



City Council Regular Meeting
Meeting Minutes – City Hall Council Chambers, 2nd Floor

January 14, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

7:00 PM

Philip Cromer, Mayor

Members of Council in attendance - Philip Cromer, Neil Lipsitz, Michael McFee, Mitch Mitchell, Josh Scallate.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem, Michael McFee.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS

No public comment.

IV. MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Motion to approve the Meeting Agenda was made by Councilman Lipsitz and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee.

All were in favor, motion carried.

V. PRESENTATIONS

A. City Manager Employee Recognition of Frank Mueller, Public Works.

Scott Marshall, City Manager, presented a plaque to Frank Mueller recognizing him for 34 years of dedicated service to the City of Beaufort and wished him a very happy retirement.

VI. PROCLAMATIONS/COMMENDATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

A. Character Education Proclamation - Jackson Snelgrove, Robert Smalls International Academy.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

B. Character Education Proclamation - Henry Samuels, Beaufort Elementary School.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

- C. Proclamation proclaiming March 2025 as Lafayette Month in celebration of the Bicentennial of the Marquis De Lafayette's 1825 visit to Beaufort.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

- D. A Resolution Honoring the Courage of Anne Frank and Declaring January 14, 2024, as "Anne Frank Community Day".

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Councilman Lipsitz and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Items approved are listed below:

A. Capital Projects Monthly Report.

B. Community Development Monthly Report.

C. Downtown Operations Monthly Report.

D. Finance Department Monthly Report.

E. Fire Department Monthly Report.

F. Human Resources Monthly Report.

G. Municipal Court Monthly Report.

H. Police Department Monthly Report.

I. Public Works Monthly Report.

J. Request co-sponsorship and permission for a waiver of the noise ordinance and a waiver for drinking in the park for PINKnic in the Park on June 21, 2025, from 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm at the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park.

K. Request for street closures from the Memorial Day Committee to host the Memorial Day Parade on Monday, May 26, 2025, at 8:30 am - 11:30 am.

VIII. MINUTES

- A. Quarterly Capital Projects Workshop Minutes - November 26, 2024.

Motion to approve was made by Councilman Mitchell and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee abstained from the vote as he was not present at the meeting.

Minutes approved as presented.

B. Regular Meeting Minutes - December 10, 2024.

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

Minutes approved as presented.

C. Special Meeting - December 17, 2024.

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

Mayor Cromer abstained from the vote as he was not present at the meeting.

Minutes approved as presented.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Request from Beaufort County Senior Leadership to host an event downtown at the Verdier House, they are requesting a waiver of the food truck ordinance and 2 parking spaces next to the Verdier House on Scott Street to be reserved on February 12, 2025, from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm.

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

Linda Roper, Downtown Operations and Community Services Director, gave an overview of the event. She stated that the food trucks will not be selling to the public, they will be the caterer for the event.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- B. The Beaufort History Museum requests to host a 250th Revolutionary War Re-Enactment on March 22, 2025, from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm and they are requesting a street closure on Craven Street from Carteret to Scott Street, a waiver of the noise ordinance, 10 parking spots in the Carteret Street lot starting March 20 - March 22, 2025, as well as 2 parking spots outside the arsenal for Thursday, March 20, 2025.

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

Linda Roper, Downtown Operations and Community Services Director, gave an overview of the event.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- C. Request from Historic Beaufort Foundation for support of the Bicentennial Celebration of the Marquis de Lafayette's visit to Beaufort on March 18, 1825, during his farewell tour of the nation to include, use of the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park, use of Day Dock and closure of the dock from 8:00 am -11:00 am, waiver of Loud and Unseemly Noise Ordinance for 13-gun salute, parade request and road closure of Bay Street from Charles Street to Scott Street from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, closure of Scott Street from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm, road closure of Craven Street from Scott Street to Carteret Street from 4:00 pm to 9:00 pm, request of in-kind staff support for set-up and take down for the event and \$10,000.00 to support the overall budget of the event.

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

Members of the Bicentennial Planning Committee gave an overview of the Lafayette Celebration to take place on March 18, 2025.

Councilman Mitchell made a motion to amend by not granting the in-kind staff support request for the event.

The motion had no second.

Motion failed.

Mayor Pro Tem McFee made a motion to amend by extending the closure end time on Scott Street from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm and denying the \$10,000.00 monetary support. The motion was seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

The amended motion carried by a vote of 4 to 1. Councilman Mitchell was against.

The main motion carried by a vote of 4 to 1. Councilman Mitchell was against.

D. Ordinance to amend Fiscal Year 2025 Budget for Revenues and Expenditures of ARPA Fund and Capital Projects Fund - First Reading.

Motion to approve was made by Councilman Scallate and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, went over the budgetary amendments being requested. This was to formalize the final ARPA obligation amounts for projects and identified needs that Council authorized the City Manager to handle.

All were in favor, motion carried.

E. Accommodations Tax Grant Award (ATAX) Recommendations.

Motion to approve was made by Councilman Lipsitz and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, addressed Council regarding a question that came up during the Special Worksession on November 19, 2024. This was about the \$100,000.00 budgeted for the Downtown Twilight Initiative. The City budgeted \$100,000.00 in the State A-Tax fund in both Fiscal Year 24 and Fiscal Year 25 for Downtown Twilight Initiative, but it was intended as a carryover as the Tiger Team committee was formed in January 2024. The total budget amount for Downtown Twilight Initiative is \$100,000.00 as it was originally budgeted in Fiscal Year 24. Finance should not have included the \$100,000.00 in the Fiscal Year 25 Budget so that the remaining amount would be properly carried over in Fiscal Year 25 in the form of a Fiscal Year 25 budget amendment. Since this did not occur, the \$100,000.00 is currently in the State A-Tax fund balance and can be released through a Fiscal Year 25 budget amendment for a variety of tourism related expenditures according to State Law. City staff plans on presenting the Tiger Team's recommendation report to Council during a Worksession in February or March.

He then went over the proposed recommendations from the Tourism and Development Advisory Committee.

Councilman Mitchell made a motion to amend the following amounts below. All other amounts will remain the same. Mayor Pro Tem McFee seconded the motion.

Friends of Hunting Island from \$10,000.00 to \$12,500.00.

Friedman Arts District from \$15,000.00 to \$17,500.00.

The original Gullah Festival from \$21,500.00 to \$40,000.00.

The amended motion failed by a vote of 3 to 2. Mayor Cromer, Councilman Lipsitz, and Councilman Scallate were against. Mayor Pro Tem, McFee and Councilman Mitchell were in favor.

Councilman Scallate made another motion to amend the following amounts below. All other amounts will remain the same. Councilman Lipsitz seconded the motion.

Friedman Arts District from \$15,000.00 to \$20,000.00.
The Original Gullah Festival from \$21,500.00 to \$35,000.00.
The carryover will be \$29,363.00.

All were in favor of the amended motion. Motion carried.

All were in favor of the main motion. Motion carried.

- F. A Resolution directing the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority as the direct recipient to apply for and receive Federal Urban Transportation Funds for the Lowcountry Area Transportation Study.

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

JJ Sauvé, Deputy City Manager; Brian Sullivan, Executive Director of Palmetto Breeze; and Stephanie Rossi from Lowcountry Council of Governments gave an overview of the program.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- G. Resolution supporting DOT Roundabout Project on Laurel Bay Road at Stanley Farm Road.

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

JJ Sauvé, Deputy City Manager, provided a summary.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- H. Authorization to allow the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority for Cost Sharing of Utility Relocation on the Duke Street Streetscape and Stormwater Project.

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

JJ Sauvé, Deputy City Manager, provided a summary. This is the same MOA that was approved in December for another project. The language has not changed. It is a standard form used across the State of South Carolina.

All were in favor, motion carried.

X. PUBLIC COMMENT – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Edie Rogers, 7A Rising Tide Drive questioned Council on where ARPA funds were being spent, stated she was in favor of renaming Southside Loop to Clayton Cooler Loop. She also mentioned the audio system in Council Chambers.

Rob Cahill, 608 Water Street, addressed Council regarding the audio system in the Council Chambers.

XI. REPORTS

City Manager's Report

Congratulations are in order for Ashley Brandon, JJ Sauvé and Sarah Sutton. Ashley has been appointed as the city's new Public Information Officer and JJ has been promoted from Assistant City Manager to Deputy City Manager. Sarah Sutton from Downtown Operations was promoted to Downtown Manager and Main Street Beaufort Director.

Promoted from Firefighter Recruit to Firefighter I - Eric McGee, Sawyer Henderson, and Giovanni Murgolo.

Promoted from Firefighter I to Firefighter II - Brandon Filicsky, Casey Peters, Logan Hoffman, and Casey Phelps.

Firefighter II to Firefighter III - Randy Ocker.

City of Beaufort has received the Government Financing Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. This is the City's 8th consecutive year achieving this prestigious award. Kudos to Alan Eisenman, Sandra Rice and the rest of the Finance Team on this well-deserved recognition.

There will be a joint meeting of the City of Beaufort and Town of Port Royal Councils this Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 6:00 pm at the Port Royal Town Hall on Parris Avenue.

Annual parade honoring the legacy of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. will be held on Monday, January 20, 2025, at 10:00 am downtown.

The Strategic Planning Retreat will be held January 22-24, 2025, at the Beaufort County Black Chamber of Commerce. The retreat agenda is available online on the city's website and public participation is welcome.

Beaufort Oyster Festival Main Event (Saturday, January 18, 2025, 10:00 AM to Sunday, January 19, 2025, ending at 4:00 pm) at Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park. Come down for a day filled with food vendors serving oyster-inspired dishes, educational exhibits, live music, a culinary competition, and breathtaking waterfront views. Don't miss the cornhole tournament on Sunday and several exciting activities for both locals and visitors.

Mayor's Report

Thanked all who attended the meetings today.

Reported on events he had attended over the last month that included the New Year's Eve Fireworks.

Councilman Mitchell

Reported on events he attended over the last month that included the Martin Luther King Breakfast.

Thanked the Finance Department for their continued excellence.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee

Reported on events he attended over the last month that included the Parris Island Holiday Reception.

Councilman Scallate

Reported on events he attended over the last month that included him volunteering with Second Helpings for one of his Leadership Beaufort Sessions.

Councilman Lipsitz

Congratulated Sarah Sutton on her recent promotion.

Reported on events he attended over the last month that included the Ribbon Cutting for Southside Park.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70) (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Law:
Discussion regarding the purchase or sale of property.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to go into Executive Session and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to come out of Executive Session and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

All were in favor, motion carried.

No actions from Executive Session.

XIII. ADJOURN

9:48 PM

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Lipsitz and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Disclaimer: This document captures all actions taken by Council and summarizes discussions. All City Council Worksessions and Regular Meetings are recorded. Live stream can be found on the City's website at www.cityofbeaufort.org (Agenda section). Any questions, please contact the City Clerk, Traci Guldner at 843-525-7024 or by email at tguldner@cityofbeaufort.org.

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (a)(d)(e), as amended, notification of regular meetings was given at the beginning of the calendar year. A copy of the agenda was posted on the City's bulletin board and website www.cityofbeaufort.org twenty-four hours prior to the meeting. A copy of the agenda was given to the local news media and requested public on file.