



# City Council Special Worksession Meeting Minutes – Planning Conference Room – 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

April 22, 2025

## I. CALL TO ORDER

5:00 PM

Philip Cromer, Mayor

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

## II. PRESENTATION

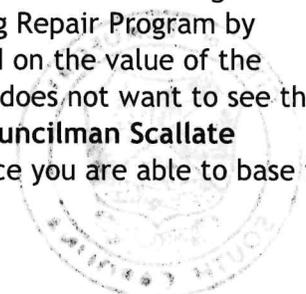
### A. Fiscal Year 2026 recommended budget.

**Scott Marshall, City Manager** stated the recommended Fiscal Year 26 Budget is \$73,138,211.00 which includes \$28.4 million in Capital Project Funds. The overall millage rate will remain flat at 73.9 mills. The value of the mill increased from \$126,453.00 to \$131,885.00. There will be \$100,000.00 for the Housing Repair Assistance Program. He then went over the figures to be paid to our strategic partners to help provide support. New items being proposed includes a new full-time position for an Emergency/Risk Manager in the City Manager's office and moving a full-time position from the Community Development Department to the Fire Department for a Fire Inspector, as well as a tag fee of \$23.50 per motor vehicle registered in the city limits.

Departmental budget presentations will be given during a Special Worksession on April 29, 2025.

The public hearing and first reading on the Budget Ordinance will be held on May 13, 2025. The second and final reading will be held on June 10, 2025.

A discussion regarding the proposed tag fee took place. The fee on city registered vehicles of \$23.50 would generate an estimated \$231,801.00 in revenues to help offset the city's cost on right-of-way maintenance and street sweeping on state owned roads within the city limits. **Mayor Cromer** has "a little heartburn" over this and feels it penalizes the less fortunate because you are paying the same amount no matter the make or condition of the vehicle. Would like to see other ways to generate revenue. Possibly take funds from the Storm Water, Hospitality, or Accommodations Tax funds. **Mr. Marshall** felt that this might have been met with some resistance. Other avenues to consider might be to reduce the ATAX funding amounts, eliminating the boat removal funds, or reducing the Housing Repair Program by \$50,000.00. **Councilman Mitchell** asked if the tag fee could be based on the value of the vehicle. **Councilman Lipsitz** also has "heartburn" about the fee and does not want to see the funds for housing repairs reduced. He feels it would be lopsided. **Councilman Scallate** stated there are ways for us to build in exemptions to the tag fee since you are able to base it on income, or on eco-friendly vehicles.



JJ Sauvé, Deputy City Manager, went over the Capital Project Funds and recommended Capital Improvement plan. A deeper dive will be done at the Quarterly Capital Projects Workshop on May 27, 2025.

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, went over the breakdown of each fund, showing expenditures and revenues related to each category along with their percentages. He also went over the unfunded requirements list.

Mr. Marshall and Mr. Eisenman addressed Councils questions and concerns. Some of the discussions were concerning funding for the Tiger Team and possibly moving those to the Housing Repair Program, cost of living increases/base salary pay for employees, reasons for needing the positions of an Emergency/Risk Manager and a Fire Inspector, funding for the 1st South Carolina Volunteer Park, transportation needs, purchasing of new police vehicles, as well as abandoned marine vessels.

The following addressed Council:

Patrick Canning, 212 Burroughs Avenue.

You can visit the City's Financial Transparency Portal by using this link:

<https://www.cityofbeaufort.org/161/Financial-Transparency>

### III. ADJOURN

7:06 PM

Disclaimer: This document is a summary. 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.

approved: June 10, 2025  
Traci Guldner

