizing large number of lifeguards with dual responsibility
- Expense

Option 3 – Cost/Expense

- 20 lifeguards x (18 weeks) = \$ 259,000 (14,440 hours @ \$18/hr)
- 1-2 managers (full time) = \$65,000 - \$130,000
- Equipment:
 - Vehicle x 2 @ \$45,000 = \$90,000 plus maintenance
 - UTV x 5 @ \$16,000 = \$80,000 plus maintenance
 - Stands/Towers (x10) @ \$2,500 = \$25,000
 - Radios: 2 800mhz/15 VHF = \$14,250 (2@6,000 ea 15@150 ea)
 - Dry boxes x 10 = \$5,000 (500 ea)
 - Beach warning flags x 10 = \$1,450 (10@\$145)
 - Rescue cans (x15) = \$1,275 (15 @ 85 ea)
 - Uniforms (short and long sleeves, trunks, rash guards, hat, whistle, goggles, rain gear, fins) = \$12,000 (20 @ \$600.00 ea)
 - Increased insurance premiums = \$? _____
 - Increased legal exposure = \$? _____

Option 4 – If there are grounds to terminate Franchise, City takes over lifeguard program

- Considerations

- Would eliminate lifeguards with dual responsibilities BUT
 - a. NOT achievable for summer 2023
 - b. Very complex operation and very expensive
- Requires new insurance
- Increased legal exposure

Lifeguard Costs

- Lifeguard Compensation \$18/hour (18 weeks) = \$12,960 (720 hrs @ \$18/hr)
 - Uniforms (long and short sleeve, trunks, rash guards, hat, rain gear, fins, whistle) = \$600.00
 - Red Cross Certification = \$50.00
- = \$13,610 per guard
- 50 LG's on beach requires 70 LG on staff = \$945,000 @ \$13,500
 - 60 LG's on beach requires 84 LG on staff = \$1,134,000 @ \$13,500
 - 70 LG's on beach requires 98 LG on staff = \$1,323,000 @ \$13,500

Other Costs

- Stands/Towers (x 50) @ \$2,500 = \$125,000
- Dry Boxes (x 50) @ \$250 = \$12,500
- Mangers (x 5+) (year-round) @ \$65k = \$ 325k plus benefits
- Trucks (x 5) @ \$45,000 = \$ 225,000 plus maintenance
- UTV's (x 14) @ \$16,000 = \$224,000 plus maintenance
- Trailers to move UTV's (x 14) @ \$1,000 = \$14,000
- Radios Police/Fire (5@6,000) and VHF(50 @ 150 ea) = \$37,500
- Other equipment (rescue cans, beach flags, first aid kits)(x 50) = \$12,000
- Increased workers comp and liability insurance = \$ ____? ____
- Legal Exposure = \$ ____? ____

Option 5 – If there are grounds to terminate Franchise, remove lifeguards from beach

- Considerations

- City is not required to put lifeguards on the beach

- SECTION 5-7-145. Lifeguard and safety services provided by coastal municipalities.
- (A) Each municipality bordering on the Atlantic Ocean is authorized [*but not required*] to provide lifeguard and other safety related services on and along the public beaches within its corporate limits. A coastal municipality may enact and enforce regulations it determines necessary for the safety of all persons on the beach.
- (B) Lifeguard services may be provided using municipal employees or by service agreement with a private beach safety company.

- Although allowed, unguarded beaches appear to be the exception

- Example: Georgetown County, Edisto Beach
- Is it achievable? Assuming there are grounds to terminate, Yes.
- Expense – No cost to the City
- Unpopular-Public safety concern-expected service.

United States Life Saving Association (USLA)

- The United States Lifesaving Association will not certify a beach safety service that utilizes lifeguards that have vending or commercial responsibilities in addition to water safety responsibilities.
- *“Lifeguards assigned to water surveillance have the primary responsibility of observing and managing persons in the water, as well as to provide assistance to persons in the water and shall not be assigned to any duties other than public safety.”*

Beach Advisory Committee

- BAC recommends exploring opportunity to amend current Franchise to eliminate dual responsibilities

Recommendation

- It is the Fire and Police Departments' recommendation that we amend the current franchise agreement to separate lifeguards and concessionaires (rentals).