

A work session of the Beaufort City Council was held on February 21, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Mayor Billy Keyserling, council members Donnie Ann Beer, George O'Kelley, Mike Sutton, and Mike McFee, and City Manager Scott Dadson.

In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d) as amended, all local media were duly notified of the time, date, place, and agenda of this meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Beer called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

#### **BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS INTERVIEWS: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION**

Alice Howard and Bill Harris were interviewed for an open position on the Metro Planning Commission.

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### **OUTDOOR DISPLAY ORDINANCE**

**Martha Weeks** said there was a Pigeon Point neighborhood meeting, and the issue arose of "eye sores" on Boundary Street such as Ali's Attic consignment shop. She said the owner appears to be following zoning guidelines, but Ms. Weeks feels that it's not a good thing to see when driving into town. She would like the owner not to be allowed to show her merchandise outside. **Libby Anderson** said there have been several complaints about the display there and the city has sent letters about the rules on displaying outside. She and the building codes people had visited the site to ensure that the owner was in compliance with the 5' rule, and she was.

**Ron Mattingly** said there were opinions expressed at the Pigeon Point neighborhood meeting on both sides of this issue, so they can't make a statement as a neighborhood. Mayor Keyserling said if they're operating within the guidelines, the bigger issue would seem to be the need to look at the question of outdoor displays. Councilwoman Beer said theirs is not the only store that displays outside and "looks on the junky side."

**Steve Weeks** said some businesses comply in a way people don't find offensive, but this one they find offensive. Theoretically, it could be worse than it is, so the issue of outdoor supplies should be looked at. Mr. Dadson said the city isn't looking the other way; the business is in compliance. This business sits out farther than the businesses near it, which may make matters appear worse than they are.

There was general discussion of the proposed improvements on Boundary Street and Boundary Street, Jr., and the desirability of seeing something else when those improvements are made. Ms. Anderson suggested the issue is with the number of items on display. If the matter is revisited, she suggested the quantity of items on display could be the criteria.

Councilman Sutton said signs have been regulated in a burdensome way, and there's been discussion of what can be put in window displays. This type of thrift business is desired by customers, which is why it exists, and he advised concern against over-regulating commerce because some people don't find it attractive. He said he feels uncomfortable discussing rezoning of this type. Mr. and Mrs. Weeks said they wouldn't want to have a business near the one under discussion.

Councilman O'Kelley said he agrees with Councilman Sutton. To him, he has never thought of the shop as anything other than a thrift shop. To him, the displays at stores on the other end of Boundary Street are worse. Councilman O'Kelley said this subject is subjective, and he doesn't see how it can be regulated without strangling business.

Councilman McFee said "a decent amount of people" object to the business's display, while several were adamantly in support of it. Councilman McFee said he sees both sides of the matter, and the business owner may be able to be spoken to about lessening the amount of her merchandise on display. He suggested she be invited to a neighborhood meeting. Mayor Keyserling agreed that that would be a good idea and far better than opening an ordinance and "appearing to pick on one business."

Councilman Sutton added that the unimproved parking lots and lack of buffers are part of this problem.

#### **PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO BUILDING CODE TO REQUIRE CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS**

Ms. Anderson introduced **Roni Abdella** from Building Codes. Ms. Anderson said a number of structures are being built with attached garages, which creates a risk of carbon monoxide poisoning in some situations. The alarms are inexpensive and readily available, Ms. Anderson said. Ms. Abdella said the requirement will be adopted by the state but probably not until next year. She'd like to see the city get ahead on this for the protection of citizens with gas fireplaces, etc. Councilman McFee said he knows of a detector that "does everything" including fire, but it's more expensive.

These are for fuel-fired appliances, Councilman O'Kelley pointed out, not heat pumps. He said he had called a contractor, and that contractor said he didn't feel it would be "a big deal" to make this a requirement. There was general discussion as to how many would be required per structure relative to the number of smoke alarms that are required.

Councilman O'Kelley asked if this were a nationwide problem. Ms. Abdella shared some information she had gotten from a website as to the dangers of carbon monoxide. She stated that it's not in current code but will be coming up, and she feels it is necessary now because of current new construction. Councilman Sutton asked if there were a way to have "triggers" such as fuel-fired appliances and attached garages.

Councilman O'Kelley said if they don't have fuel-fired appliances, it's not required. Those who have a fireplace, but then turn it into a gas-log fireplace, would have to get a detector. Councilman McFee said a wood fireplace with build-up can create carbon monoxide, too. Mr. Dadson suggested that there needs to be a debate about the costs of preventative measures vs. the use of emergency personnel. Ms. Anderson said the current building code is applied smoothly by Ms. Abdella in re-occupancies, especially.

Councilman Sutton said he has no problem with doing this on new construction. He discussed potential push-back and the need for education. Councilman McFee said he agrees with Councilman Sutton on the frustrations of upgrades and updates, but also feels some of them are justified. Ms. Anderson said they can start with the provision for new construction, see how that goes, and then consider retrofits.

### **REVIEW OF COUNCIL RETREAT WORK PLAN**

Mayor Keyserling said that after the marketing summit, he had met with some people who agreed to put together a marketing summary. Councilman McFee said he felt that the focus at the end of the retreat seemed to get lost. Mayor Keyserling recalled asking for other metrics to measure whether the city is growing, i.e., investments, new jobs, people moving to the city, etc. He said at the summit, the more traditional marketers had trouble at first but then saw that it was one tool that could be used for city-building. Mayor Keyserling said he'd tried to explain how this affects the CIP: If Beaufort were a destination for annual Little League competitions, for example, the city would be more likely to spend money on parks, etc. The vision and marketing have an impact of many millions of dollars, not just the money that's handed out through ATAX.

Councilman Sutton said the money has in the past been spent primarily on tourism, when they could be spending more to drive the CIP. Mayor Keyserling said the summit, the retreat, and "Scott's micro-politan" have been helpful in learning how to market and spend. Councilman Sutton detailed what he'd like to see in terms of neighborhoods.

Mayor Keyserling said they were given a copy of the comp plan, and maybe there should be a work session in which they go back to the comp plan. Mr. Dadson suggested some additions to the minutes from the retreat. In the work plan / priorities for the year, he said, they should add a marketing program on the first page under Priorities. It's not broken out in detail in the work program.

Councilman McFee recalled that **Camille Miller** had recommended getting a marketing consultant to help the city with its marketing. Mr. Dadson suggested a work session with more focus and guidance in which dollars, efforts, and policy are better coordinated and then a level of measure is determined. They want control, he said, and to determine the measures and coordination they want to see happen. Councilman Sutton said they need "an outline of the

tangible indicators.” What are the indicators, he asked, that show that issues are coming forward, and then “turn those around” and look at tying marketing to those.

Mayor Keyserling asked **LaNelle Fabian** if the impact of events on businesses had been looked at. And if there’s not impact, maybe something else should be done to help businesses grow. Councilman Sutton said he liked that marketing is going in a direction that’s different from what’s been done in the past.

Mayor Keyserling said the criteria by which the DMO is selected is not limited, as far as he knows. Councilman McFee said the state’s requirements must be met; it must be specific to tourism marketing outside of 50 miles from the city. Councilman McFee said the state statute should be honored, and Mayor Keyserling agreed but said he feels the city should set some of its own criteria as well, which wouldn’t be in conflict with the state statute. Councilman Sutton said the conversation’s never been at this level, and the Chamber of Commerce and Main Street Beaufort will need to be brought along to bring people to Beaufort.

Mayor Keyserling said the question is if it’s the best use of money for buses to come in town, people to get on a carriage and then to get back on the bus. He compared the amount of time and energy to that spent on the film festival, where people came from far and wide specifically for that event. Mr. Dadson said they want to put the money where it is best going to generate what they want. Councilman Sutton said it fits in with other groups’ efforts in the city, especially by having it at the university.

**John Dickerson** said that the facilitator at the marketing summit from Greenville had said that in Greenville they had specific goals and how they would spend money to achieve them, i.e., this program led to this many people booking rooms for this many days and then increasing the amount of time they spent here to look at the community.

Councilman Sutton said specific goals will make it easier for the DMO. Mayor Keyserling suggested another work session in which they attempt to take the next step. If the goal is to apply tourism as a tool toward city-building, he asked what the criteria would be with the partners – including widening the circle of partners. Ms. Fabian said in regard to Accommodations Tax dollars and city building, she asked if she could use Accommodations Tax money to run an ad in *Entrepreneur* magazine. Councilman McFee and Mayor Keyserling said she could.

Ms. Fabian said there’s confusion about what branding is, and efforts are being held up until branding is determined. The consistency of the message is important, she stressed. Mr. Dadson asked if council was ready to affirm the summary work plan. Mayor Keyserling said he needed more time to study it.

Mr. Dadson said in the staff section, he wanted to add #3: Organizational Capacity Review. He said they need to ensure that there is not slack in the capacity in the organization as the city “ramps back up.” Council agreed that they needed more time to look at it.

Mayor Keyserling said he’d gone to a recent MEC meeting, and he feels the best way to protect the city “is to do more of the same but better.” He had suggested Pete Cotter as a bridge. The military is facing austerity like they haven’t seen in some time, and he said the city should look at what they can do to help the military and thereby help the city as well.

### **ASSOCIATION OF DEFENSE COMMUNITIES (ADC) PRESENTATION**

Mr. Dadson made a presentation on a meeting he’d attended in Monterey about the City Base program. The city managers and the installation commanders had similar objectives. They “rethought jointness.” He showed aspects of the Quantico strategic plan for 2007-2011, including cooperation with police, fire and EMS, and actively participating in local boards, for example. The current situation is that the military has insufficient budget to maintain excess infrastructure capacity, and cities and counties have suffered budget losses. He went on to show some tools in the code that deal with cooperative agreements and a slide about the many obstacles to cooperation, such as the Department of Defense philosophy and concurrent jurisdictions.

Mr. Dadson said a suggested approach is to reduce base-op costs and said the city found that they could improve service levels through savings and improve savings with intergovernmental support. He showed a slide of the improvements that were made; they retained competition. The city was less complex than the federal services so was better able to compete and could generate dollars locally with less red tape. They learned to be creative and collaborative, Mr. Dadson said, among other valuable lessons. The performance contract language is results-oriented, he said, covering “What to be done, not how.” He went on to say that among the lessons learned were that they had to develop new non-military skills on the base command side and to be a visible regional leader. Among other touchstones were that each party needed to recognize and satisfy the needs of the other.

Mr. Dadson went on to suggest what Beaufort and MCAS should do: scan the environment from different perspectives, then “put the players at the table and see what’s possible.” He showed the emergency service providers outside the base and on it, as well as the schools, airports, hospitals, and housing markets. He showed the economic impact of MCAS on Beaufort; it’s a big employer. The joint land use study was a cooperative effort with the military in the past; the city took action on the AICUZ. The county has contributed by managing the rural and critical lands process, a costly partnership with MCAS.

Mr. Dadson summarized some of the lessons learned at the conference. He concluded that this had opened up new ways of looking at and doing things in cooperation with partners and the military for mutual good.

Mayor Keyserling said a commanding officer effectively becomes a city manager *and* a mayor and has to build a new culture around the strike fighter, so there must be ways for the city to help him and strengthen the base. Councilman O'Kelley said there's no corporate memory in the military, and the working relationships don't automatically carry over when personnel changes.

There followed general discussion of Beaufort and the military bases here. Councilman McFee said the economic storms have been weathered somewhat better in Beaufort because of its military connection.

There was general discussion about open positions on the volunteer boards.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before city council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
IVETTE BURGESS, CITY CLERK