



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

July 8, 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

Mike Tomy, Planning Commission Chair, addressed Council on Old Business, Item A. regarding updates to the Beaufort Development Code, Chapters 7 and 9.

IV. MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to pull Item L. - Request from the Junior Service League of Beaufort for use of the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park and co-sponsorship for the 2nd annual Scales and Tails Kids Fishing Tournament on April 4, 2026, from 8:30 am - 3:00 pm, off the Consent Agenda for discussion. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

Item was moved to New Business Item K.

All were in favor, motion carried.

V. PRESENTATIONS

A. City Manager Employee Recognition of Police Officer Chris Cushman.

Scott Marshall, City Manager, and Police Chief, Stephenie Price, honored Police Officer Chris Cushman for his 33 years of dedicated service to the City of Beaufort and its citizens upon his retirement.

VI. PROCLAMATIONS/COMMENDATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

A. A Resolution honoring the 10th anniversary of the Pan-African Family Empowerment and Land Preservation Network's Help Save Gullah Geechee Land Campaign.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

B. Recognition of Paul Trask for his service on the Planning Commission.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

C. A Resolution honoring the career and legacy of Mark Robertson and proclaiming July 11, 2025, as "Mark Robertson Day" in the City of Beaufort, South Carolina.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Councilman Mitchell 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 the Open Land Trust for street closure, waiver of drinking in public, waiver of noise ordinance to host Brunch on the Bluff on Saturday, April 25, 2026, from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm.

K. Request from Technical College of the Lowcountry PTA Club to host the Jingle All the Way 5K from TCL on the Spanish Moss Trail on Saturday, December 13, 2025, from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm.

VIII. MINUTES

A. Worksession and Regular Meeting - June 10, 2025.

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

Minutes approved as presented.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

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

Mayor Cromer opened up the Public Hearing.

The following addressed Council:

Lise Sundrla, Historic Beaufort Foundation.
Jessie White, Coastal Conservation League.
Megan Morris, Beaufort Chamber of Commerce.
Bill Bardenwerper, member of the Planning Commission.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

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

Members of Council addressed their questions and concerns to Curt Freese, Community Development Director.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to postpone approval of second reading until the next meeting in August. Councilman Mitchell seconded the motion.

The motion passed by a vote of 3 - 2.

Mayor Cromer, Councilman Lipsitz and Councilman Mitchell were in favor.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee and Councilman Scallate were against.

A special joint meeting of Council will be held with the Planning Commission.

- B. **PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING - An ordinance to annex 1.72 acres of real property identified as Beaufort County Tax Map Number R100 026 000 0151 0000, 3659 Trask Parkway, to the City of Beaufort Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann 5-3-150(3).**

Mayor Cromer opened up the Public Hearing.

No public comment.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

- C. **PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND READING - An ordinance to amend the City of Beaufort Zoning District Map to include real property identified as Beaufort County Tax Map Number R100 026 000 0151 0000, 3659 Trask Parkway, to be zoned Regional Mixed Use (RMX).**

Mayor Cromer opened up the Public Hearing.

No public comment.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

- D. An Ordinance to amend, Part 8 - Motor Vehicles and Traffic, and Chapter 2 - Parking, of the City of Beaufort Code of Ordinances- Second Reading.

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

Councilman Scallate made a motion to amend Section 8-2001 to add Employee Parking as an established zone. Councilman Lipsitz seconded the motion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Councilman Scallate made a motion to amend Section 8-2002 by changing the time limit from 2 hours to 4 hours for the Library and Playground Parking Lots. Councilman Mitchell seconded the motion.

The motion passed by a vote of 3 - 2.

Councilman Lipsitz, Councilman Mitchell, and Councilman Scallate voted for.

Mayor Cromer, and Mayor Pro Tem, McFee voted against.

The main motion passed by a vote of 4 - 1. Mayor Pro Tem, McFee voted against.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING - Ordinance to rename Southside Loop in Southside Park as Clayton Cooler Loop.

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.

JJ Sauvé, Deputy City Manager, provided background information for the name change. The Planning Commission were in favor.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- B. PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING - Ordinance to name the newly constructed Airport Road Project as Donnie Beer Drive.

Mayor Cromer opened up the Public Hearing.

No public comment.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

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

JJ Sauvé, Deputy City Manager, provided background information for the naming of the road.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- C. PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING - Ordinance amending Chapter 5, (Landscaping, Parking and Lighting) of the Beaufort Development Code.

Mayor Cromer opened up the Public Hearing.

Jessie White, Coastal Conservation League addressed Council.

Mayor Cromer closed the Public Hearing.

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

Curt Freese, Community Development Director, provided information regarding the key changes to the Landscaping and Tree sections of the Development Code, that included the Administration of Tree Permits, and Fencing.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- D. Request from Morgan Powell to host a wedding and reception on Saturday, May 16, 2026, in White Hall Park, waiver of drinking in public, waiver of drinking in a public park, and loud and unseemly noise ordinances from 4:00 pm - 8:30 pm.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

- E. Request from The Exchange Club of Beaufort for co-sponsorship to host the 2025 Patriot Day and Awards Ceremony at the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park on Thursday, September 11, 2025, from 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm to include a multi-agency vehicle procession from White Hall Park over the Woods Bridge to the Waterfront Park.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

- F. An ordinance to adopt a Nuisance Abatement Ordinance for the City of Beaufort - First Reading.

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

JJ Sauvé, Deputy City Manager, specified the ordinance follows the State Nuisance Abatement Code, but allows for a quicker timeline for addressing some issues at the local level. It has been codified by the City Attorney to match up with all of our existing ordinances.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- G. A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Beaufort, South Carolina, adopting the City of Beaufort Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2026-2027.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

- H. Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a contract for construction of the King Street and Port Republic Stormwater Projects, pending final approval by the South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) and appropriate Grant Budget approval.

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

JJ Sauvé, Deputy City Manager, provided a brief overview. There is currently approximately \$9 million budgeted for construction which includes grant funding. The pump station was taken out of the scope of work. Davis and Floyd handled the bid process following the City's guidelines. J. H. Hiers Construction was the lowest responsive bidder with a bid of \$6,484,956.00. This is reflective of the current market. Staff will await the required contract approval documents from RIA before moving forward. Future budget amendments, funding modifications, or substantive changes to the contract scope will be brought back before Council for approval.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- I. Authorization to allow the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation's Kids in Parks Program and the Friends of the Spanish Moss Trail.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

- J. City Attorney Contract renewal.

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

Scott Marshall, City Manager, stated in August 2023, when Ben Coppage was appointed City Attorney, the agreement allowed for the renewal of an additional two years upon written agreement between the parties. Mr. Coppage's next 2-year commitment would start on August 23, 2025, and expire on August 22, 2027.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- K. Request from the Junior Service League of Beaufort for use of the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park and co-sponsorship for the 2nd annual Scales and Tails Kids Fishing Tournament on April 4, 2026, from 8:30 am - 3:00 pm.

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

Councilman Lipsitz asked for this to be pulled off the Consent Agenda for discussion since the announcement of the partial closing of the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park. If the portion of the park, where this normally takes place, is not open when the event happens in April 2026, they will be moving down to the area near the Marina where the Water Festival Toad Fishing Tournament was held.

All were in favor, motion carried.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Anthony Pope, Lafayette Street, asked Council to pay attention to the urban community and to try and understand them.

Rob Cahill, 608 Water Street, thinks there are too many no trespassing signs in the Waterfront Park. He also would like to see the restrooms open longer in the evenings.

XII. REPORTS

City Manager's Report

Offered an apology to the Mayor and Council for Mr. Freese's breach of decorum in referring to a Council Member by his nickname when making a presentation. This is unprofessional, does not meet expectations and will not happen again.

Thanked Public Works, Downtown Operations, Fire, Police, and Capital Improvement Projects. Upon receiving the engineering report recommending closure of the Waterfront Park promenade, these departments responded immediately and collaboratively. Their ability to mobilize onsite, adjust plans in real time, and communicate effectively with both Festival leadership and the public, turned a potentially disruptive situation into a well-managed adjustment. This is teamwork at its finest. Special thanks as well to Deputy City Manager, J.J. Sauv e and Public Information Officer, Ashley

Brandon. Their timely, accurate public messaging and coordination with local media helped ensure our community remained well-informed and confident in the City's response.

Congratulated Lise Sundrla on her appointment as the Executive Director of the Historic Beaufort Foundation.

The Beaufort Water Search and Rescue volunteer organization is celebrating 50 years of service. This dedicated group has responded to countless water-related emergencies across Beaufort County—including during events like Water Festival and Dragon Boat. Tomorrow night, the Beaufort/Port Royal Fire Department will formally recognize them at the Port Royal Town Council meeting in honor of their five decades of volunteer service.

Noted the joint meeting of City Council and the Town of Port Royal, originally scheduled for July 10, 2025, has been cancelled.

Stated the next meeting of Council will be on August 19, 2025.

Mayor's Report

Thanked all for the prayers and support for his wife following her recent accident.

Reported on meetings/events he had attended which included being the Reviewing Official at the Marine Corps Graduation at Parris Island.

Councilman Mitchell

Thanked all for their well wishes following his recent surgery.

Attended a 1st SC Volunteers Park Stakeholders meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee

Attended the Northern Regional Implementation Committee (NRPIC) meeting.

Councilman Scallate

Thanked all for their well wishes following his recent accident.

Was able to attend the Waterfront Advisory Committee meeting virtually.

Councilman Lipsitz

Was elected to the position of Secretary on the Executive Board for the Lowcountry Council of Governments.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70) (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Discussions regarding the conveyance 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 Mayor Pro Tem, McFee.

All were in favor, motion carried.

No actions from Executive Session.

XIV. ADJOURN

10:26 PM

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: August 19, 2025
Traci Guldner

