



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

May 13, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

7:16 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 AND NON-ITEMS (WERE COMBINED FOR THIS MEETING)

Jared Madison, 2618 Holmes Drive, addressed Council about considering free parking for employees working in the local shops and eateries downtown. A written copy of his comments are attached.

Teresa Bruce, 2400 Wilson Drive, asked if an environmental study regarding the seawall at the Pigeon Point Boat Landing was going to be performed.

Deborah Gray, 1300 Barnwell Bluff, spoke in favor of Old Business, Items A & B regarding the annexation and zoning of 3492 Trask Parkway.

Princess Smith, 50 George Williams Lane, spoke on the Project Freedom 326, Mr. and Miss Juneteenth Scholarship Pageant.

Mike Tomy, 1103 Craven Street, Chair of the Planning Commission, spoke regarding New Business, Item B, Chapters 7 and 9 of the Beaufort Code.

Jessie White, Coastal Conservation League, appreciates the Planning Commission and staff for the recent updates to the Development Code.

IV. MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

V. PROCLAMATIONS/COMMENDATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

A. Character Education Proclamation - Mason Paige, Joseph S. Shanklin Elementary School.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

B. Character Education Proclamation - Colby Coker, Beaufort High School.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

C. Proclamation proclaiming May 4 - 10, 2025, as National Tourism Week.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

D. Proclamation proclaiming May 17 - 23, 2025, as National Safe Boating Week.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

E. Proclamation proclaiming May 2025 as National Preservation Month.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

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

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 from CAPA & The Exchange Club of Beaufort to host the 2025 31st Annual Ghost Tours, October 10 - 11, 17 - 19, 24 - 26 and 30th, and request two (2) complimentary parking spaces from October 10 - 30, 2025.

K. Request from St. Peter's Church to conduct a Eucharistic Procession and co-sponsorship on Sunday, June 22, 2025, from the Catholic Church on Lady's Island to the Henry C. Chambers

Waterfront Park, then proceed to the Catholic Church on Carteret Street from 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm.

- L. Request for street and bridge closures from Lowcountry Habitat for Humanity to host the 2025 Turkey Trot on Thursday, November 27, 2025, from 7:30 am - 9:30 am.

VII. MINUTES

- A. Worksession and Regular Meeting - April 8, 2025.

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

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

- A. PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING - Ordinance to annex 2.8 acres of real property located at 3492 Trask Parkway, R100 025 000 012A 0000, into the City of Beaufort pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. 5-3-150(3).

Curt Freese, Community Development Director, provided an overview. No changes were made since first reading.

Mayor Cromer opened the Public Hearing.

No public comment.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to accept and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

Councilman Scallate stated that he was changing his vote from first reading and provided reasons as to why he is now voting to approve.

The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 1. Councilman Lipsitz voted against.

- B. PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING - Ordinance to amend the City of Beaufort's Zoning Map to rezone real property identified at 3492 Trask Parkway, R100 025 000 012A 0000, to Natural Preserve District (T-1).

Curt Freese, Community Development Director, provided a brief overview. No changes were made since first reading.

Mayor Cromer opened the Public Hearing.

No public comment.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to accept and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

The motion passed by a vote of 4 to 1. Councilman Lipsitz voted against.

- C. Ordinance to amend Sections 1-9031 and 1-9032 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Beaufort, South Carolina to change the composition of the Cultural District Advisory Board - Second Reading.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

D. Ordinance to amend Fiscal Year 2025 Budget for Revenues of General Fund - Second Reading.

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

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, provided a brief overview. No changes were made since first reading.

All were in favor, motion carried.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING - An ordinance to amend the City of Beaufort Zoning District Map by changing the zoning designation of real property located at 30 Cougar Drive, identified as Beaufort County Tax Map Number R123 015 000 0110 0000, from T3-Suburban District (T3-S) to Institutional and Campus District (IC).

Curt Freese, Community Development Director, reported in 2017 this property was zoned T3-Suburban. This is the site of the Lady's Island Middle School. They are planning to do an addition, and the current zoning restricts them in making many of the proposed changes. The IC zoning district better aligns with the existing and future public-school use and allows for a better site design when considering alterations and improvements. The Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve this request.

Mayor Cromer opened up the Public Hearing.

Mark Cole, Project Manager for the Beaufort County School District, stated this is not just for alterations. They are going to be rebuilding the entire school.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

B. PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING - Ordinance amending Chapter 7 (Land Development) and Chapter 9 (Development Review Procedures) of the Beaufort Development Code.

Curt Freese, Community Development Director, reported many man hours have been spent on these two chapters by the Planning Commission. He noted the red line changes that were included in the packet do not match up to the clean version. A revised red line version will be sent to Council in the next few days. The clean version of the Development Code before them tonight was approved by the Planning Commission unanimously. The land development/subdivision requirements are core functions of the Development Code. Chapter Seven includes streets, open space, public utilities, major and minor subdivisions, and site plans. Chapter Nine includes public notice and approval requirements.

Mayor Cromer opened up the Public Hearing.

There was no public comment.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

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

Councilman Scallate thanked the Planning Commission and Staff for all their hard work and is excited to see these code edit changes. He expressed his concerns which included red line changes that were and were not captured.

Mayor Cromer appreciates the red line changes but would find it helpful to have a brief summary of the major changes being made by section. This was echoed by Councilman Mitchell.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee, provided Mr. Freese with some of his clerical findings.

All were in favor, motion carried.

C. **PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING - Ordinance to approve for the levy of taxes for the City of Beaufort for Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026; to provide for execution of and to put into effect the consolidated budget; to provide budgetary control of the City's fiscal affairs.**

Scott Marshall, City Manager, stated the overall budget for consideration is \$73,132,037.00. The overall millage rate remains flat at 73.9 mills. The value of the mill has increased to \$131,885.00. This is an increase of \$5,432.00. He went over items being proposed which included a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) of 3 percent for employees. He went over several new initiatives and other changes that are being suggested as well. Second reading is to be held on June 10, 2025.

At the Mayor's request, a Special Worksession on the budget is being held on May 20, 2025, at 5:00 pm.

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, went over some of the changes made to the budget since the April 8, 2025, Worksession. This included the removal of a Vehicle Tag Fee, deletion of a new full-time position for an Emergency/Risk Manager, and the addition of a Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA) Fee Schedule. He then went over the Consolidated Recommended Budget. A new section for the budget this year was covered. This section captures the unfunded personnel positions and equipment being requested.

JJ Sauv , Deputy City Manager, went over the Capital Projects funding source details.

The Mayor requested that Council's questions and comments be held until the Special Worksession.

Mayor Cromer opened up the Public Hearing.

No public comment.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

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

Councilman Scallate stated he still struggles with some of the expenditures that are annotated in the TIFF II fund. He wants to see these funds used for transportation. He will still be advocating for a flat raise over a percentage increase for employees.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- D. Request for co-sponsorship for Tidal Creek Fellowship, Night of Worship, on Wednesday, June 25, 2025, from 3:00 pm - 9:00 pm, and waiver for loud and unseemly noise for amplified music - there will be a worship band. No alcohol or food will be served.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

- E. Request for use of all of Whitehall Park on Sunday, June 1, 2025, from 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm, request for waiver for loud and unseemly noise to host a graduation party.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

- F. Resolution in support of a Childcare and Early Learning Demonstration Project.

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

Scott Marshall, City Manager, provided an overview of the project.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- G. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract with Spartan Fire & Emergency Apparatus, Inc. for the purchase of an Enforcer PUC Pumper.

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

Tim Ogden, Fire Chief, stated fire trucks take about 3 years from the order date to start production. The purchase price is \$1,164,456.00.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- H. 1.1% Hospitality Tax Fund recommendations.

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

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, stated the total amount requested from the five applicants was \$100,330.00. The budgeted amount to be disbursed is \$31,900.00. The committee rated the proposals based on the criteria stipulated in the Ordinance and adhering to the City Council's strategic goals. Recommended amounts are below.

Beaufort Area Hospitality Association - \$22,000.00

Gullah Traveling Theater - \$4,000.00

The Original Gullah Festival - \$4,000.00

Freedman Arts District - \$1,900.00

All were in favor, motion carried.

- I. A Resolution providing directives to the Waterfront Advisory Committee.

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

JJ Sauvé, Deputy City Manager, stated the directives in the resolution would help guide the committee's actions.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- J. Appointments to Boards, Commissions and Committees - Building Board of Appeals, Cultural District Advisory Board (CDAB), Historic District Review Board (HDRB), Planning Commission (PC), Tourism Development Advisory Committee (TDAC), and the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBOA).

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to reappoint Rob Bogardus, Rob Montgomery and Jennifer Petersen to the Building Board of appeals for 4-year terms to expire on June 30, 2029. Councilman Scallate seconded the motion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to reappoint Linda Jefferies as the representative for the Greater Beaufort-Port Royal CVB, and Bonnie Hargrove as the representative for the USCB Center for the Arts, to the Cultural District Advisory Board for 3-year terms to expire on June 30, 2028. Councilman Mitchell seconded the motion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to reappoint Rita Wilson to the Historic District Review Board for a 3-year term to expire on June 30, 2028. Councilman Scallate seconded the motion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to reappoint Barb Farring to the Park and Tree Advisory Committee for a 3-year term to expire on June 30, 2028. Councilman Mitchell seconded the motion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to reappoint Mike Tomy to the Planning Commission for a 3-year term to expire on June 30, 2028. Councilman Lipsitz seconded the motion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to appoint Pazanta Byars and Joanne Parrish to the Tourism Development Advisory Committee for 3-year terms to expire on June 30, 2028. Councilman Lipsitz seconded the motion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to reappoint Patrick McMichael to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a 3-year term to expire on June 30, 2028. Councilman Scallate seconded the motion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

X. REPORTS

City Manager's Report

Thanked all who helped with making the Taste of Beaufort a great event.

Stated there will be a Special Worksession on Tuesday, May 20, 2025, regarding the proposed Fiscal Year 2026 budget.

Reported the Fire Department has earned the Fire Safe South Carolina Community designation for 2025. Recognized Deputy Chief Vezin and the public education team for leading this effort.

Mentioned the Spring 2025 edition of The Beacon will be arriving soon.

Congratulated Councilman Josh Scallate, Public Information Officer Ashley Brandon, and Firefighter/Advanced EMT Jason Kleiner on their recent graduation from Leadership Beaufort.

Future Guardians Summer Camp enrollment has opened up. This is for youth ages 11 - 17 and space is limited. The program will run from June 23 - 26, 2025. Deadline to apply is May 31, 2025.

Congratulated Firefighter David Ferreira, who recently graduated from the SC Fire Academy and was awarded the Order of the Maltese by his peers. This honor recognizes the recruit who best exemplifies the eight virtues represented by the Maltese Cross, a firefighter's badge of honor.

There will be a Police Department Blood Drive on Friday, June 6, 2025.

Stated it is National Police Week. We thank the men and women of the Beaufort Police Department for their dedication to protecting and serving our community.

Next week will be National Public Works Week. Our community thrives because of their work maintaining critical infrastructure and public spaces with care and commitment.

Mayor's Report

Reported on meetings/events he had attended which included the Technical College of the Lowcountry graduation.

Councilman Mitchell

Reported on meetings/events he had attended which included giving the welcoming speech for the Institute for the Study of the Reconstruction Era Symposium at the University of South Carolina Beaufort Campus on April 26, 2025.

Councilman Scallate

Stated two Japanese Maple Trees will be planted in Cuthbert Park in honor of Connie Hipp and Rob Bridgers with the Beaufort Chamber Leadership Beaufort program. He graduated in the 40th class of the program.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee

Attended the Beaufort County Tax Referendum meeting in Bluffton.

Councilman Lipsitz

Wished Traci Guldner, City Clerk, a Happy National Clerks Week.

Members of Council attended the Ribbon Cutting for the basketball and pickleball courts on Battery Creek Road.

Members of Council attended the South Coast Cyber Summit.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70) (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements with strategic partners.
- B. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70) (a) (1) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Discussion regarding personnel - Boards, Commissions and Committees, Park and Tree Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals.
- C. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70) (a) (1) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Discussion regarding personnel appointed by Council - City Manager.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to go into Executive Session and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

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.

Actions taken after Executive Session:

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to give City Manager, Scott Marshall, a 3 percent Cost of Living Adjustment retroactive to his employment date of January 18, 2025. Councilman Mitchell seconded the motion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to reappoint Parker Moore to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a 3-year term to expire on June 30, 2028. Councilman Lipsitz seconded the motion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to appoint Libby Anderson to the Planning Commission for a 3-year term to expire on June 30, 2028. Councilman Lipsitz seconded the motion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to appoint Michael Andersen to the Park and Tree Advisory Committee for a 3-year term to expire on June 30, 2028. Mayor Pro Tem, McFee seconded the motion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

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

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.

approved : June 10, 2025
Traci Guldner



Jared Madison

Beaufort City Council Meeting
Tuesday May 13, 2025 7:00pm
1911 Boundary Street 2nd Floor
7:00pm

Ideas To Increase Downtown Beaufort's Hospitality/Restaurant Economic Impact and Annual Revenue

Employee Disengagement and Economic Impact

A Gallup study was conducted which uncovered an astounding \$450-\$500 billion per year lost as a result in disengaged employees.

31% of employees in the United States of America and Canada felt as if they were engaged at their place of employment:

Questions based on Gallup Q¹² Items:

- 01. I know what is expected of me at work.
- 02. I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.
- 03. At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.
- 04. In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.
- 05. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.
- 06. There is someone at work who encourages my development.
- 07. At work, my opinions seem to count.
- 08. The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important.
- 09. My associates or fellow employees are committed to doing quality work.
- 10. I have a best friend at work.
- 11. In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.
- 12. This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.

52% of employees in the United States of America and Canada were evaluated as having lives that were thriving, 44% of employees were evaluated as struggling and 4% of employees were evaluated as suffering.

Taken from Forbes.com:

“According to Gallup, disengaged employees have 37% higher absenteeism, 18% lower productivity and 15% lower profitability. When that translates into dollars, you’re looking at the cost of 34% of a disengaged employee’s annual salary, or \$3,400 for every \$10,000 they make.

- The average salary in the United States is about \$47,000
- 34% of \$47,000 is \$15,980

A single disengaged employee at the average salary level is going to cost you almost \$16,000 per year. “

Let’s apply this formula to a whole organization.

- You lead a small business that employs around 250 people.
- Using the Achievers data {Achievers data-driven HR insight} (which states only 21% of employees are engaged), we can calculate that around 198 of those 250 employees are engaged and complacent in their work.
- Let’s say the average salary of those employees is \$47,000
- That means your employee complacency is costing you \$3,164,040.

It just got real, didn’t it? Of a total payroll of \$11,750,000 utilizing the average salary, your employee complacency is costing you over \$3 million a year. Play with the math and apply these numbers to your business. If you aren’t shocked by your results, perhaps you should question your own complacency!”

Downtown Beaufort Economic Impact of Disengaged Employees

\$3 million dollars a year in taxable income

Ways To Improve Employee Morale

From Achiever.com take from list of 15

1. Prioritize employee recognition

This is of key interest to my particular cause as free parking as a reward for valued hard work is a great way to boost employee morale.

2. Celebrate Achievement's publicly

Also of key interest to this particular cause as celebrating downtown employees achievement through a rewards program accompanied with free parking

3. Give recognition where it's due

Due to most employees in the United States feeling overwhelming, unappreciated and stressed out which adversely affects work quality, morale, and efficiency, recognition of hard work would result in a beneficial financial effect on companies revenue's.