



City Council Regular Meeting Meeting Minutes – Electronic Meeting Via Zoom

May 12, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

7:19PM

A. Mayor, Billy Keyserling.

All members of Council in attendance.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

A. Mike McFee, Mayor Pro Tem

III. PROCLAMATIONS/COMMENDATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

A. Proclamation Proclaiming May 16-22, 2020 as National Safe Boating Week

Motion to approve made by Councilman Murray and seconded by Councilman Cromer.

Proclamation was read by Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee.

Approval was unanimous.

B. Proclamation Proclaiming May as National Preservation Month

Motion to approve made by Councilman Murray and seconded by Councilman Cromer.

Proclamation was read by Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee.

Approval was unanimous.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment

V. MINUTES

A. Worksession and Regular Meeting - February 25, 2020

Motion to approve made by Councilman Murray and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee.

Worksession Corrections: Page 1 under item A. Community and Economic Development Director David Prichard. A comma after Director is needed.

Page 1 under item B. where it states have problems, should be no problems.

Page 1 under item C. where it states confusing should be confusion.

Regular Meeting Corrections: Page 1 under Proclamations no comma after Mayor.

Page 5 under Reports, Councilman Cromer's remarks no apostrophe should be a comma. Minutes approved with corrections.

B. Worksession and Regular Meeting - March 10, 2020

Motion to approve made by Councilman Cromer and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee.

Worksession Corrections: Page 2 paragraph 4 "broad" should be capitalized to signify the river.

Regular Meeting Corrections: Page 3 first sentence a comma is needed after Director.

Page 3 section E. comma after City Manager.

Page 4 under number 6, Chic Fil La should be Chick-fil-a. Minutes approved with corrections.

C. Worksession - March 17, 2020

Motion to approve made by Councilman Murray and seconded by Councilman Cromer.

Corrections: Page 1 section II middle section March 30 should have a comma not an apostrophe. Minutes approved with corrections.

D. Special Emergency Meeting - March 19, 2020

Motion to approve made by Councilman Murray and seconded by Councilman Cromer. Minutes approved as presented.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Ordinance approving the sale of Bob Jones Field and Recreational Facility to Holy Trinity School, waiving, and releasing all rights thereto under the transfer agreement dated December 2, 1992 and authorizing the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with Beaufort County and to sign a Release of Transfer Agreement - 2nd Reading

Motion to approve made by Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee and seconded by Councilman Cromer.

Motion to approve was unanimous.

- A. Ordinance authorizing and approving the sale of City land in Commerce Park - 2nd Reading

Motion to approve made by Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee and seconded by Councilman Cromer.

Mr. Prokop stated that the only thing that may change in this agreement is the lot number.

John O'Toole, Beaufort County Economic Development Director, stated that this would represent a 64,000 square foot building and nearly a 5-million-dollar investment. He appreciates the City's support.

Councilman Murray thanked Council for their support and thanked Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation for their hard work on this project with a private sector partner.

Motion to approve was unanimous.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Approval of County Council appointment of Dan Reidel to the Beaufort Housing Authority Board of Commissioners as a Beaufort County representative.

Motion to approve made by Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee and seconded by Councilman Cromer.

Councilman Murray asked for an update from Beaufort Housing Authority to discuss appointments and mission. He would like to see this as a Worksession item within the next few months.

Approval of appointment was unanimous.

- B. Authorization to allow the City Manager to enter into Negotiations with Waterfront Park Playground equipment contractor.

Motion to approve made by Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee and seconded by Councilman Murray.

Kathy Todd, Finance Director, gave an overview regarding the Land, Water Conservation Grant. This is the remainder of the half million grant that the City was awarded for Waterfront Park repairs.

Kathy Todd continued by giving an overview of the RFP process. The recommendation is to move forward with Great Southern Recreation with a bid proposal of \$298,682.

Councilman Cromer asked if this was going to be new equipment or replacing components of the existing equipment.

Linda Roper, Downtown Operations Director, said that this all new equipment with a whole new design.

Mayor Keyserling asked if any of the current equipment is salvageable and can it be put anywhere else.

Linda Roper stated unfortunately it is not. Due to changes in compliance it would not meet safety requirements.

Councilman Murray asked if there have been any conversations with the agency to extend the grant due to current financial circumstances.

Linda and Kathy both stated that they had a discussion with the State last week and that could be a possibility, but they would have to wait until the end of July to revisit.

Councilman Murray asked if the City does not move forward with the grant, can the \$150,000 match be reallocated.

Kathy said no. The match is part of the grant application. In the application it specified that a match is a component of the grant and that is why the grant was awarded.

Lolita Watson (Facebook Question), asked will the public be able to weigh in on the playground equipment .

Mr. Prokop said that was done. Surveys were done months ago.

Approval was 4-1. Councilman Murray was not in favor.

- C. Resolution of the City of Beaufort urging all businesses and individuals to closely follow all of Governor McMaster's executive orders regarding COVID-19 including order 2020-28, reopening retail businesses previously determined to be Non-Essential.

Motion to approve was made by Councilman Murray and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee.

Mr. Prokop, City Manager, stated that this is the same resolution that was passed on April 28, 2020. The only change is #4, the amount of time for the resolution to be in place before extending. This gives us adequate coverage for FEMA should we have to seek reimbursements.

Approval was unanimous.

- D. Ordinance and leasing transitional parcels in Parks and other property owned by the City for Restaurants to provide outdoor dining services.

Motion to approve made by Councilman Murray and seconded by Councilman Cromer.

Mr. Prokop, City Manager, stated that this is a 90-day lease beginning in June for restaurants that have property that could expand their outdoor dining under the new regulations due to COVID-19. All restaurants will have a separate lease and will pay \$10.00 a month.

Approval was unanimous.

VIII. REPORTS

City Manager's Report

I am sure that we are all happy to see our City start to see some businesses opening and our outdoor activities beginning to start up. But of course, we all need to keep the importance of social distancing in our minds and in our actions.

The financial effects of COVID-19 on states and local governments is huge. 88% of cities are anticipating major revenue shortfalls which is leading to cutbacks in services provided.

In most cases around the United States communities with a large tourism base are seeing significant hardships on top of increased expenditures to respond to the virus. I point this out so that it is clear to everyone that we are not alone in addressing our needs moving forward.

The path to moving forward is to get there safely includes a strong commitment to following the rules set forth by the CDC and accepting a sense of personal responsibility. We must be diligent about social distancing. Wear a mask in public. Wash your hands frequently. Stay home as much as you can. It is up to all of us to do this...for our own safety, for our friends, coworkers, and loved ones and for the greater good.

While we have all been focused on the COVID-19 impact we need to keep our eye on our number one goal which is economic diversity. While we all want our hotels, restaurants, and retail shops back and running as soon as possible, we need to continue to embrace our strategic goal number one "Economic Diversity" we need to create higher paying jobs and continue to focus on "delivering more resilience through greater diversity" in our employer base.

We can benefit from this virus. Let us not dwell so much on the impact of the virus but rather on the opportunities. Let us all continue to work together to build on what we have for the long-term benefit of the City.

I always like to share good news in times like this. The good news tonight is that our building permits through the month of April are running 50% ahead of last year, both on the residential and on the commercial side. We collected \$96,000 in permit fees this year compared to \$66,000 last year and last year was a record year for us. In addition, we had 7 new businesses sign up for business licenses in the month of April. To me this shows that we have taken a hit from the virus, but it has not knocked us down.

Thanks to all our employees for keeping us safe. And a thank you to the City's Parks and Streets Division for keeping our City looking good during these past few months.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Keyserling stated that at the Senate hearing today, Dr. Fauci used South Carolina as a state that is doing it right. Thank you to the citizens of Beaufort, we are by the numbers in good shape.

With the City's Pride of Place program, I started a Mask Campaign to try to get as many citizens as possible to wear a mask. Currently there are 6 individual retailers that are willing to distribute them. Citizens are donating to Pride of Place for the cause and making donations at businesses. Thank you to all.

Mayor stressed the importance of completing the Census 2020 form. It is very critical that we all complete.

The Beaufort County School District has come up with a virtual model for graduations. Let's support our students.

Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee

Very surprised to hear that the CTC will not be funding. Usually the CTC comes before LATS and we have not heard this. LATS has been able to resume their meeting via Zoom.

Councilwoman Sutton - No Report.

Councilman Murray

CTC warrants further discussion.

The Beaufort Digital Corridor currently has 3 great finalists for the Executive Director position to replace Shelley Barrett who unfortunately will be leaving the end of the month. Shelley Barrett is leaving us in a very great position to keep moving.

Councilman Murray echoed the Mayor regarding flattening the curb. Our citizens deserve a big pat on the back for making sacrifices and following protocols. We should be very proud of that. We still need to continue to follow CDC guidelines and please continue to support small businesses when you can and extend those in the business community a little grace.

Councilman Cromer

He had a great conversation with Ian Scott, new Beaufort County Regional Chamber Director, regarding moving forward and the opening of businesses.

Councilman Cromer asked citizens to continue to support local businesses.

IX. ADJOURN

8:30PM

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 (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.