



City Council Regular Meeting  
Meeting Minutes – City Hall Council Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

March 11, 2025

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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**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**

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Mayor Pro Tem, Michael McFee.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS**

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Dan Blackmon, 1010 Duke Street, addressed Council regarding New Business Item F., in reference to the Beaufort Jasper Housing Trust Guidelines. A copy of his written comments are attached.

**IV. MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL**

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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**

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A. Recognition of Police Officer, Dan Thompson, for receiving the Governor's Silver Crest Award.

Police Chief, Stephenie Price, presented Officer Dan Thompson with the Governor's Silver Crest Award, honoring his 25 years of unpaid volunteer service as a Reserve Officer.

B. Presentation of a House/Senate Resolution and Beaufort County Proclamation for "Lafayette Month in Celebration of the Bicentennial of the Marquis De Lafayette's 1825 visit to Beaufort".

Lise Sundrla, Historic Beaufort Foundation, presented the House and Senate Resolutions and the Beaufort County Proclamation to Council commemorating the Bicentennial of the Marquis De Lafayette's 1825 visit to Beaufort.

## **VI. PROCLAMATIONS/COMMENDATIONS/RECOGNITIONS**

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A. Character Education Proclamation - Terrence Thomas, Beaufort Middle School.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

B. Proclamation proclaiming March 2025 as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

## **VII. CONSENT AGENDA**

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

Councilman Scallate asked questions of Capital Projects, Community Development, Downtown Operations and Finance.

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 Cub Scout Pack 001 for co-sponsorship and use of Whitehall Park to host Cub Scout Pack 001 graduation, Saturday, May 10, 2025, from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm.

K. Request from First Scots Presbyterian Church for co-sponsorship for the use of the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park on Sunday, April 20, 2025, from 6:00 am - 9:00 am to host a sunrise service.

L. Permission to host the 2025 Beaufort Shrimp Festival and Arts and Crafts Market in the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park, October 3 - 4, 2025, host the Run Forrest Run 5K/Walk on Saturday, October 4, 2025, and request waivers for the sale of alcohol, open container, public drinking, noise ordinances, street closures and permission for issuance of parking passes.

M. Request to host 2025 Holiday Weekend events to include street closures, and other permissions, December 5 - 7, 2025.

## VIII. PUBLIC HEARING

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### A. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) 2025 Needs Assessment.

Michelle Knight, Community and Economic Development Director, with the Lowcountry Council of Governments presented their CDBG Block Grant Program Needs Assessment for 2025. This Public Hearing must be held yearly by their organization. The presentation included Low and Moderate Income (LMI) threshold amounts, 2025 Action Plan, and grant program categories that included their application deadlines.

Mayor Cromer opened the Public Hearing.

The following citizens spoke during the Public Hearing.

Joe Macdermant, 1809 Boundary Street.

Dan Blackmon, 1010 Duke Street.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

## IX. MINUTES

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### A. Worksession and Regular Meeting - February 11, 2025.

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

Minutes approved as presented.

## X. OLD BUSINESS

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### A. Ordinance for the lease of commercial space that is part of real property owned by the City of Beaufort, South Carolina located at 500 Carteret Street to New Story Leasing, LLC. - Second Reading.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

### B. An Ordinance to amend the Code of the City of Beaufort, Sec. 8-2003. - Vehicles and property may be removed - Second Reading.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

### C. An Ordinance to amend City Ordinance number 2024/11 regarding the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 City of Beaufort Budget to provide for the inclusion of a Schedule of Maximum Allowable Fees for Rotation List Calls - Second Reading.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

## **XI. NEW BUSINESS**

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- A. **PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING - Ordinance to amend the City of Beaufort's Zoning Map to include Parcel R120 002 000 0045 0000, Christensen Park, rezoning from T3-S (Suburban District) to T-1 (Natural Preserve).**

Curt Freese, Community Development Director, provided an overview as to why the City is looking to rezone this parcel. He stated that residents in the surrounding area petitioned the City to revise the zoning of Christensen Park so the property could be permanently preserved as a Natural Preserve. This request encompasses Christensen Park, the Pigeon Point Boat Landing and open space along the water adjacent to the board landing. The Planning Commission recommended approval by a vote of 6 - 1.

Mayor Cromer opened up the Public Hearing.

Kay Merrill, 813 Audusta Place, is supportive of this rezoning.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

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

Councilman Scallate inquired why all the parks that the city owns were not brought to the table at one time to be preserved and rezoned to T-1 which included Basil Green and Knott Park. Mr. Freese gave some reasons why this might not apply to some of the other parks due to development or other uses and used Washington Street Park as an example.

**All were in favor, motion carried.**

- B. **PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING - Ordinance to amend the City of Beaufort's Zoning Map to include Parcel R120 001 000 0293 0000, Cuthbert Park, rezoning from T3-S (Suburban District) to T-1 (Natural Preserve).**

Curt Freese, Community Development Director, provided an overview as to why the City is looking to rezone this parcel. Residents in the surrounding area petitioned the City to revise the zoning so the property could be permanently preserved as a Natural Preserve. The Planning Commission recommended approval by a vote of 6 - 1.

Mayor Cromer opened up the Public Hearing.

Kay Merrill, 813 Audusta Place, is supportive of this rezoning.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

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

**All were in favor, motion carried.**

- C. **Request for Historic Beaufort Foundation to host the 2025 Lafayette Soiree on May 10, 2025, from 6:00 pm - 10:30 pm, with allowance to transport participants from remote parking to 411 Craven Street, signage and waiver of the Loud and Unseemly Noise Ordinance with street closures.**

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

**All were in favor, motion carried.**

- D. **Request waiver for loud and unseemly noise from Fred Singleton, Renewal of Vows on Saturday, August 23, 2025, from 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm. in the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park.**

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

**All were in favor, motion carried.**

- E. Ordinance amending the Business License Ordinance of the City of Beaufort to update the Class Schedule as required by Act 176 of 2020 - First Reading.

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

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, stated that Act 176, the Business License Standardization Act, requires every municipality with a business license tax to update their business licensing class schedule every odd numbered year to go into effect the following year.

**All were in favor, motion carried.**

- F. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Beaufort Jasper Housing Trust (BJHT) for the administration of a Housing Repair Assistance Program.

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

JJ Sauvé, Deputy City Manager, started off by stating identified needs have been categorized into two programs. One is providing housing repair assistance for critical needs in homes that are owner occupied, and the second is providing housing repair assistance to dilapidated homes, many uninhabited. The program being discussed tonight primarily focuses on category 1. Providing housing repair assistance for critical needs in homes that are owner occupied.

Mr. Sauvé and Claude Hicks, Executive Director of the Beaufort Jasper Housing Trust then went over components and language of the Memorandum of Understanding.

Councilman Mitchell asked if foundations were to be included instead of excluded, would that be crippling to the program.

Councilman Scallate inquired about changes with the Intergovernmental Agreement which was discussed in the Beaufort County Council Meeting on Monday, March 10, 2025. He questioned the agreement spelling out two separate boards, one made of appointments from each partner, and the other an internal board of directors in which the Housing Trust has the ability to add to at will. He is concerned since Council had not seen the bylaws that discussed the internal board and there being no definition of the independent roles of each board. He is also concerned that Council had not seen this Memorandum of Understanding beforehand, and it has already been passed by Beaufort County Council.

Dick Stewart, the City Representative on the Beaufort Jasper Housing Trust Board was asked to give his perspectives on the matter.

**Councilman Scallate made a motion to amend by removing “Foundation or site pad repairs” from the ineligible column under Addendum A. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mitchell.**

**All were in favor on the amended motion. Motion carried.**

**All were in favor on the main motion. Motion carried.**

## **XII. PUBLIC COMMENT – NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

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Patrick Canning, 212 Burroughs Avenue, spoke about Councilman Mitchell attending a public rally in his military uniform. He also spoke about a post that was made by the City Manager, Scott Marshall, on Facebook.

Rob Cahill, 608 Water Street, spoke about low hanging tree limbs over a section of sidewalk located near North and Bay Street.

Joe Macdermant, 1809 Boundary Street, spoke about various topics. Bicycle accidents, public attendance at the Strategic Planning Retreat, and a bike trail on the Bluff.

## **XIII. REPORTS**

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### **City Manager's Report**

Stated the next steps after the Strategic Planning Session will be to workshop the results in the April Worksession and bring the new plan to Council in May.

Reported fire crews traveled to Horry County to help with wildfires.

Informed every one of the processes that will take place for the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget.

### **Mayor's Report**

Reported on meetings and events he attended which included the Beaufort International Film Festival.

Invited all to attend the upcoming Bicentennial Celebration of Lafayette's visit to Beaufort to be held on Tuesday, March 18, 2025, in the Downtown area.

### **Councilman Mitchell**

Reported on events he attended that included the Ribbon Cutting for PRN Staffers at the Beaufort County Black Chamber of Commerce building, located on the 3rd floor.

Addressed the comments that were made by Mr. Canning during Public Comment.

### **Mayor Pro Tem, McFee**

Nothing to report.

### **Councilman Scallate**

Reported on events he attended which included the Incubate Debate event in Bluffton held on March 1, 2025.

Spoke about his March Leadership Beaufort session.

Stated that Junior Achievement of Greater South Carolina is still looking for volunteers for their event March 19 - 20, 2025.

### **Councilman Lipsitz**

Reported on events he attended which included the 12 Black Leaders to know in South Carolina Event in Charleston which was held February 21, 2025.

Members of Council thanked the members of the Fire Department that traveled to Horry County to help with the wildfires.

Members of Council thanked staff for a successful Strategic Planning Session that was held February 24 - 26, 2025.

#### **XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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- A. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70) (a) (1) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Discussion regarding personnel - Boards, Commissions and Committees - Waterfront Advisory Committee, Park and Tree Advisory Committee, Tourism Development Advisory Committee.
- B. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70) (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Legal advice regarding litigation: (1) - Protect Beaufort Foundation, Inc. v. City of Beaufort, (2) - Historic Beaufort Foundation v. City of Beaufort, City of Beaufort Historic District Review Board, and the Beaufort Inn, LLC, (3) - West Street Farms, LLC and Mix Farms, LLC v. City of Beaufort, City of Beaufort Historic District Review Board, and the Beaufort Inn, LLC, (4) - Miranda Black, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated, v. City of Beaufort, SC; SP Plus Corporation DBA Park Beaufort; Metropolis Technologies, Inc.
- 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 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.

#### **XV. ADJOURN**

**12:00 AM ON 3/12/25**

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

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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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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.

To: Mayor and City Councilors  
From: Daniel M. Blackmon, President of Northwest Quadrant Neighborhood Association  
CC: Scott Marshall, City Manager and J.J. Sauve, Deputy City Manager  
Date: March 11, 2025  
Re: Memorandum of Understanding with Beaufort Jasper Housing Trust

Proposals to Fix the Foundation Problems.

1. Amend the exclusionary language on page 167 to add "Foundation or site pad repairs" to eligible for funding and deleting "Foundation or site pad repairs" from ineligible list.
2. Alternatively, amend the exclusionary language on page 167 to add to the eligible for funding list: "Foundation or site pad repairs if the rules and regulations of the South Carolina Housing Trust allows foundation and site pad repairs" and deleting "Foundation or site pad repairs" from ineligible list.
3. The City Mayor and Council send a letter to the South Carolina Housing Trust setting forth the problem and recommending the amendment of the rules and regulations to permit foundation and site pad repairs along with a similar letter to the Governor and Legislative Delegation.
4. The City apply for a grant under the Community Development Block Grant program for housing repairs including foundation and site pad repairs especially in the historical district.

approved: April 8, 2025  
Haci Wilkner

