



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

April 25, 2023

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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**7:01 PM**

Mayor, Stephen D. Murray III

Members of Council in attendance - Neil Lipsitz, Mike McFee, Mitch Mitchell, Josh Scallate and Mayor Murray.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee, made a motion to amend the agenda by moving the Executive Session after Reports. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

All were in favor, motion carried.

**II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee

**III. PROCLAMATIONS/COMMENDATIONS/RECOGNITIONS**

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A. Character Education Proclamation - Kate Kelly, Beaufort Middle School.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

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No public comment.

**V. MINUTES**

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A. Worksession and Regular Meeting - April 11, 2023.

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

Minutes approved as presented.

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

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A. Request from Dragonboat Beaufort Race Day Organizers for free event parking in the Marina Parking Lot on June 24, 2023, from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm.

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

Linda Roper, Downtown Operations and Community Services Director, and Chris Jones, Dragonboat Beaufort Director, gave an overview of the request.

Eric Thibault, Treasurer, Downtown Merchants Association addressed Council.

**Councilman Scallate made a motion to allow 25 parking spaces from the beginning of the day until 7:00 pm for event organizers, and another 25 parking spaces from the beginning of the day until 3:00 pm. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mitchell.**

**Motion carried 4 - 1. Councilman Lipsitz voted against the motion.**

- B. Request from Downtown Beaufort Merchants Association for waivers of Drinking in Public, and Food Truck regulations during the First Friday Street Closures on June 2, August 4 and November 3, 2023, from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

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

Linda Roper, Downtown Operations and Community Services Director, and Eric Thibault, Treasurer, Downtown Merchants Association gave an overview of the request.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee, encouraged them to speak with the restaurants and make them aware of the food trucks during the event.

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

- C. A Resolution authorizing the City of Beaufort to enter into a Cooperative Pricing Agreement with OMNIA Partners for the procurement of Playground Equipment.

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

Linda Roper, Downtown Operations and Community Services Director, gave background information on the reasoning for the adoption of this resolution. No pricing negotiations can be started until the City has become a member of the co-op. This will allow for special pricing. This would provide a fair and comprehensive process which meets/exceeds the City and State procurement requirements. The actual contracts for purchasing any equipment would be brought back before Council for approval.

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

- D. A Resolution authorizing the purchase or condemnation by the City of Beaufort of a utility and temporary construction easement on property located on Allison Road for the public purpose of placing utilities underground as part of the Allison Road Streetscape Project.

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

Carrie Gorsuch, Infrastructure Project Support Coordinator, and Neal Pugliese, Project Manager, gave an overview of the project. This effort has been going on for over a year and a half. They have received easements from all property owners except for one located at 2311 Allison Road. Numerous negotiation attempts were made but were unsuccessful. The City Attorney, Bill Harvey, was contacted about recommendations. His recommendation was to move forward with the purchase, or condemnation, in order to secure the Right of Way. An appraisal was completed, and the recommended purchase price would be \$24,000.00.

Mr. Pugliese stated that Dominion Energy made some amazing compromises, and that Mr. Harvey worked very diligently with Dominion Energy to meet 2 of the 3 requests that were set forth by the property owner. Dominion Energy could not meet the 3rd requirement of limiting the size of the transformer on the ground to 36 inches by 36 inches.

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

E. Appointments/Reappointments to Boards, Commissions and Committees.

**Motion to reappoint Eric Powell and Mike Sutton was made by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz to the Building Board of Appeals.**

These are 4-year terms and will expire June 30, 2027.

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

## **VII. REPORTS**

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

Chill With a Cop will take place this Friday, April 28, from 4:30 pm - 6:30 pm in Pigeon Point Park. Hosted by Beaufort Police Department, with assistance from the Exchange Club.

The Lowcountry Wind Symphony will be at the Waterfront Park on Sunday, April 30, 2023, at 4:00 pm.

We are just a little over a week away from Taste of Beaufort on May 5 - 6, 2023.

All the dead palm trees have been removed from Waterfront Park. The new ones arrived this week and are in the process of being planted.

The new fire truck that has been on order for almost two years will soon be put into service.

Just a reminder for the public that it is budget season for the City as we prepare our Fiscal Year 2024 Budget.

Staff provided the City Council with a first look at the staff-recommended budget earlier this evening in worksession.

On May 9, 2023, Department Directors will present their detailed department budgets to Council at our regularly scheduled worksession.

On May 16, 2023, in a special worksession, Council will have the opportunity to examine and discuss the recommended budget in greater detail.

On May 23, 2023, we will have a public hearing and first reading of the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget.

On June 13, 2023, we will have second and final reading.

Were notified today that the City received a 9.4-million-dollar Rural Infrastructure Authority Grant that will be used for Downtown drainage projects.

### **Mayor's Report**

Reported he would be traveling to Columbia, to testify against the Short-Term Rental Ban Bill that would set restrictions on Cities to regulate Short Term Rentals and will be supportive of Home Rule.

### **Councilman Mitchell**

Nothing to report.

**Mayor Pro Tem, McFee**

Attended a Residential Empowerment Coalition meeting to talk about landlord engagement programs to assist with housing insecurities.

Is planning on attending the Millage Rollback Workshop this Thursday, April 27, 2023, with Beaufort County.

**Councilman Scallate**

Shared that he attended his first Beaufort History Museum Board meeting on April 14, 2023.

**Councilman Lipsitz**

Attended the 99th birthday celebration of Ray Stocks.

Attended the Re-Imagine Ribaut Road symposium along with Councilman Mitchell and Councilman Scallate last Thursday, April 20, 2023.

Shared that he has been accepted into the Fall Class of The Riley Institute - Diversity Leaders Initiative.

Council congratulated Colonel Arbogast and all that participated in a very successful Air Show this past weekend.

**VIII. 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 appointed by City Council.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

No actions from Executive Session.

**IX. ADJOURN**

**10:53 PM**

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

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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).