

A work session of the Beaufort City Council was held on August 23, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. in the Planning Conference Room, City Hall, 1911 Boundary Street. In attendance were Mayor Keyserling and council members Donnie Ann Beer, Mike Sutton, Mike McFee, George O'Kelley, 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 Keyserling called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

DISCUSSION WITH REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION CHAIR

Jon Verity said the Commercial Committee hasn't been active this month. They plan to look at the post office for their next project, however. Mayor Keyserling offered an update from his efforts to contact the postmaster. Mr. Verity said the Housing Committee has met and have been assigned properties to identify those that can be restored, which are beyond repair, and where there is vacant land which could be developed. They are looking at the city's vacant property on Lafayette. There is a demand, according to the Housing Authority, for single-bedroom homes. They would like to use it for some denser development and "a little bit of marketplace if we could."

Mr. Verity said Sector Two and Sector Three plans are being made; pre-charette meetings are being set up with various groups. **Josh Martin**, Demetri Baches, and Mr. Verity met with TCL and will meet with the hospital soon to see what both organizations want in terms of planning. Sector Two and Sector Three have been combined, so the work will cover from City Hall down Ribaut Road to Port Royal.

There will be a meeting with bankers about the Lowcountry Housing Trust. The Lafayette site may be a place for affordable housing funded in collaboration with the trust.

Mr. Verity said Seth Harry will be presenting to the Redevelopment Commission meeting on September 1. There's been Rail To Trail activity, Mr. Verity said. Bike paths have been approved. Opticos discussions continue on form-based code. The Redevelopment Commission is working on relocating the community gardens. He said there has been movement forward on Duke Street with the CBDG grant so as not to lose the renewal money.

Mr. Dadson said getting approvals on Bladen Street with the SCDOT has become difficult, and that's holding up Duke Street, but they're hopeful they will be able to bid both in the fall. Mr. Verity said he's under the impression that the city is pursuing a TIGER 3 grant to complete Boundary Street. Mr. Dadson said that is correct, and they'll seek it to finish more of the project.

The Olive Garden and Red Lobster are under construction, Mr. Verity said.

Mr. Dadson said after Labor Day, they need to have a Redevelopment Commission and council work session on Sector One and review how to use the book provided by Office of Civic Investment. Mayor Keyserling said Main Street Beaufort, the public, etc. should also be involved with it “as a marketing piece.”

Mr. Verity said they’re starting “a campaign of information flow about what’s being done” in the commission; they’re creating a slide show to show some gated communities.

Mayor Keyserling said engaging people other than the institutions in Sector Two and Sector Three will be a lot more difficult. In Sector One, people are more engaged in city government whereas the neighborhood associations are less involved and tend to be more working people. Mr. Dadson suggested the schools be “elevated as discussion points.” Mayor Keyserling said Rail To Trail is really about those two sectors. Mr. Martin said there will be direct mailings to property owners to notify them of the projects. Mr. Dadson suggested going through the schools’ PTOs as well.

Mayor Keyserling asked Mr. Verity if the deal with the garden fell through with the school district. Mr. Verity said he didn’t think they were doing it; they are looking at a property next to it. Mr. Martin said he didn’t know.

Mr. Dadson said staff had met with the DOT commissioner about projects they wanted to do after the Sector One work. They are trying to get approval on Boundary Street, Bladen, and various projects like parking on Carteret, etc. There is more substance to be discussed. Mayor Keyserling said they agreed to meet again when the city had a list. Mr. Dadson said staff is working on a list of issues. Mr. Martin said there’s a meeting September 26.

Mayor Keyserling said the Lipsitz building closes mid-September, and he suggested that the Commercial Committee should contact the owner. The plan, Mayor Keyserling said, is retail with apartments upstairs. **Lanelle Fabian** said the owner told Main Street Beaufort there would be three retail businesses on the bottom floor.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Beaufort as a Tree City USA

Frances Waite, Coastal Region Urban Forester, said Beaufort has been awarded Tree City USA status for 22 years. She described the requirements to be a Tree City. She discussed pruning and planting efforts through grants. **Liza Hill** is training to be a certified arborist. The Tree Board has worked with utility and cable companies to identify single-phase lines. Ms. Hill said the projects are being prioritized. Mayor Keyserling asked about grants for this. Ms. Hill said the data is available if grants are found. Ms. Waite went on to discuss other future plantings in Beaufort. She said there are 40 Tree Cities in South Carolina.

Tourism Development Advisory Committee (TDAC)

Mayor Keyserling told **Chip Dinkins** that there have been discussions in regard to coordinating tourism and development pieces “to make a better coordinated whole.” The Designated

Marketing Organization (DMO) is being re-thought, he said, so there may be a need to postpone taking applications for and following up on TDAC money. The process with tourism dollars seems very fragmented, Mayor Keyserling said, and staff and council want to bring it together better.

Mr. Dadson said the total TDAC grant amount is \$155,000. Mr. Dinkins said there are 7-8 grant applicants. Main Street Beaufort and Chamber of Commerce have received some of that (in the Chamber of Commerce case that's in addition to their DMO money). The DMO budget would be about \$600,000, Mr. Dadson calculated.

There was general discussion of which organizations had applied for TDAC grants. The presentations by the groups are imminent, Mr. Dinkins said. Councilman McFee said they should hear the presentations, since it is already in process, but by statute, they need not distribute the money for two years.

Councilman Sutton explained his concerns in the past and said the next step seemed to be determining the goals for the funds, then the discussion became about the DMO and what it is marketing. His position is that the grant's intent is to enable grassroots marketing efforts. Quantification of that is difficult. Mayor Keyserling asked if, in marketing Beaufort, the waterfront is being taken advantage of or the arts in the area. The break may eventually be that dollars go to the events that are the marketed as part of the whole, Mayor Keyserling said. The conversation needs to continue, he feels, as to how the various pieces fit in. They need to determine what they're getting for it and how that fits into the "branding of Beaufort."

Bob Moquin said he feels it's worthwhile to re-evaluate. The recipients who submitted, though, would like to know if they can count on money for specific projects. A timeline for when they might get the money, especially if it's to be used for an event, is necessary.

Mayor Keyserling said the Beaufort Memorial Hospital cycling event is a good example; they spend \$26,000 on it, but he doesn't see Main Street Beaufort or Visitors and Convention Bureau (VCB) involved in it as part of an experience that brings people to Beaufort.

Ms. Fabian said Main Street Beaufort uses Accommodations Tax money to advertise Shrimp Festival, Taste of Beaufort, and downtown Beaufort. They're nearing the time of Shrimp Festival and the Accommodations Tax money will be used to advertise it. Ms. Fabian said they've done a survey to prove that they are advertising to out of towners. If they don't get funds to market the festival and downtown Beaufort, "it will be hard," and they "might not trust someone else to advertise the festival" for Main Street Beaufort.

Mayor Keyserling asked Ms. Fabian her Main Street Beaufort budget overall; Ms. Fabian said it's between \$250,000 and \$300,000. They make only a small percentage from the festivals, which are meant to do promotion of downtown. She said they will need to look at their budget if they are not going to get the Accommodations Tax money. Councilman Sutton asked how much they

asked for this year from Accommodations Tax. Ms. Fabian guessed that it was \$60,000. Mr. Dinkins said Main Street Beaufort was able to spend the TDAC grant money as they liked.

Councilman Sutton said there need to be changes, but it may be too late to change this year's funding. If a group is doing business that the DMO would normally be doing, just because they have funding, he might not support it, i.e., a guidebook, which the DMO should be doing. In regard to events, he feels they should be self-sustaining, and a time-limit should be put on events that can't run *without* Accommodations Tax. There's not been accountability in the past as to whether the money was used for operating expenses or marketing. Councilman McFee said for the last three years, that's been separated. TDAC funding "is not as grey as it was," he said. He urged caution about "co-mingling too much"; some marketing is specifically meant to go outside the area and draw people into the area.

Councilman McFee said the marketing "was so fragmented for so long" that it's led to discussions as to what a DMO should be. He said there's a benefit to having one entity identifying and marketing events year-round. Mayor Keyserling asked if council members felt promotional events should maybe be a DMO function and Main Street Beaufort should get back to economic development in the future. Mayor Keyserling said when the Chamber of Commerce didn't want to do events, they gave them to Main Street Beaufort. Ms. Fabian said they didn't want the festival to go to Port Royal, so they took it over and hired an events manager.

Councilman O'Kelley said Main Street Beaufort might still run the Shrimp Festival, but the DMO could market it. Mayor Keyserling said eventually, though, the DMO might do all the marketing and do the events as well so Main Street Beaufort could do business development projects. Mr. Moquin said there are pros and cons to having one entity do that. The VCB could do that, but he wouldn't want "finger-pointing," if, for example, the advertising the DMO did didn't bring as many people as had attended in the past. Mr. Moquin said on the flip side, the events held in Beaufort could be leveraged when the VCB makes media buys. If they have more money to leverage, they can get a deal and buy more advertising. Mayor Keyserling said they could also package the events better.

Ms. Fabian said Main Street Beaufort would hate to have to rely on someone else to market their event when they have done the work to show that they can do it well. She reiterated that Main Street Beaufort doesn't know if they have the money to advertise the Shrimp Festival. They have used the money to grow and reach different markets. Councilman Sutton said he'd rather see Main Street Beaufort "marketing the dead buildings downtown" and otherwise focusing on the needs of Beaufort retailers. Ms. Fabian said the Main Street Beaufort annual retreat was last month, and there are "exciting things coming up," like work plans and projects that she hopes will "make council happy."

Mayor Keyserling said one of the most attractive things about Beaufort is "who we are." He feels that beyond the money to market Beaufort, the most important thing they can do to grow tourism and enhance the quality of life for locals is to build-out downtown and USCB. Main

Street Beaufort does a good job with festivals, but in terms of the vacant buildings and lobbying to promote businesses, there needs to be more. They need to be an agent, the group that is the go-to place and knows about every opportunity. Building, re-building, and marketing downtown is getting lost because of the focus on festivals.

Nan Sutton said as a retailer downtown, if she could do something for downtown Beaufort, she would travel regionally and research what Beaufort needs to make it even more appealing – businesses other than t-shirt shops – which is, she said, “the piece that is missing.” Mayor Keyserling said there’s a position like that in Greenville with someone “who finds that right retail.”

John Dickerson said someone came before the DRB with a B&B and cooking school downtown, but hasn’t again. If they could have unique, interesting businesses downtown, they could bring them in and then reach out to different markets the businesses appealed to.

Councilman O’Kelley said his “pet” is parking. Maybe Main Street Beaufort could shoulder that, he said. Economic development can’t happen without fixing parking.

Councilman Sutton said he’s not saying that groups that have applied for Accommodations Tax wouldn’t get funding this year, but he wants to know if it’s in the city’s best interest to keep doing business the way they have been. He wants accountability. He also wants decisions to be based on the best return on investment; groups shouldn’t assume that because they were funded one year they automatically will be the next. Mr. Dinkins said they have less than half the number of applicants they used to have, and that’s because they are making it more difficult to get money without being accountable for how it’s spent.

Mr. Moquin said the TDAC process is a no-win situation. He described a group’s strict funding criteria used “to determine who gets what and how much.” Councilman McFee said he didn’t know that the City of Beaufort could do that; the criteria are as report-result oriented as they can be without having a consultant to do that. Mayor Keyserling said the Main Street Beaufort study was very helpful. Mr. Moquin said they are trying to get more events and festivals to do what Main Street Beaufort did in that regard.

Councilman Sutton asked if TDAC can come back next year in advance of the next distribution of funds. Mr. Dinkins said May or June would be good. Mr. Dadson said they should bring TDAC back after they make the awards for this year. Ms. Fabian warned that the Shrimp Festival is important to the city and could be lost quickly, as might have happened if Port Royal had taken it over; the DMO advertises for Beaufort, Port Royal and the Sea Islands, not just Beaufort.

Ms. Sutton said downtown needs those festivals, which increase business over those weekends. Mayor Keyserling said no one is saying that the council wants to get rid of them. **Androula Weiland** said every Main Street Beaufort festival is self-sufficient thanks to sponsors, and none of the expenses come from money that is meant for marketing. Councilman O’Kelley said if

there's a city marketing tool, they have to "do for the city because they are getting city marketing funds."

Mr. Moquin said tourists don't come to Beaufort for just one thing; they come for 2-3 things and "the experience," so it's important not to forget the consumer.

BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

Mayor Keyserling said **Harley Laing** had e-mailed him, and Mr. Laing would like to go back on the Planning Commission. Mr. Dadson said he can serve on the commercial *and* on the Rail To Trail committee. There are some applications for positions on the HDRB and Planning Commission. He asked for discussion about whether to interview the other candidates or to go with Mr. Laing for Greg Huddy's vacant position. Mayor Keyserling said they could interview whomever they want to at the next council work session. There was a general review of the applicants and the length of terms and their expirations.

Ms. Fabian said the vacant HDRB seat was Maryann Norton's seat, who was the Main Street Beaufort representative. Ms. Norton owned property in the Historic District, which is a baseline requirement. Ms. Fabian said she knows those requirements. Mayor Keyserling asked her to get someone who can handle the learning curve.

There was general assent to appointing Mr. Laing to the Planning Commission; Councilman McFee said they should meet with the applicants, though, because they can serve on other boards. Mayor Keyserling suggested getting to meet the applicants at the next work session.

Councilman O'Kelley asked what the council was to do if Beaufort is evacuated for a hurricane. Mr. Dadson said they should evacuate, and if they do, council will get a card to let them back in when they're needed. Mayor Keyserling will go with the city manager.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Beaufort City Council was held on August 23, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, 1901 Boundary Street. In attendance were Mayor Billy Keyserling, Council members Donnie Ann Beer, Mike Sutton, Mike McFee, George O'Kelley, 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.

CALL TO ORDER

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The invocation was led by Councilwoman Beer, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by the mayor.

RESOLUTION COMMENDING GREG HUDDY FOR SERVING ON THE BEAUFORT-PORT ROYAL METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman McFee, made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION COMMENDING ANN BLUNTZER FOR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY AND OPEN LAND TRUST

Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman McFee, made a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was approved unanimously. Councilwoman Beer read the resolution and Mayor Keyserling presented it to Ms. Bluntzer. Ms. Bluntzer made a statement about her work with the Open Land Trust in cooperation with the city and introduced the new Open Land Trust director, Patty Kennedy.

MINUTES

Councilwoman Beer made a motion, second by Councilman McFee, to accept the minutes of the August 9, 2011 work session and regular meeting. Councilman O'Kelley said his name was left out for attendance at the regular meeting. He also noted that his comment about the follow-up to the Executive Session was still blank and should state that council gave the city attorney permission to conclude the suit against Airport Junction. Councilman McFee noted that all references to Ceil Dore throughout the minutes should be Mary Lou Brewton. **The motion to accept the minutes as amended passed unanimously.**

Councilwoman Beer made a motion, second by Councilman McFee, to accept the minutes of the August 16, 2011 work session. The motion to accept the minutes as submitted passed unanimously. Councilman O'Kelley abstained from voting because he was not at the meeting.

REQUESTS FROM MAIN STREET BEAUFORT REGARDING PERMISSION TO SERVE ALCOHOL, STREET CLOSURE FOR 5K RUN, CLOSURE OF CHARLES STREET EXTENSION, AND PERMISSION

TO USE THE PARKING LOT BY THE WATERFRONT PARK PLAYGROUND TO STAGE CHILDREN'S FESTIVITIES FOR THE SHRIMP FESTIVAL

Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman McFee, made a motion to approve the request for the downtown event, slated for September 30 and October 1, 2011. The motion passed unanimously.

REQUEST FROM THE BAPTIST CHURCH OF BEAUFORT TO HOST A BAPTISM AT THE DOWNTOWN MARINA BOAT RAMP

Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman O'Kelley, made a motion to approve the request for the October 16, 2011 event from 12 – 1 p.m. The motion passed unanimously.

REQUEST FOR A REFUND OF LATE FEES CHARGED FOR BUSINESS LICENSE

Councilman O'Kelley, second by Councilman McFee, made a motion to approve the request. Staff recommends this, Mr. Dadson said. The business worked with staff to work the matter out, and the \$224.08 late charge should be refunded and "chalked up to an honest mistake," Mr. Dadson said.

REPORTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilwoman Beer said the 9-11 ceremony "is going to turn out to be a pretty big event."

Councilman Sutton said he wants to follow up reports on the mooring field and on the horse buggy crossing at Newcastle. Mr. Dadson said there will be a mooring field report on September 13, 2011.

Councilman McFee said the Tricentennial Committee has been working on the parade on September 17. There have been six applications for historically relevant floats. He's sure council "will be in period dress on their float." He encouraged other groups to get involved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion of Councilwoman Beer, seconded by Councilman Sutton, council voted to move into Executive Session pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 70(a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Laws for discussion of land acquisition. The motion was approved unanimously.

Councilwoman Beer, seconded by Councilman McFee, made a motion to come out of executive session and resume the regular council meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

Councilwoman Beer made a motion, second by Councilman McFee, that the City of Beaufort, in partnership with Beaufort County and the Open Land Trust, commit \$250,000 toward the acquisition of two parcels of real property located at 41 and 47 Sea Island Parkway on Lady's Island for the purposes of open space protection and scenic view shed enhancement. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before city council, **Councilwoman Beer made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman O’Kelley. The motion was approved unanimously,** and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
IVETTE BURGESS, CITY CLERK