

A work session of the Beaufort City Council was held on November 16, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall Planning Conference Room, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Council members Donnie Ann Beer, Mike McFee, Mike Sutton, and Mayor Keyserling, and Mack Cook and City Manager Scott Dadson. Gary Fordham was absent.

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 Keyserling called the work session to order at 5:00p.m.

DISCUSSION REGARDING APPOINTMENTS TO THE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Mayor Keyserling said standards had been built in for accountability, but he feels the communication factor had not been considered. He feels that council should have a mechanism for knowing what the Redevelopment Commission is doing, now that the council members are all off of the commission. A council member could be a “go-between” for the two groups and attend their meetings. Currently, Mr. Dadson is the connection, but it’s a burden for one person, and Mayor Keyserling said he wanted to discuss whether someone from council should be put on the Redevelopment Commission. Some terms will expire at the end of the year, so he feels it’s an appropriate time to discuss it.

Councilman Sutton said he’s in concurrence that someone on council should have a seat on the Redevelopment Commission as a council seat or a liaison. Councilman McFee said he concurs as well and that would be appropriate. Mayor Keyserling said he sees the possible options as a liaison from council, a voting member from council, or once a month meetings with the Redevelopment Commission chair in a work session with council. When the council members were on the Redevelopment Commission, it did “modest work,” then grew when the council left because they felt they were holding them back, but council are still “the guys on the street who get the questions,” according to Mayor Keyserling. He said that a lot of the work on the Redevelopment Commission is done in subcommittees that then report in the meetings. Councilman McFee said the Redevelopment Commission members were let go to do work, and he feels council shouldn’t be a hindrance to the work they’ve done so far. He doesn’t want to impose too much and slow them down.

Mayor Keyserling invited former Redevelopment Commission member **Gene Rugala** to the table. Mr. Rugala said they discussed leaving a member of council on for these reasons, but ultimately they decided that would hold the Redevelopment Commission back, and Mr. Dadson should be the liaison. Mayor Keyserling said there seems to be agreement, so it will be put on the regular council agenda. Mr. Rugala asked how the Redevelopment Commission feels, and Mayor Keyserling said he didn’t know; he’s only spoken to the chairman, who felt it could go either way. Mr. Rugala said the lines of communication should be open, and he agreed that council shouldn’t be an impediment, but the Redevelopment Commission needs to be accountable.

Bob Pinkerton, chairman of the Redevelopment Commission, arrived at the table. Mayor Keyserling reiterated the discussion thus far. Mr. Pinkerton said he had discussed it with the mayor, and he understood that council needs to feel closer to what's going on. When the Redevelopment Commission changed, the mission changed. It became a much more business-oriented group, setting a mission and moving on. When the council members were there, the non-elected members didn't feel they really had any authority. He feels since the council left, the Redevelopment Commission doesn't have any real authority. Re: parking money, for example, the Redevelopment Commission has no authority to spend even 50 cents of that money. They have no resources, and if they want to do something and talk to a lawyer to see if it's OK, they have to contact Mr. Dadson or staff to see if they can. Mayor Keyserling said the group is strong enough; Mr. Pinkerton said great people have been appointed. Mayor Keyserling said he feels they won't let a member of council inhibit their thought and that one member would help them because of what that council member has "learned on the ground."

Councilman Sutton asked what strengths a council member would bring to the Redevelopment Commission that are absent today. Mr. Pinkerton said council has the power to do things, and the Redevelopment Commission doesn't. Any council member carries a lot more weight than he or any other Redevelopment Commission member does. Councilman Sutton said that adding a council member would be empowering to them, and Mr. Pinkerton agreed. Mr. Pinkerton said the tempo is good now, and "great stuff is happening." They would need to bring on someone from council who is a good manager, and who understands that these are all volunteers. Councilman Sutton said he's overbearing and wants to get it done. If he sits on the Redevelopment Commission, he doesn't want to talk about something for 6 months. Mr. Pinkerton said there are those on the commission who feel the same way.

Mayor Keyserling said he feels that council members would be rotated; a seat would be dedicated for a council member, but it would be rotated. Mr. Dadson said that seemed like a good idea, even to do it more rapidly than Redevelopment Commission members are rotated in. Mayor Keyserling and Councilman Sutton agreed that a council member on the Redevelopment Commission should have a vote. Mr. Pinkerton said it's important that all the issues be aired before the voting takes place.

Councilwoman Beer asked if a council person can be removed for any reason from the commission the same way a Redevelopment Commission member can be. Mr. Dadson said there are three local controls: the overall rules are applied by the state, too. Locally, council controls the budget and is the underwriter; they have the power to appoint and remove without cause; council developed the charter and allowed the Redevelopment Commission to move forward. These are powerful tools the council has in place.

DISCUSSION REGARDING PARKING

Mayor Keyserling said there are many parking-related issues to discuss, i.e., parking on the Point and the layered structure of authority. Mr. Pinkerton said they have been focused on and going after the problems that have been expressed to various sources. As far as he can tell,

they're all being addressed. As long as the kiosks are there, there will always be some unhappy people.

Lanelle Fabian and **Randall Burch** of Main Street Beaufort came to the table. Mayor Keyserling said they got off to a bad start with parking for a variety of reasons, i.e., starting in July, signs in the historic district, insufficient buy-in from the merchants, and marketing that wasn't as good as it could have been. Kiosks had problems that involved longer waiting. From Mayor Keyserling's point of view, people are furious with him. They need to figure out how to smooth out the edges and stick with it at least until the end of the year. If they replaced the meters tomorrow at \$1 an hour and the \$10 fine, they would have the same level of discontent they have today. People are learning to use the kiosks and there are some advantages.

There was some discussion of the need for different time durations for meters. Mayor Keyserling said it was a mistake not to accept that aspect of the recommendation, and they should go back and look at it. Mr. Dadson said the parking subcommittee is looking into that. He said council had wanted to go with the simplest method and tweak it as they went. During the holiday bagging of meters, there will be a lull time, and they will be able to think about it and figure out what to do next.

Councilman Sutton said they can talk for 12 hours about parking, and it would be the same thinking every time. He recalled "a layered level for parking times" in the original discussions. The program offered 4-hour parking on Bay Street, and it's not been gone back to. Merchants have asked for extended time on Bay Street, at least in a certain area. He has a problem with the amount of time available on Bay Street and in the library lot. He said now people will park on Craven, but if it's a 2-hour limit, what's the use? If there are too many layers to solve the problem, he wants an agreement on whether the hours on Bay Street should be extended. Mr. Pinkerton said he doesn't know what the merchants want, and he assumes there are a variety of opinions.

Ms. Fabian said merchants want a longer parking period on Bay Street. Mr. Burch said the consensus is 3 or 4 hours. Ms. Fabian said there have been merchants asking for shorter time periods on Bay Street as well, and the longer periods cause less turn over. Mr. Burch said a short-term visit, the merchants have suggested, could have a short-term (20 minute) meter.

A member of the public said she feels that sometimes this is discussed to death. She feels they need to look at the overall picture. Mayor Keyserling said a commitment was made to the employees on Bay Street, and a certain rate at the private lot was promised to them. Councilman Sutton said that was a private lease, but no rate was promised. Mayor Keyserling said they advertised an employee rate, but now the rate has been raised.

Nan Sutton said there was a meeting of Bay Street merchants, and the overall feeling is that they want more than two hours, at least 3 hours. Ms. Fabian said the elimination of time limits was in the original proposal for parking. Mayor Keyserling asked **Alice Wallace** of Lanier what the elimination of hours would do. Ms. Wallace said it would have a big effect on turnover.

Mayor Keyserling said he doesn't mind the 4 hours, but if they end up where they were before, they haven't solved the problem. Mr. Dadson said they're getting the turnover they wanted. Councilman Sutton said the intent is to balance the program. Councilman Sutton said they need more than 2 hours on Bay Street, and if it's 3 hours, that's fine. Councilwoman Beer said she believes in 3 hours over 4 hours.

Mr. Burch said the assumption that they have eliminated employee parking on Bay Street is incorrect. If they come in at 4:00, they pay for 2 hours, and are good. Some have figured out that it makes more sense to park in the lot, but they have not changed the everyday employee coming down and paying for 2 hours at 4:00 pm. Mr. Dadson said the problem with just dealing with time is that they haven't dealt with the end time for the hours of enforcement. A lot of business is being generated after 5 pm. There needs to be an economic incentive added in. Mayor Keyserling said he's certainly for that.

Councilman Sutton said Lanier was hired as experienced professionals, but he doesn't sense they have been doing work anywhere else in the country. He doesn't feel the city has received any recommendations or advice, or if they have, the city hasn't followed what they were told. He doesn't have confidence in Lanier "to do the hard work." Ms. Wallace said Lanier has had over 68,000 transactions at the pay stations, which means they are working. Councilman Sutton said he's happy about that but not about the complaints.

Mayor Keyserling reiterated that there are too many levels: Lanier, Main Street Beaufort, Redevelopment Commission, and city council. He feels that while the concept about the Redevelopment Commission managing the asset was a good idea, it's another layer that maybe puts them in an awkward position that doesn't necessarily allow them to do what they are supposed to be doing. He feels like there is a huge division among the merchants, and some aren't in Main Street Beaufort. Main Street Beaufort has to be assumed to speak for the merchants. If it were Main Street Beaufort and Lanier, the Redevelopment Commission is gotten out of something they don't control. Ultimately, it will come back to council. His frustration is that there are so many levels, no one knows where to go. There are "too many people in the equation."

Ms. Fabian said she feels Mayor Keyserling is leading in the right direction. There has been confusion about roles. She said that Main Street Beaufort and merchants want a first-time warning system; the Redevelopment Commission didn't. Councilman Sutton asked if that was feasible. She said the Redevelopment Commission didn't support it. It went from the parking committee to the Redevelopment Commission, and there's confusion about whether it goes to council. The parking subcommittee typed up bullet points and was expecting to present it to the Redevelopment Commission, but then they and council got a presentation from staff. The information was there and ready to be given. Councilman Sutton asked why they didn't get it. Ms. Fabian said the Redevelopment Commission got a report from MC and council got a report from Mr. Dadson.

Ms. Fabian went on to say that merchants disagree, too; they have their own ideas and their customers tell them different things. She is confused about what Main Street Beaufort's role is. Councilman Sutton said Main Street Beaufort has been put in a bad position; they have been the voice of the merchants downtown, in his opinion. Mayor Keyserling said Lanier "should know who their boss is." Ms. Wallace said everybody is, at this point. Basically, they make a change, and another group doesn't like it, and then they change it again for that group. They would like to get direction. Mayor Keyserling said they need it from one voice.

Mr. Burch described what had happened re: the plethora of signs and times at the kiosks; he had asked Lanier to do things in that regard but didn't know of anyone else changing it. Main Street Beaufort didn't choose the kiosks. Had he known that Main Street Beaufort was in charge of picking the kiosks, he would have wanted to touch them first.

Sue Palmer said they weren't aware of any problems being solved and didn't know where to complain. Mr. Burch said the e-mails aren't going into a drawer. There's a tally sheet about the complaints being made about specific problems, and their priority and the way of solving them is being recorded. Mayor Keyserling said Main Street Beaufort has created an information database. Councilman Sutton said some issues have been dealt with, i.e., signs on the kiosks, labels for the receipts, being able to go into any kiosk to add time, etc.

Councilman Sutton said he doesn't understand why Beaufortians are different than others served by Lanier, a professional parking group that has served other cities. Ms. Fabian said Main Street picked pay-and-go and the colors of the kiosks. **Brent Phillips** of Lanier said the problem of being able to see the kiosks does seem to be unique to Beaufort. Councilman Sutton said he'd like to see a report on where Lanier has kiosks because he feels that they were "ill-prepared to be used." Ms. Wallace reported three other places that have the same machines. **Pete Palmer** said there needs to be someone who's clearly in charge who can clearly communicate to the public.

Mayor Keyserling said there are too many players, and they should unburden the Redevelopment Commission from a duty that shouldn't have been theirs to begin with. Mr. Pinkerton said they need a single person in charge. Mayor Keyserling said ultimately it should come back to council. At the same time, Main Street Beaufort is the logical marketing arm to sell it. Mr. Dadson said the city attorney is reviewing the agreements between the groups. Lanier is the enforcement and ambassador arm and operates in that capacity, and that will not change. Council already has budgetary control. They will have an acting report and a management and complaint report. All the information is there and will continue to be. There has always been downtown parking for 2 hours; those problems have existed for years. Councilman McFee said there was no incentive not to, before.

Councilman Sutton said a problem is the marketing back to the merchants and the consumers. Mr. Dadson said they have had communications with the press; Main Street Beaufort communicates with its members via the web site. Mr. Dadson said some complaints can't be dealt with – i.e., those who don't like the rate, etc. – as opposed to not being able to read the

kiosk. He said Lanier lets people go without a ticket 47% of the time if they come in to talk about it.

Mr. Burch said there needs to be an understanding of what marketing is. Main Street Beaufort assumed it was to market regionally and locally; they didn't sign up to market it to merchants downtown. Mayor Keyserling said that Main Street Beaufort is earning its 15% to make the system work via marketing. It was meant to be sold downtown. Mr. Burch said the contract says nothing about selling it to employees, etc. Councilman Sutton said Main Street Beaufort marketing parking is more apropos for them to be doing than the shrimp festival is. Ms. Fabian said the membership is the highest it has ever been. Of 138 businesses on the issue, "x" amount of them think this and "y" amount think that, and she feels the information should be given to council.

Mayor Keyserling asked council to digest what they are talking about and come up with a recommendation. Ms. Fabian said there's a parking subcommittee meeting soon. Mr. Dadson said if Main Street Beaufort is the sounding board for this matter, Ms. Fabian and Mr. Burch can only put on the table what their board allows them to. Councilman Sutton said the information is coming from the board and the membership, not the full voice of downtown. If this is a board decision, that's one thing, but if there's data, he wants to hear it, not just their recommendations.

Ms. Sutton said she was on the board of directors for 7 years and that's the problem: the merchants are sometimes apathetic "and so divided." She thinks the most effective way is a door-to-door survey for all the businesses, and there will be a difference in that and what the board of directors says. The merchants as a whole "are a very tough group." She thinks to get the correct information to council, the survey Ms. Fabian suggested is the best way. Mr. Burch asked if they want a broad perspective, or just Bay Street's. The merchants association is rolled up into Main Street Beaufort.

Councilman Sutton said the issues are: layered timing; sign issues (too many and not enough); number of kiosks (too far between spaces); space labeling / parking over numbers. Ms. Wallace said the parking over numbers was her idea; people complain that they can't see the numbers on the sidewalks because the sidewalks are too small. Councilman Sutton said they should have based it on what they've done in other communities. They can't change what they do every time they get complaints. Ms. Wallace said you can see the numbers at the Marina. Councilman Sutton said they're "asking people to do some silly things," and it could be made clearer. Anyone who manages parking should have been able to figure out these issues. Mr. Dadson said Beaufort is persnickety about numbers, signs, etc. Councilman Sutton said the complaints are about stupid things that shouldn't have happened.

Councilman Sutton said that the complaints at the street level are about not being able to find a kiosk or to walk 51 steps to one. Mayor Keyserling asked Ms. Fabian to send Councilman McFee and Councilman Sutton the parking subcommittee recommendations. Mr. Rugala said Councilman Sutton's complaints are valid, but they have a unique opportunity while the meters

are covered, and they can solve problems and then sell it to the community the right way. Councilwoman Beer said they all need to take responsibility. Mr. Rugala said there should be a plan ready to go by January 1.

DISCUSSION OF PARKING ON THE POINT

DeWitt Helm said that the Point's neighborhood association was briefed on what would become of parking on the Point after the kiosks were installed, which was that it would become worse for residents. The neighborhood association assembled a task force of people: Earl McMillan, David Taub, and Annelle Pender. Their objective was to develop a program that could be used in the whole neighborhood or on a piecemeal basis. It was reviewed with the whole neighborhood, and they were asked to vote on its implementation. Decidedly, (9-1 margin) the program was acceptable; as to whether they wanted it throughout their neighborhood, the vote was 60% against. They further analyzed the report, and on Port Republic and New Street up to North Street, the margin was 70% in favor of having the plan in place for their area now. Paul Michau presented that recommendation to council last week. Mr. Helm stressed that this is not a parking *prevention* program for non-residents but a parking enabling program for residents of the Point. It also allows emergency personnel to get into the Point.

Mayor Keyserling said safety and parking are separate issues for him. He doesn't doubt that emergency vehicles should be able to get through. Port Republic Street is so narrow, he could see no parking there. On the parking (non-emergency) side, he's not convinced that stickers are the best solution, which involves a better way to offer employees incentives to park elsewhere. Stickers for just one-and-a-half streets in the Point make him nervous. They also asked the Old Commons neighborhood; Mr. Dadson said it's not an issue for them yet, but they have been approached.

Councilman Sutton said he sees issues of non-enforcement of fundamental basic rules of street use. Stripe the wide-enough streets, and don't stripe those that aren't wide enough. The curb cuts are there, but fencing and landscaping is blocking the places to park; residents could put the car on their own property. It's not a problem of residents not being able to park. Councilman Sutton feels DOT should be contacted and brought into the issue. They can help them delineate the areas that should be striped. If they delineate where people can't park, and they park outside those boundaries anyway, they should get a big ticket from the police. This would help with safety. That is solvable.

Mr. Helm said all but a couple Point residents can park at least one car in their property's driveway. He said the new parking program downtown has moved city employees to park at the Point. They realize this is going to happen during the downtown festivals, but it's become a common experience. Councilman Sutton said it's tolerated and shouldn't be. Mr. Dadson said council controls parking regulations in the city. SCDOT has jurisdictional control over certain routes. Re: safety, there are smaller emergency vehicles; a desirable urban density creates an issue of more parking on streets. The denser and more urban it gets, the more of a problem it is.

Mr. Dadson said they need to think about what options are being taken by people and then design the streets to accommodate that. The design of streets and the basic health, safety, welfare widths need to be considered, as well as the “creep back.” There’s more to do on Carteret now, so it’s creeping. Mr. Helm said it will creep from the college, too, as it grows. Mr. Dadson said filling in will eliminate the problem, and over time, the need to drive in and find space will move opportunities around. Neighborhoods want something in the neighborhood so people can walk to it.

Mayor Keyserling asked if they could have stickers only for certain hours. Mr. Dadson said it depends on what the problem is. Mr. Helm said their recommendation was from 8 am – 6 pm. East Street is starting to be a problem. Councilman Sutton said there must be a simple answer: is it more city striping? He thinks it makes sense to delineate the inventory they have, i.e., where they can and can’t park. He doesn't want to stripe if he doesn't have to. Craven and New Streets are a problem, Mr. Helm said, for ambulances. The most dangerous block is the corner of New and North. There’s strong support for making North Street one-way west. Councilman Sutton said there seems to be some reluctance to make it safe by delineation. Mr. Dadson said the inventory, as well as the widths and right-of-ways (some are 30, 40, and 60 feet) is the best idea, he feels.

DISCUSSION REGARDING SHORT-TERM RENTALS

Mr. Dadson said the letter has been changed that was sent to those who are found to be renting illegally. Mayor Keyserling apologized for enforcement problems. The list had a number of businesses not complying in one category or another. This all started when someone asked for a rezoning and were told to go for “special exception.” The conundrum is whether those who are operating continue to operate while the city decides what to do. Mr. Dadson said it’s always been enforced, but not consistently with business licenses.

Mr. Dadson said council needs to determine how it will move forward with new land use regulations. They will get the framework text of the new form-based code in the winter. It must be adopted and be applicable to everybody, or it can be overlaid. The path that is chosen will likely give a regional understanding of planning, then a neighborhood at a time will be built up. It will be overlaid until they build from the bottom up. Council has an incremental approach and will have a timeframe of 2-5 years. They will have to judge those issues as they have with this; they will have to decide whether they are creating larger ramifications. In form-based code, use is less of an issue; the form and style of the building, etc. are more pertinent. In the long run, no one ever gets rid of the use table. Some things will still be regulated. In short-term rentals, use is more important to consider than time. If residential living is conducive, that’s the first level of dealing with the issue. The time period – whether it has an adverse effect – needs to be considered as well. A lot of the issues will be different per neighborhood.

Libby Anderson had distributed a packet on the issue to council members. She reviewed the timeline of events regarding short-term rentals to date. A focus group established to look at this in the historic district was formed, and they met twice and recommended the consulting team review the ordinance. They wanted them to do so before January 1, so if there are

significant changes, they can take them back to the Planning Commission and make changes. Short-term rentals in relation to commercial corridors were a concern of the subcommittee, who were sympathetic with the concerns of the applicants for a home on Duke Street.

Mayor Keyserling heard it will take a long time, and that it needs to be looked at early. Mr. Dadson said he's trying to give council a reference to time. Councilman Sutton clarified that it's a bigger picture issue, and there's a lot to do. Mr. Dadson said the consultants have 6 things to do as soon as they arrive January 1st. The change to the ordinance to allow short-term rentals by special exception would be an initially conservative approach. Mr. Dadson said council had a similar debate about Light Industrial by special exception. Mayor Keyserling asked if they can have a policy that defined the parameters – conditions within the special exception. Ms. Anderson said it's black and white now re: commercial and residential districts. This would allow short-term rentals in residential districts according to a certain process and conditions.

Mayor Keyserling said if they move forward, he wants a framework of the conditions. He wouldn't want to make one in the middle of what is an established neighborhood until they hear from the consultants. He would like a little more guidance and more parameters to the special exception process. Ms. Anderson said some members of the committee felt that was the way to go. She said there are now 2 official applications for short-term rentals. Mr. Dadson said it seems to be more popular in the historic district and near the water but is spread out a little bit beyond that. The list of vacation rentals by owner is pretty big and happens more than people want to admit it happens.

Councilman Sutton said he knows it will be a long time before the consultants have this discussion. The list they have thus far of short-term rentals operating illegally is probably the tip of the iceberg. He feels like the special exception is the way to go, but he hates to put this on the ZBOA. Mr. Dadson said they can do conditional or special exception. One is more elaborate and the other is more administrative, and they could move in that direction: if they meet these ten conditions, for example, they can do it, whatever they set as the conditions, rather than going to special exception. Councilman Sutton said they can't control who rents and how they act. The issue is whether the city has a viable need for allowing short-term rentals. Mayor Keyserling said they all agreed they want it, but the question is where it goes. Councilwoman Beer asked why it was just in the historic district.

Carlotta Ungaro said with the current occupancy rates, there's really not any "need" for short-term rentals. Councilman Sutton said the question is of 31 days of rental or less-then 30, which is an overnight accommodation issue. Mr. Palmer said there's a potential impact on homes adjacent to homes being used for short-term rental. Those who live next door to a short-term rental experience an impact on their lives and "it's not pleasant"; they "don't know who's coming in and why they're there." They can only tolerate it. Many who come to town for the Parris Island graduation are doing short-term rental rather than staying in a hotel. He said he understands the desire, but it has an impact on the historic district and the neighbors. He doesn't see it as positive in any respect. Councilman Sutton said Historic Beaufort Foundation has a cottage, and if it was furnished and renovated to be made habitable, they have the rights

to it for 30 years; they could make money from it as a short-term rental. He doesn't understand why anyone would want a dead house in their neighborhood when it could be renovated and made into a short-term rental. Councilman Sutton said the way to attract an investor to dead properties is to offer this tool which they don't have right now. It's proven to work as a preservation tool.

Greg Huddy said there's opportunity in the historic structures. Money can be put into it because they will be put to use as short-term rentals. It's a good opportunity to restore the houses and it seems like a win-win for everyone. If there are historic properties in need for renovation, short-term rentals can be an incentive to restore them. **Erica Dickerson** said they have had only 2 people who stay a month or longer, and they were retired northerners looking for a warmer climate; they cook in, don't eat out, bring their pets and stay around the house. Short-term rentals for them are about getting a bargain. The 2-3 week renters want to experience a small town: they eat out at least one meal a day, shop and enjoy the Beaufort experience. Those who have a 1-week stay (of which they have had 7 so far) work, have small children, eat out at least 1-2 times a day, and spend their money here. Couples with children cook in almost all the time, and have limited disposable income. So far they have had 12 who stay 2-5 nights who are potential retirees: they eat 2-3 meals out each day, have good disposable income, and like to shop, play and enjoy the town.

The month-long renters, she said are "cheap." **John Dickerson** said the people here for a week are interested in the area and are willing to spend money; those who stay for a month aren't as interested in what Beaufort has to offer. They just want to get away from the cold. Everyone needs to know where they want to live by experiencing it; it's an economic engine that pulls them here. It's quite different than staying in a hotel or B&B. They're in a different market. This is more for people who want to experience Beaufort and get to know it. Ms. Dickerson said their guests sign off on what they can and can't do and are introduced to all their neighbors. Mr. Palmer said the Dickersons have a history of working with the community and "we know you well and have respect for you."

Mr. Huddy said in the discussion there was acknowledgement that if short-term rentals are going to happen, there have to be guidelines, i.e., can't be out of town management. Zoning too often prevents 98% positive because of a bad 2%. Mr. Dadson said 47% of the city is rental housing; the abundance of it is the problem in some neighborhoods. A map was passed that showed where the property owners are. He said the core is owned by people other than those who are living there. Mr. Dickerson said it's agreed that there should be good guidelines. Everyone wants to do business in a fair and even fashion, including taxes and business licenses; some have tried to do it right but didn't.

Ms. Anderson said at the committee meeting, they agreed to expand this beyond the historic district. They discussed limiting the number of short-term rentals per block, i.e., one per block or every 400', a minimum 2-night stay, ample on-street parking, etc. Mr. Helm said the focus group said this would be allowed in specified corridors, at a specific distance from those

corridors. **Henrietta Goode** said this locks it in on distance, not a particular person/space. Mr. Huddy said it was not agreed upon, but the focus group discussed it.

Councilman Sutton said he doesn't have a problem with a whole block of short-term rentals. Mr. Dadson said the market will settle the score on this. There will probably be compliance when people have to apply, and then there will only be marginally more than there are now. Mr. Huddy said he owns long-term rentals, and there is more upkeep and maintenance on short-term rentals. Councilwoman Beer said neighbors can enforce compliance when the rules are made.

Councilwoman Beer said neighbors don't want to get involved with each other, but they'll come to council. Ms. Goode said they're going to sign an agreement saying they'll comply. **Rosemary Cousins** said she has a retirement home on Wilmington Street. She's interviewing property management companies. She wants to improve things that she has heard have happened. Councilwoman Beer said neighbors/owners can be very confrontational, so it's better when the city steps in. Ms. Goode said when an owner is out of the city, the best thing to do is get management so they can see what's going on. Mr. Helm said short-term rentals will change the character of a neighborhood, which can be highly positive or less so. If the vast majority don't want to change the character of the neighborhood, what should be done?

Mayor Keyserling said under special exception, the neighborhood will be heard. Mr. Helm said the Point neighborhood association is diametrically opposed to short-term rentals because they believe it will be detrimental to the Point and potentially the city as a whole. Mr. Dickerson said he created a presentation on the economics of short-term rentals as opposed to long-term rentals. Ms. Dickerson said It's not cheap to re-do a house in the historic district. Councilwoman Beer said that's true anywhere. Mr. Dickerson went on to give specific costs. Mayor Keyserling said he had short-term rentals but most ended up staying 31+ days. His concern is only neighborhood preservation. The neighborhoods should be more involved in deciding that than the city is. Mr. Palmer said he gets the benefits and economics but feels there are liabilities in certain neighborhoods.

Mr. Dadson said it can be a matter of individual property rights or neighborhood rights. The city enforces codes for health, safety, and welfare. Mr. Palmer said there's zoning from the get-go that limits uses of properties. Mr. Huddy said he wouldn't have known that they could do multi-family in many residential districts.

Ms. Dickerson said there's no way for people to become legal right now. If they paid taxes and have a business license, and there've been no complaints, she thinks there should be help getting them legal. Ms. Ungaro said the Port Royal residents could be surveyed for their experiences; they have a lot of short-term rentals. The occupancy rates are low from those reporting now, but she said the market will determine what will succeed; if people want it, they will pay for it.

Councilman Sutton said the issues are enforcement for identified existing businesses, a decision on one piece of existing property either way, and then a decision to be made on special exception rules. Mayor Keyserling said the conditions can be made within special exception. Councilwoman Beer reiterated that the neighborhood can let their feelings be known in the special exception process. Mr. Dadson said legal counsel should be consulted with before they decide to quit enforcing shutting down current short-term rentals that are out of compliance. Mr. Huddy asked if this provision extended to the rest of the city. Ms. Anderson said the change has been made from short-term rentals in the historic district to city-wide. Mayor Keyserling said he thinks it can be done in 30 days. Ms. Anderson said the Planning Commission will have a meeting and can give their recommendation before council's next reading. Councilman Sutton said it seems this has to be measured; some properties may not work. The permit isn't for the life of the owner; it's for 6 months or a year. Mr. Dickerson said there will be an administrative review of the license.

Mr. Dadson asked Ms. Anderson if the special exception for existing non-conforming use needs to be grandfathered, and Ms. Anderson said no. Councilman Sutton said there needs to be a tag between the renewals and complaints. Ms. Anderson said the permitting process "has flags that will pop up."

UPDATE ON TMAC APPOINTMENTS AND REINSTATEMENT

Mayor Keyserling said the Chamber recommendation is Charlie Calvert, Main Street Beaufort's are Christopher Hewitt and Charlie Williams, Jerry Stocks (Old Commons) and Heather Winch has agreed to come back from the Point. **Julia Paige Wylie Good**, Historic Beaufort Foundation, said Cheryl Neeson might be interested. Ms. Ungaro said the chamber will offer someone else, too. Mr. Dadson said this will be on the agenda for next week.

Mayor Keyserling said for HDRB he recommended Mr. Easton, who had applied in the past. There was some discussion of the need for a Main Street Beaufort representative on HDRB. Ms. Fabian said there are 3-4 people filling out applications to be interviewed by council for Lisa Estes' position. No one knew if Mr. Easton is a member of Main Street Beaufort.

REVIEW OF CAPITAL REQUEST

Mr. Dadson said this is an equipment request for Public Works' parks and stormwater uses. Mr. Dadson was pleased with the net proceeds of auction (\$48,000). Public Works director **Isaiah Smalls** said the auctioneer said it was \$54,000. Councilman Sutton said the city already owns a Bobcat. Mr. Smalls replied that it does, but this is a request for a mini-backhoe; the current ones don't have the 4-way bucket. Councilman Sutton asked about other backhoes, and Mr. Smalls said there's only one, and the one they have isn't applicable for what they need now.

Mr. Cook said there will be 2 more police cruisers for sale on property.com. Mr. Smalls said they will also try to sell the baler that didn't sell at auction. Mr. Dadson said "a lot of stuff has been written off the books" this way. Councilman Sutton asked where the posts and meter housings ended up. MC said the meters are in the Scott Street garage. They are refurbishing the units. A

discussion ensued about putting meters in front of the old city hall. Mr. Dadson said there will be a budget amendment and he wanted assent to move forward. General assent was given.

All council members agreed to be in the Christmas parade.

Re: council meetings on December 21 and 28, there was general agreement that they be cancelled. They then discussed the holiday drop-in to thank various boards. Councilwoman Beer said December 1 is the grand opening of City Hall at 4:00 pm. They discussed who could do the invocation.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
IVETTE BURGESS, CITY CLERK