

**Regular Session #16  
August 16, 2010  
Mayor and Council  
Town of Ocean City**

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**Mayor Richard W. Meehan  
Council President Joe Mitrecic  
Council Secretary Lloyd Martin**

**Council Member Jim Hall  
Council Member Margaret Pillas  
Council Member Mary Knight  
Council Member Doug Cymek  
Council Member Joe Hall**

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## **IN ATTENDANCE**

Mayor Rick Meehan, Council President Joe Mitrecic, Council Secretary Lloyd Martin, Council Members Jim Hall, Margaret Pillas, Mary Knight, Doug Cymek and Joe Hall, City Manager Dennis Dare, City Solicitor Guy Ayres and City Clerk Kathleen Mathias, Private Events Coordinator Lisa Mitchell, Members of the Press and Interested Parties.

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Council President Joe Mitrecic called this Regular Session to order at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 301 Baltimore Avenue, Ocean City, Maryland 21842.

## **PRAYER AND PLEDGE**

Council President Joe Mitrecic led the prayer, and Council Member Mary Knight led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **REPORT FROM CITY MANAGER ON UPCOMING WORK SESSION**

City Manager Dare reported that the following items are scheduled for discussion in the upcoming work session on August 31, 2010:

1. Update on Advertising and Tourism Promotion Campaign – presented by Andrew Malis, President MGH
2. Request for sole source purchase of heat exchanger plates for the Convention Center – presented by City Engineer Terry McGean
3. Recommendation to reject bids for automated refuse truck body – presented by Public Works Director Hal Adkins
4. Recommendation to award bid for automated refuse truck cab and chassis – presented by Public Works Director Hal Adkins
5. Review of revised Ocean City Critical Area Program – presented by Planning and Community Development Director Jesse Houston
6. Review and approval of the Planning Commission's recommendation for building heights of Mobile Homes – presented by Zoning Administrator Blaine Smith
7. Review of General Order 400 E-1 Vehicle Operation Routine and Non-Routine – presented by Ocean City Police Chief Bernadette DiPino
8. Discussion of ballot questions for the October Election – presented by City Clerk Kathleen Mathias
9. Report on Police Commission Meeting of July 14, 2010 – presented by Council Secretary Lloyd Martin
10. Report on Eastern Shore Salary Analysis – presented by Human Resource Director Wayne Evans

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The following were approved:

- A. Work Session – dated June 15, 2010 as amended
- B. Work Session – dated July 27, 2010
- C. Regular Session #15 – dated August 2, 2010 as amended

## SPECIAL EVENTS

Private Events Coordinator Lisa Mitchell presented the following events for approval:

- A. 8<sup>th</sup> Annual “Let’s Walk the Boards for St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital – Saturday, April 9, 2011 Present for questions was Judy Davis, St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital. **Council Member Jim Hall moved to approve; seconded by Council Member Joe Hall The vote was unanimous.**
- B. 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Step Out to Fight Diabetes – Saturday, November 6, 2010, November 5, 2011, November 3, 2012 and November 2, 2013. Present for questions was Carlos Mir, Marketing Manager for American Diabetes Association. **Council Secretary Lloyd Martin moved to approve with the following caveats: (1) tent permit must be acquired; (2) no [tent]-peg holes in the Inlet Parking lot; and, (3) meet with Public Works prior to the event; seconded by Council Member Doug Cymek. The vote was unanimous.**

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

Proposed Service Reductions to Ocean City’s Fixed-Route Public Transit System for November through March (see Attachment A).

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Angela Bostick, representing Sea Rocket Captain Graham Bostick, asked the Council to consider temporarily waiving the parking lot standards on the 1<sup>st</sup> Street lot where the Sea Rocket operates. **Council Member Jim Hall moved to waive the paved parking lot standards to allow for temporary commercial use with the caveats imposed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street parking lots; seconded by Council Secretary Lloyd Martin. The vote was unanimous.**

## ITEMS REFERRED TO AND PRESENTATIONS FROM THE CITY SOLICITOR

City Solicitor Ayres presented the following for approval:

- A. Second Reading – Ordinance **2010-22** to Amend Chapter 34, entitled *Fire Prevention and Protection* (requires permit from Fire Marshal for grills and fire on public property). **Council Member Jim Hall moved to ratify Ordinance 2010-22; seconded by Council Member Mary Knight. The vote was unanimous.**
- B. First Reading – Ordinance **2010-24** to authorize and empower the Mayor and City Council of Ocean City to issue and sell Eighteen Million one hundred five thousand dollars (\$18,105,000) maximum aggregate principal amount of it’s General Obligation, fully registered bonds (for improvements to Convention Center, land acquisition on 64<sup>th</sup> Street and public facilities projects). **Council Member Jim Hall moved to approve the First Reading of Ordinance 2010-24; seconded by Council Secretary Lloyd Martin. The vote was 6-1 with Council Member Pillas opposed.**

- C. First Reading – Ordinance **2010-25** to amend Chapter 58, entitled *Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions* (amends penalty for illegal use of laser pointers to reduce the penalty of jail-time from 6 months to 90 days). **Council Member Mary Knight moved to approve the First Reading of Ordinance 2010-25; seconded by Council Member Doug Cymek. The vote was unanimous.**

**Council Secretary Lloyd Martin moved to ratify Ordinance 2010-25 as an emergency ordinance; seconded by Council Member Doug Cymek. The vote was unanimous.** The Mayor concurred with the vote.

- D. **Resolution #2010-16** of the Mayor and City Council approving the application and receipt of financing for Community Legacy Projects (OCDC Community Legacy Projects). **Council Secretary Lloyd Martin moved to ratify Resolution 2010-16; seconded by Council Member Jim Hall. The vote was unanimous.**

## **ITEMS REFERRED TO AND PRESENTATIONS FROM THE CITY MANAGER**

City Manager Dennis Dare made the following Staff Recommendations: (1) award the stand-by generator maintenance contract to **Fidelity Power Systems** for the amount of \$27,170.00. **Council Member Jim Hall moved to approve; seconded by Council Member Doug Cymek. The vote was unanimous.** (2) Front-end trash truck loader cab/chassis to **Elliott Wilson Truck**, for the amount of \$125,692.00, and, the front-end trash loader body to **Maryland Industrial Truck**, for the amount of \$63,609.00 (total Budget Allocation = \$207,000.00). **Council Member Mary Knight moved to approve; seconded by Council Member Jim Hall. The vote was unanimous.**

## **COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

None

## **COMMENTS FROM THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**

Mayor Meehan welcomed the Maryland Association of Counties (MaCo) who are convening at the Convention Center this week.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Council Member Jim Hall moved to adjourn at 7:00 p.m.; seconded by Council Secretary Lloyd Martin. The vote was unanimous.**

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Prepared by: Deputy City Clerk Kelly Allmond  
Approved by: City Clerk Kathleen Mathias  
Approved by the Mayor and Council on:

**August 16, 2010**  
**Mayor and City Council**  
**Town of Ocean City, Maryland**

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**PUBLIC HEARING**  
**PROPOSED REDUCTION OF COASTAL HIGHWAY**  
**BUS SERVICE FOR NOVEMBER THROUGH MARCH**

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

The next item on the agenda is a Public Hearing for proposed service reduction to the Ocean City fixed route bus service for the public transit system from November through March. Mr. Adkins?

*[Council President Mitrecic also read the following:]* There was a notice of Public Hearing – a proposed reduction of Coastal Highway Bus Service for November through March.

Notice is hereby given that a Public Hearing will be held on August 16, 2010, at 6:00 p.m. in City Hall at 301 Baltimore Avenue, Ocean City, Maryland, first floor Council Chambers.

The purpose of the Hearing is to solicit public comment on proposed service reductions to Ocean City's fixed-route public transit (bus) system, operating along Coastal Highway, during the months of November through March. The proposed service reductions are due to a decrease in ridership, lower than anticipated revenues and high operating costs.

Topics to be covered at the Hearing are:

- Reducing the number of buses servicing the Coastal Highway fixed-route, November through March annually.
- Reducing the number of buses, and or modifying service hours applied, on all shifts.
- Service reduction impacts on patrons.

The location of this Hearing is accessible to persons with disabilities. Any individual who requires special assistance to participate in the Public Hearing should contact Mrs. Dianna Davis at 410-723-2174 at TTD 410-723-3636 ten days prior to the hearing in order for Ocean City Transportation to make the necessary arrangements. A sign language interpreter will be present and available at the Hearing. Mr. Adkins? Open the Hearing?

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

Thank you for that introduction, Councilman and President Mitrecic. Thank you for the introduction to the Public Hearing. Joining me this evening, as you closed with the comment about sign language interpreter, is Mr. Jonathan Blackman to my right, I also have accompanying me, George Thornes and Steve Bartlett of the Transportation Department, in an effort to answer any and all questions both presented by the Mayor and City Council, or, any one in the audience in attendance

*Director Adkins continues...*

this evening. The reason we are here this evening is, back on May twelfth, during a Mayor and City Council Budget wrap-up session, one of the many topics that were discussed were the service levels for winter deployment in the Transportation Department. For definition, "Winter Deployment" in this case, starts the first Monday in November of a given year and ends the first Sunday in April of a given year. In this case, it happens to be November 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 through April 3<sup>rd</sup> 2011. We approached the Council on May twelfth with a menu of options that, at that, time were specific to what was known as the "Third Shift" being defined, at that time, as ten pm to six am; specifically, the discussion was tailored around Sunday through Thursdays, not the weekends due to the fact that on any given weekend from November to April can in fact be affected by Special Events and other events going on in Ocean City. As a result of the menu that was presented to the Council, a selection was made budget-wise to reduce the level of service during the winter months from a deployment of three buses in the morning, three buses in the afternoon and three buses in the evening to what we know at staff level is "Two – Two and One." So basically in the morning shift there will be two buses on the road, transitioning into the afternoon and evening hours, again two, but, in fact, the graveyard shift, as some of us would entitle it, would be one bus. The net result savings that was offered to the Council when selecting that option, was a reduction in savings of roughly One Hundred and Nine Thousand Dollars (\$109,000.00) total when looking at the whole day and the whole time period.

In accordance with MTA regulations, when modifying the deployment you are required to hold a public hearing. You are required to: advertise that thirty days in advance, which we did; hold the hearing, and, as the result of the hearing, forward the results to the MTA for review and concurrence. We would envision, after this evening, a minimum of a ten day period for the MTA to evaluate the findings of this evening. If it is favorable, depending on the outcome of the evening, we are then required to advertise an additional thirty days public notice in such locations as the Transit Buses and Bus Shelters indicating the forthcoming change it would be effective this given year, November 1, 2010. It is in fact, a Public Hearing. It is in fact your opportunity and those in attendance to speak any comments or concerns you have on this topic. If anyone wishes to come forward, feel free to do so. I would ask that you speak, into the record, your name and address. And upon leaving the podium, please record your name and address with the City Clerk. Those are my comments.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Okay. We will take any comments from the Council? No? Alright we will take comments from the audience. Please raise your hand if you wish to speak and I will call on you. And again, speak into the mic[rophone], state your name and address for the record. Yes Maam?

**Beverly Butler**

My name is Beverly Butler, and I live at 10000 Coastal Highway, Unit 1605, English Towers Condominium. I really am against this. I think that the 'Two-Two' bus is fine, but I'd like to see, on the graveyard shift, another bus. I can afford this, but most people who can't are working now and are not at that this meeting. You don't help... I'm really worried about those women or men who miss that bus by two minutes and then they stand there for another fifty-five or sixty minutes because, when that bus leaves down here or up there, and they don't pick up at two or three stops, that makes them get to the other stops much quicker, and, if those women or men, come out every

*Beverly Butler continues...*

night at the same time, and then two or three times, they don't have somebody at another stop, that two minutes is gone. So, unless you can tell them when that bus is going to hit every stop, I don't feel that you are being fair to the people who are standing out there working and waiting for the bus. You know and I know what's going on up in Rehobeth, you know what is going on in Salisbury and I sure wouldn't like to be working until two o'clock in the morning and then miss that bus by a minute or two minutes. It's not hurting me but I really feel strongly. We can cut the buses and the trams, but we can't think that we can put parking meters by Fagers, and believe me I go to Fagers and it would not hurt me one bit to pay a parking meter there, but it just seems like those of us living here, working here, paying taxes here are the ones that are being hurt. It's just like this summer, I pay a parking fee after paying taxes for my grandchild at eight o'clock in the morning to do a junior beach patrol camp. It cost me, not that it hurts me, but it does hurt other people – five dollars a day. And this is getting out of hand with those of us that live here. And I really really would like you to think about this; especially these women and men who, by two minutes, can have to stand out in that cold for another fifty-five minutes. Thank you.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Thank you. Anyone else this evening? Yes sir.

**Patrick McKenna**

Good afternoon and thank you for this opportunity to present my comments. I hope that MTA will keep things going in Ocean City as far as public transportation because it really does help reduce the traffic during the wintertime and does make it easier for people who do have to work at night, even late at night, to get to and from work and I just think it would be a shame just to go from being in the United States to being in Bangladesh. It just seems out of hand, and I hope they will consider that. And thank you very much. [*Council President Joe Mitrecic: I need to state your name and address...*] Oh, I'm sorry, Patrick McKenna, I live at 112 78<sup>th</sup> Street here in Ocean City. Sorry about that. [*Council President Joe Mitrecic: no, that's fine.*].

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Anyone else this evening. Council Member Martin?

**Council Secretary Lloyd Martin**

Hal, with the one bus on midnight shift, we're looking at right now what thirty minute headways in the Wintertime? Is that what....every thirty minutes?

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

You currently...historically...let's call it, this time last year, you provided thirty-minute headways. And with one bus on, you're looking at an hour plus keeping in mind that that bus driver will need to use the facilities every so often, I'll put it that way? But an hour, hour and ten.

**Council Member Joe Hall**

Hal for ...only have the one bus on, how many transportation employees do we have? How many transportation Employees will be on staff? Is it a driver alone, or a driver and a supervisor?

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

That driver.

**Council Member Joe Hall**

That driver. Alright. Is there any thought or is there anything out there that would be a way for that driver to communicate with potential rider-ship on the fly via text. I mean he couldn't answer his cell phone and drive, I'm sure that would be a violation. [Public Works Director Hal Adkins: that would be a violation. Texting would be a severe violation.] No, I mean, I could see it if you had a text where when he left, if he was leaving the north end or leaving the south end and there was a .... Because we don't have a lot of drivers at this time. We're talking about a bus that's running empty most of the time and possible one or two patrons...

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

To answer what I think you are going with the questioning, is it feasible for you or I to do mass text to individuals all at one time, say, I wanted to load every member of the Mayor and Council on my cell phone, and at one time, I want to text everybody, just push buttons to say that 'I'm leaving the south end.' Yes that feasible, I mean, my kids do it all the time with their phones.

**Council Member Joe Hall**

Right, I mean, that's the communication thing is the person that's working on 110<sup>th</sup> Street, and he knows....

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

I would never advise him to do it while traveling but if your ... was to do it when leaving the south end or leaving the north end, I guess that would be feasible.

**Council Member Joe Hall**

Because what we're talking about, who we're servicing are, and the concern is of local workers or local residents that use the bus in the middle of the night during the winter and they are usually regulars. I would assume.

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

At the time that we did the budget wrap up on May 12<sup>th</sup>, Dennis had requested some statistics from the Transportation Department that would provide it, I do not expect that you would have memorized the bulk of that meeting; but I will tell you in summary, what we did is looked at the average number of riders per night, on a Sunday through Thursday night, for the months of November, December, January, February and March over the last three calendar years. I can say comfortably on average you are looking at about , let's call it a hundred and thirty, riders on average at night. Of those though, it's not a hundred and thirty in our opinion, it's not a hundred and thirty different people, it's about twenty eight to thirty five core individuals that if you would to speak to our drivers, those are the people that use that bus system in the middle of the night. There are only about twenty eight to thirty five of them who obviously use it two to three times in the middle of the night.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Okay. Mr. Mayor?

**Mayor Rick Meehan**

This is a little bit far outside the box for this conversation but I think it's something that we should look at in the future and it's probably, technologically a couple steps above what Joe was talking with regard to texting, and we do have locators on the bus, I mean, when are we going to be able to

*Mayor Meehan continues...*

have an app on the phones where somebody can go to the app, hit the app and it's gonna show them where the buses are?

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

My answer to that because I'm well aware of it and I know that as recently as two or three weeks ago, it was discussed via email thread back and forth. Mayor we have a \$75,000.00 grant - what is known as a TDP-a Transportation Development ... it is our intent that the scope of that TDP is to study bringing the Transportation Department in to the electronic age. We had a meeting with MTA officials a little over a month ago. We are waiting for them to assign a consultant out of their on-services listing to assist us versus us having to write and advertise an RFP short, list and hire a firm of our own so, I could tell you we are well aware of that issue, but at the same time, we are also concerned that we do not want to fragment our way into the technology age and we're trying to look at it comprehensively.

**Mayor Rick Meehan**

Okay, well that's good and I think we need to do that because I think that would be a valuable service not just for the winter months but all year round and people being able to... I mean, we all have to admit it's amazing what your phones can do today and how people are relying on them. And in 2011 I think it would be great if our visitors could, when they walked out of their restaurant or they walked to take their kids to the bus stop or whatever, not everybody has them yet, but they will, hit those apps and locate where the buses are. I think that technology is readily available and I would certainly hope that in the scope of any RFP that that's one of the items that will be in there and we will pursue that because I would think that would be a great asset to our residents and our visitors moving forward.

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

I agree

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Council Member Jim Hall?

**Council Member Jim Hall**

The only thing I would add to this...this is not something that the Council wanted to do, has not wanted to do, and Rick will remember in all our years together this late night service you have asked for year after year after year after year, this was a budget year that this was required. It was just something we needed to do. But we were assured and the lady that came up and spoke very well, I think that George told us and I think Hal you told us that your bus drivers know the 28 or 30 people that use the bus and I think they will, in answer to the lady, will try to adjust their speedup or slowdown so they hit 59<sup>th</sup> Street at the same time. So the lady that works at the 7-11 that comes out at three am kind of knows when that bus is going to be there. If he is ahead of schedule he can back off a little bit, if he's behind schedule he might pick it up a little bit. I think the drivers pretty much know who's where and about when and when they are going to arrive at a particular stop so, I would hope and was assured by George that, the drivers going to take hour and make sure that he hits each one of those spots about the same time if he can do it. We were assured of that and like I say, nobody wanted to do this this is something we are going to have to try and see how it works out, and I think it is a good measure in this market.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Council Member Joe Hall?

**Council Member Joe Hall**

With that being said Hal, if we do make this adjustment we're not locked to it, in the sense that if we decide on the December 15<sup>th</sup> this is not something we want, we are free to add a bus at any time, without a public hearing?

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

It is my understanding the public hearing necessity is for reducing service, not increasing service. You are correct.

**Council Member Joe Hall**

So, for the public's sake, I'm sure the Council will be responsive if we find that our decision here tonight is not the wisest, we will be free to adjust back to wherever we feel necessary in a minute.

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

That is my understanding.

**Council Member Joe Hall**

Or in a vote.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Do we have anybody else in the audience this evening? Yes sir?

**Steve Wheeler**

Hi my name is Steve Wheeler, I live on - the Key Apartments - 7204 Coastal Highway, Apartment 4, and as the summer...I have been out there and this is pertaining to me also. From beginning of this summer, I have watched these buses go by and go by and the thing is that where I live on the Ocean side, I have noticed that for some reasons there has been like four of five times I have had to call in to the bus where the bus drivers actually pass the stop and they will not stay at the stop and I have had to call it in a couple of times. And the people apologize and all that, and that's nice, but there's a lot of times that I have noticed when work in the summer time, that at nights when I'm waiting at the bus, there will be like crowds and crowds and crowds of people standing out there, and these buses are going by. I mean it's nice that they get these big buses come in town to you know help them out but my concern is from where, okay, I can understand that it's nice to cut it back to two and two and one at night, but the thing that I've had questions today also, that there's people that do the midnight shift until the morning and the concern is, my question is is that, they keep asking me, okay what do they do in the morning that there was one bus that runs. How would everybody get around. I mean there not going to just sit there and call a cab and have to fork out all that money and you can fork out the two dollars or three or whatever.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Okay, thank you Mr. Wheeler. Anyone else this evening? Yes Maam?

**Vicky Johnson**

Hi I'm Vicky Johnson, I live at Caribbean Drive in Ocean City and I'm still back on the bus, Hi. I was late for this, I went out to my stop 94<sup>th</sup> Street at five thirty and got here at twenty after so summer time, not so perfect either, I waited fifteen minutes for a bus. I had a whole thing, I....When did we decide, because I missed some of this that we needed to do this? In May ....

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

In March actually, the second week in March, yes Maam during the budget hearing.

**Vicky Johnson**

In March? Alright great. Okay and in April we had to kill the recycling program because it was costing too much money and we saved a million dollars a year there, right? And in June, like every June, I came home from work every day standing while the graduates were riding for free still in June. So didn't we know already why were they still riding for free?

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Actually, we talked about...it was too late for this year to change that but it was something that we let the Play-It-Safe group know that there was going to be on next year's reduction..

**Vicky Johnson**

Alright, very good because I mean, every year, I'm fine with that that's what I do. I ride the bus year round so I deal with it. I hear about reductions and I got a little miffed. And also, did we discuss, before I came in, because the bus made me late, possible fare increase in January that I've been hearing about.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

That's not on tonight's, this is a Public Hearing on the reduction of the buses on the street in the winter time.

**Vicky Johnson**

Right, I understand that, so, right we're going to reduce then later increase the cost. That's what I want everyone to be aware of that that is the word on the street.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

True.

**Vicky Johnson**

So then there's also that taxi medallion money that came in and that is .....and I'm not reading all of this tonight because I was late. How much is that, like, eighty seven thousand dollars a year we're going to get now from that?

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Ms. Johnson, this actually isn't a budget hearing, this is a hearing on the reduction of the bus service.

**Vicky Johnson**

Because of budget

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

This is a hearing on the reduction of the bus service for the Town of Ocean City.

**Vicky Johnson**

Because of budget. Thank you.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Council Member Joe Hall?

**Council Member Joe Hall**

She can make her letter part of the record, is that correct?

**Vicky Johnson**

No, no I'll send it in...

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Council Member Pillas?

**Council Member Margaret Pillas**

Hal, would you just answer the question the gentleman before this young lady was up. He was talking about, I guess he doesn't understand how our buses are working but sometimes there are crowds of people waiting. That was one of the things he, and, you didn't answer the question for him. If you could explain that to him.

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

I guess he was making a statement. I didn't take it as a question, but if the gentleman would like an answer, you can look at our system at any given hour on any given day and depending on the flux whether it's the southbound movement because everyone's heading to the boardwalk, or whether it's later in the evening when everyone is heading back, you will have certain hours of the day where you face what is known as "crush loads". There is no way feasible or financially that you could deploy enough buses to maintain your crush load every hour of the day. So you look at your rider ship on an hourly basis, based on what day of the week it is, you adjust your deployment accordingly to cover the average rider-ship on a given hour. You're gonna face those spikes, especially giving you the finest example, southbound movement anywhere from five o'clock to seven o'clock maybe four o'clock to seven o'clock you just, it would be like a convenience store, and if you knew you had a peak hour and then staffing it with five people all day long, if you only had that one peak hour it wouldn't make sense and you couldn't afford to do it. So hopefully, that's what you were witnessing. I hope you did not witness half loaded buses passing by passengers waiting to board. I hope that's not what you saw.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Anyone else this evening wish to speak? Council Member Joe Hall?

**Council Member Joe Hall**

Hal, the previous speaker didn't mention about it being a budget issue, and I do believe this came through as a budget discussion, could you do you or can you let us know what the tax payer subsidy for the bus state system is. I mean this is not a profitable thing.

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

I don't have the number memorized, Dennis. I'd be close but I don't have it memorized.

**City Manager Dennis Dare**

Two and half cents out of thirty seven and a half cents goes towards Transportation.

**Council Member Joe Hall**

In excess of two million dollars. So even though we're reducing the taxpayers and property owners are subsidizing the bus system for two million plus dollars which is a benefit whether we use the bus or not because it reduces traffic on the highway during the summer. It's less of a benefit in the winter time because it's basically we're providing a service for the non-driving public. Where the benefit to the general public is is when we're reducing traffic load during the summer season. And taxpayer property owners are subsidizing that with two million dollars plus of property tax money.

**City Manager Dennis Dare**

Two and a half.

**Council Member Joe Hall**

Two and a half.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Yes Maam? Yes Maam?

**City Manager Dennis Dare**

The reduction of the bus on the midnight shift is a savings is estimated \$59,407.00.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Okay thank you.

**Beverly Butler**

My name is Beverly Butler, 10000 Coastal Highway, English Towers Unit 1605 Ocean City. The other thing that bothers me the more I hear this is you try to encourage riders to ride the bus and encourage people to come down for New Years Eve, Super Bowl and all this kind of stuff, and now you're gonna take the bus to an hour. Tell me who's going to stand out there an hour?

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Actually, I believe that for, this is for Sunday through Thursday actually.

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

The winter deployment reduction we are discussing here this evening is specific for Sunday nights through Thursdays. It is not including, whatsoever, the weekends or special events such as New Years Eve, Super Bowl or any of that sort. It's the typical Sunday through Thursday evenings. And if the Super Bowl happens to fall on a Monday night or whenever it does, we would have appropriate deployment at that time.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Yes Maam. Anyone else here wish to speak? Seeing None. Council Member Martin?

**Council Secretary Lloyd Martin**

Motion to close the Public Hearing.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

I have motion by Council Member Martin and a Second by Council Member Knight to close the Public Hearing, all those in favor? Let the record show the vote was unanimous. Thank you all for being here this evening. Thank you all for your comments and they will be taken into consideration. Mr. Mayor?

**Mayor Rick Meehan**

I think the comments were all relevant and I think we expected to hear some of those comments because this has been an ongoing conversation for a number of years. And I think Councilman Jim Hall said it very clearly this isn't something we really wanted to do. But if you follow our budget deliberations that took place, well really we worked on the budget year round, but specifically in March, April and May, we made numerous cuts and changes to the budget, I mean, I could list all, but for the sake of time tonight, I won't tonight, but I mean they include hiring freezes, salary and COLA freezes for all our employees which has been two years in a row, reductions in the tram service, and reductions in a lot of services that affected everybody a little bit throughout the community. And there was a lot of discussion about discontinuing the bus service at that last midnight shift or the graveyard shift and there was a lot of resistance from the Council about doing that. I mean I think it crossed the desk up here because we wanted to make sure we still provided a service. Will it be a service you'll have to follow a little closer rather than making sure their out there on the half hour every hour – they have to be out there every hour on the hour, and I think that those that really rely on the bus can make that adjustment. We've all made a lot of adjustments in Ocean City over the last few years, and what we're trying to do is make it so we can continue to provide service and at least have them out there so our public and our residents could take advantage of them. So I think this is difficult, I think a lot of the choices and decision we made for our budget were difficult, but I think the service continues. We can modify it during those busy time periods, Ms. Butler you're absolutely right, especially on weekends or in the Spring. But, for those twenty five to thirty people, hopefully we'll be able to communicate with them, hopefully moving forward be able to communicate even better and I think the Council is making a tough but correct decision making this change. Thank you.

**Council President Joe Mitrecic**

Thank you Mr. Mayor.

**Public Works Director Hal Adkins**

Thank you for your time. Mr. Blackman, thank you for your services, and most importantly for those who came out this evening to speak, thank you too.