



## City Council Worksession Meeting Minutes – Electronic Meeting Via Zoom

May 12, 2020

### I. CALL TO ORDER

5:00PM

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Mayor, Billy Keyserling. All members of Council in attendance.

### II. DISCUSSION ITEMS

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A. “Together Beaufort” - **Bill Prokop, City Manager**, gave an overview of the “Together Beaufort” Program. This program is for helping businesses survive COVID-19 and transition to new regulations. The brochure was put together by Linda Roper, Downtown Operations Director and Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation. In addition, a draft ordinance has been prepared to transition City parcels contiguous to restaurants so they can extend outdoor seating (Saltus, Plums and Luther’s Restaurants).

B. Update on COVID-19 and City Operations Plan - **Bill Prokop, City Manager**, gave an overview of the precautionary measures that have been put in place in City buildings and staff to include mask wearing for City staff, social distancing markers and plexiglass shields in customer service areas.

**Mr. Prokop** continued by stating that the public is still encouraged to call and make appointments or use online services. Anyone entering City buildings will be required to wear a face mask. We are ensuring that all guidelines set by CDC are met. We are all working hard to protect our community. I have ongoing conversations with Beaufort County and Beaufort Memorial Hospital.

C. Budget FY 2021 and options to consider - **Bill Prokop, City Manager and Kathy Todd, Finance Director**, gave an overview of the FY 2021 Budget concerns and constraints.

**Mr. Prokop** began by stating that the budget process this year is very unusual and unsettling. Our entire management staff is involved in preparing our budget. We have had three rounds of reviews and cuts. The cuts consist of 2 million dollars in expenditures and all new projects have been eliminated. Our big issue will be the lack of revenue, which is something we cannot control.

**Mr. Prokop** continued with presenting four different key areas on how the budget is being built.

1. Our goal is to hold the millage at the current level except for the state authorized CPI increase, which is 2 ½ % to operating, which equals about 1.4 Mils and 1 Mil on debt.
2. Add a vehicle tag fee of \$25.00 per year. This will be paid by the vehicle users and not just the property owners. This is the same fee that is charged or will be charged by all

other municipalities in the County. Beaufort County is already charging this fee. The fees generated would be used for road and sidewalk maintenance, which currently we have no funding source for. The City was just advised from the CTC that their will be no funding for municipalities for the next two years. Therefore, we need to have a funding source to maintain our roads and sidewalks.

3. Millions of dollars will be spent on Stormwater projects and making major improvements to our system throughout the City. A small increase of \$10.00 will be proposed on the already established Stormwater fee so we can be prepared for maintenance.
4. Due to the lack of State Accommodations funds due to COVID-19 in this upcoming budget we will need to release \$150,000 from the City's committed fund balance capital to cover the cost of the repairs at the Arsenal. In addition, we need to freeze any reimbursements of grants that were estimated on FY 2020 due to no revenue coming from the State Accommodations. Council will be asked to consider for this year only to consider consolidating all ATAX funds into one united marketing fund to help promote all businesses as a group.

**Mayor Keyserling** asked if it would make sense to join efforts with the County for a joint marketing campaign. The Convention and Visitors Bureau he believes, has asked for some of the surplus, but it seems that combined in one package would be more effective then spreading it out.

**Bill Prokop** said that the City will be talking to the County about this.

**Kathy Todd** gave a visual presentation of the City's current revenues and expenditures as of April 2020 and stated there is no indication from the state regarding any assistance for revenue shortfalls. The CARES Act does not cover shortfalls in revenue and FEMMA only covers direct expenditures.

**Mayor Keyserling** asked what the revenue is projected on the \$25.00 vehicle tag fee.

**Kathy** said it was \$240,000 and without it we would have to cut another \$240,000 out of the FY 2021 operating budget.

**Councilman Murray** asked if additional details would be provided regarding all that was put on the table this evening to include where additional cuts are being made.

**Bill** said yes, next week we will provide Council with a presentation to include all the details. At this time, we just wanted Council to see the broad concept of what we are addressing.

**Councilman Murray** asked Kathy to provide a list of departmental expenditures year to date.

**Kathy** said yes absolutely and stated that she would be sharing the CIP document via email as well.

### III. ADJOURN

6:15 PM

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Disclaimer: This document is a summary. All City Council Worksession and Regular Meeting minutes are recorded. Live stream can be found on the City's website at [www.cityofbeaufort.org](http://www.cityofbeaufort.org) (Agenda section). Audio recordings are available upon request by contacting the City Clerk, Ivette Burgess at 843-525-7018 or by email at [iburgess@cityofbeaufort.org](mailto:iburgess@cityofbeaufort.org).