



City Council Regular Meeting Meeting Minutes – Electronic Meeting Via Zoom

May 26, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

7:00PM

A. Mayor, Billy Keyserling.

All members of Council in attendance.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

A. Mike McFee, Mayor Pro Tem

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment

IV. MINUTES

A. Special Council Meeting - March 31, 2020

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

Correction: Page 3 first line zoom should be a capital “Z”.

Minutes approved with correction.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Ordinance and Leasing Transitional Parcels in Parks and other property owned by the City for Restaurants to provide Outdoor Dining Services - 2nd Reading

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

Bill Prokop, City Manager and Linda Roper, Downtown Operations Director, gave an overview of the status regarding individual leases. All leases should be completed next week.

Approval of Ordinance was unanimous.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Request for City support from Sea Island Carriage Company and Southurn Rose Carriage Company due to COVID-19

Motion to consider was made by Councilman Cromer and seconded by Councilwoman Sutton.

Rhonda Carey, Event & Tour Operations Coordinator, began by stating that due to the current pandemic, tourism has been adversely affected. Both tour companies, Sea Island Carriage and Southurn Rose approached me about doing something similar like “Together Beaufort” for the tour companies. This may include payment extensions. In addition, the companies are seeking a temporary modification to the tourism ordinance, which is to allow temporary time slots for tours from June - August 2020. The first temporary slot being proposed is 9:20am and one at 7pm. In Addition, they are asking for forgiveness of their quarterly slot fee dues (April-June \$11,067.25 and July-Sept. \$11,067.25).

Nicole Myers, Sea Island Carriage Company owner, stated that the Coronavirus has impacted their business. While they began feeling the effects of what was happening in early March due to the tour buses cancelling trips to Beaufort, on March 18 the companies were shut down due to being non-essential. Generally, 50% of our annual income is made in March through May, which they have lost. While this income is lost, we still must keep up with the expenses of the business without any revenue coming in. Allowing forgiveness of the quarterly slot fees would help a great deal at this time. May 22 was the first day we were able to open back up for business and we were able to do tours Memorial weekend, however the occupancy was at a 20% rate.

Councilman Murray said he is in favor of waiving the first three months and maybe differ the other quarter until September 20 and see what those numbers are.

Councilwoman Sutton asked if they have applied for PPE funds and she stated she had a concern with the proposed 7pm slot. She is afraid that it may be a touchy situation with The Point neighborhood.

Nicole Myers said that using the new earpieces and mic sets should help with noise or be very minimal. The tours would only be one carriage at a time going into The Point.

Linda Roper, Downtown Operations Director, stated that they have been talking to The Point Neighborhood Association and that they are aware of what the tour companies are trying to do. We have received some feedback and we will continue to communicate with them.

Nicole Myers asked if it would be possible to include a 9am slot.

Councilman Murray withdrew his original motion and Councilwoman Sutton withdrew her second.

Councilman Murray made a motion to approve the temporary slot times from June - August 2020 to allow additional slot times at 9:00am and 9:20am. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Sutton.

Approval for temporary time slots as amended was unanimous.

Councilman Murray made a motion to forgive the April through June payment that was due June 20, 2020 of \$11,067.25 and differ the July through September payment of \$11,067.25 until

September 20, 2020 for both Sea Island Carriage and Southurn Rose Carriage companies. Motion was seconded by Councilwoman Sutton.

Kathy Todd, Finance Director, stated that the April through June payment would impact the current budget, FY 20 and the other payment, July through September would affect the upcoming budget, FY 21.

Approval to allow forgiveness and deferment was unanimous.

B. Annexation and Zoning of parcel at 3484 Trask Parkway to RMX - 1st Reading

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

David Prichard, Community and Economic Development Director, gave an overview of the petition to annex on behalf of Wood Timber, LLC. The public hearing for this petition was held on April 28, 2020. No public comments were made at that time. The public notices were published in the Beaufort Gazette on March 31, 2020 and in the Island Packet on April 2, 2020. The Metropolitan Planning Commission unanimously voted to recommend approval on May 18, 2020.

Approval on 1st Reading for Annexation and Zoning was unanimous.

C. Ordinance amending certain provisions of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Beaufort, South Carolina, to authorize meetings to be held by telephonic or other electronic means, and matters related thereto - 1st Reading

Motion to approve made by Councilman Murray and seconded by Councilwoman Sutton.

Bill Prokop, City Manager, explained that adopting this ordinance would make having electronic meetings possible moving forward. Currently the ordinance in place is only good for the current situation of COVID-19 and/or emergencies.

Councilman Murray stated that he likes the electronic meetings, but he feels that we have not captured the best way for the public to participate. He asked that the City keep looking for the technology that allows the public to feel like they have the same opportunities they have like in an in-person meeting.

Approval of Ordinance on 1st Reading was unanimous.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70) (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Receipt of Legal Advice.

Motion to go into Executive Session was made by Councilman Cromer seconded by Councilman Murray.

All in favor.

Nothing to report from Executive Session.

VIII. ADJOURN

8:28PM

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.