

A work session meeting of the Beaufort City Council was held on September 25, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, 1901 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.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

### **BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS INTERVIEWS**

**Laura McAlhaney** was interviewed for a seat on the Tourism Development Advisory Committee (TDAC).

### **DISCUSSION WITH RDC AND METROPOLITAN COMMISSION CHAIRS**

**Jon Verity** said the prospective bakery at the Von Harten Building is progressing with SBA and bank approval for the buyer, but “there are still hoops to jump through” on the state level. He has been selling at the Port Royal Farmer’s Market and is developing a following.

Lowcountry Housing Trust and with Sun Trust had a meeting in Bluffton in regard to fix-up homes; everyone involved was very enthusiastic. The next quarterly meeting will be in Beaufort. The Redevelopment Commission is also looking at a program related to housing grants for low-income buyers; it’s a grant if one stays in a house for 5 years. Henrietta Goode has come up with 5-6 people’s names, Mr. Verity said, and she is “reassuring them that this is a good thing.” Councilman O’Kelley said there was a similar city program; Mr. Verity said this is the same thing, and the loan is forgiven if one stays for 5 years. There’s a deadline in mid-October to identify the houses.

Councilman Sutton clarified that the repair funds would be for \$15-20,000. Councilman Sutton said this is good because it eliminates the hurdles of the past for heirs’ properties. Councilman O’Kelley asked what happens if the owner dies. Mr. Verity said that is a good question. Councilman Sutton said when the block-by-block program ended, the houses that were in that zone haven’t gotten any better. Councilman O’Kelley said there were strings attached to the \$7500 the city offered.

**Maxine Lutz** asked if these funds could be used for houses that are currently unable to be lived in. An owner could piece together different sources to repair them adequately. Mr. Verity said Brenda from Habitat for Humanity would know. Mayor Keyserling said the funds could be possibly leveraged for a loan. Mayor Keyserling congratulated Mr. Verity and the Redevelopment Commission for getting the number of organizations sitting at the table to do this.

The new owner of the Lipsitz building has had his plans approved by the DRB, Mr. Verity said, and is looking for tenants. 2/3 of the upstairs area will be made into artists' studios for rent. 80% of the original windows are still useable. Downstairs will be "fixed": not remodeled, but restored.

Mr. Verity said the Rail Trail broke ground a couple weeks ago. The project is on hold in regard to the Depot Building until the path is built that goes through it, so they can see what can be done and if a private developer could do anything with it.

Councilman Sutton asked if there was movement on Lafayette Street. Mr. Verity said the final should be done within the next 30 days. Councilman McFee concurred.

### **DISCUSSION REGARDING BASIL GREEN PARK GRANT AND ROADS**

Mr. Dadson said they "had worked the PARD (Parks and Recreation) dollars of the city and the county." They wanted to determine parking first. He said they were presenting a report on the conditions for the roads and the grants.

**Isaiah Smalls** passed out a presentation on the current road conditions and how they could be improved. Mayor Keyserling asked if that was prior to them being taken over, and Mr. Smalls said this would be *after* the take-over. Mr. Smalls said the local DOT has agreed to some improvements, but they wouldn't sign the MOU that was drafted. The local DOT will fill potholes, clean pipes, and do clipping, but they will not sign anything that commits them.

Mr. Smalls said in regard to street ownership: there are state-owned highways which are eligible for federal funds; state-owned streets which state funds are used to maintain; and county- and city-owned streets. City-owned streets are eligible for CTC funds, Mr. Smalls said.

Mr. Smalls described different street improvement funds and the criteria for qualifying for them. As they looked at taking over certain streets, they wanted to be certain they had a funding source for improvements as they're taken out of the system. Lafayette can be resurfaced with federal and local matching funds within the next 8-10 months.

Councilman Sutton asked what state DOT has to say about resurfacing a failed road like Lafayette Street. Mr. Smalls said they say, "When we have the funds, we'll pay you." Mr. Smalls said a representative on the committee presents what the needs are which are put with other requests and ranked. This road qualifies for Federal Highway Commission money which is why it will be paved next month.

Mr. Smalls said Rodgers Street is in fair condition except for failing spots between Cherokee and Boundary Street. Mr. Dadson said these road improvements will improve the ability to park. Mr. Smalls said as the ownership is taken over, there is an avenue for doing improvements. Mayor Keyserling asked if the city would take over the streets before they're improved. Mr. Smalls said yes, they would.

Mr. Smalls said Lafayette Street will be paved with federal funds next spring or summer. Council will prioritize the other streets. Nairne Street is in good condition, and they anticipate it will not need resurfacing in 7-10 years, depending on traffic volume.

Streets scheduled for improvement based on federal funds: Lafayette, Federal, Wilmington, Battery Creek Road, Waddell Road, Charles, and Bay Street. Councilman Sutton said that even when the streets are paved, the gutters and curbs are still in poor condition, and he asked if that was part of the conversation. Mr. Smalls said it could possibly be a joint venture between the DOT and the city.

In response to Mayor Keyserling's question, Mr. Smalls said the issue of no-striping is unlikely to happen again. The local DOT will be talked with about delineating the center line.

City streets currently on the list for BCTC / Tag funds: Boyer and Craven Streets. Councilman O'Kelley said East Street is "in horrible shape with potholes." He asked if Mr. Smalls could talk to DOT about filling in the potholes. It doesn't necessarily need repaving, but the potholes need to be filled. Mr. Smalls said it's from the horse carriages.

**John Dickerson** asked if work will be done to make stormwater flow properly on streets where it currently doesn't. Mr. Smalls said they would have to address the curb and gutter when they address the paving. Mr. Dadson said council needs to determine if they want the streets taken back in regard to the Basil Green plan.

Mayor Keyserling asked **Libby Anderson** to go over the plan. **Liza Hill** said the plan for Basil Green is to provide pervious on-street parking with county funds matching city funds. She told which streets would have how many spaces. The grant administered for the park must show ownership for the property, an intergovernmental agreement, and the spaces can't be metered. The deadline for completion for the grant is May 2014.

Mayor Keyserling said the grant money can improve the parking. but then the city will have the streets. Mr. Dadson said they wanted to provide a new vision of Basil Green Park. The committee was convinced that this is a good plan, and this is the first phase in moving toward this end. Councilman Sutton asked if this would open up Godfrey Street to Rodgers; this doesn't include any of that plan with the PARD funds, Ms. Hill said.

#### **DISCUSSION WITH THE TREE BOARD REGARDING RE-ESTABLISHING THE TREE FUND**

**Barb Fariior**, the chair of the Tree Board, said there was a Tree Fund some years ago to maintain trees and plant new trees. She is asking that the fund be reinstated. From 2004-10 the city planted 68 trees per year on average. They removed an average of 34 trees per year. In 2011, 14 trees were planted and 92 removed. The average cost to plant a 2.5" tree is \$250; planting one 24" tree is \$1800.

Tree removal permit fees are one source of funds for the Tree Fund, Ms. Farrior said; there could also be the use of fines received by the city, donations from groups at Arbor Day, and funds from developers not returned by the end of the one year period. These funds could be used for planting trees as well as for the removal of them and the maintenance of them. The establishment of a tree nursery at Southside Park has also been discussed and would save the city thousands of dollars.

Mayor Keyserling asked what explains the drop-off in plantings. Ms. Hill said the economy may account for it. Mr. Smalls said the budget was changed, and the planting hasn't been funded. The increase in trees taken out was because of hazard trees. Ms. Hill said they got two forestry grants prior to 2011. Currently the South Carolina Forestry Service is offering no funds.

Mayor Keyserling asked Ms. Farrior what kind of budget they are talking about with those source numbers. Ms. Hill said it comes up to \$5500 per year. An average of \$460 a month was garnered from permit fees for tree removal thus far this year. Other sources, such as the performance bonds that are not returned are real dollars, but she's not sure they can be used this way. Ms. Farrior said those figures can't be relied upon.

Mayor Keyserling said starting the nursery "would be a double bang for their buck if the nursery is started." Ms. Hill agreed wholeheartedly and said "it's a small investment if they start small." Councilman O'Kelley said these are trees taken out by the city and planted by the city. This doesn't take into consideration individuals planting on private property.

**Eddie Rodgers** asked if Ms. Hill had said that there's been no designated Tree Fund since 2004. Ms. Hill said it was used up until a year and a half ago. Tree City USA requirements include having a Tree Board, but the city is not required to have a tree fund for buying and planting trees.

Mayor Keyserling asked Mr. Dadson about the open space fund and if it's possible to use some of that money to allocate from the land acquisition fund. Mr. Dadson said they can allocate it that way if they wish. Councilman Sutton said they have been hesitant to do that. They have kept the tax base low, and there are situations like this where trees need to come down after storms. Tree boards in the past asked 12-15 years ago for tree planting.

Councilman Sutton said they could develop a tree planting capability in Southside Park so that they would never have to go out and buy trees retail. Mayor Keyserling said he had assumed that there would be a tree farm at Southside Park. The question is how to raise funds to grow it.

Mr. Dadson said part of the tree removal fee could be for the Tree Fund. That would average around \$6000 a year. They can apply for grants; council can raise fees and "move money around." Ms. Farrior said they have the property in Southside Park to start this, but it would take \$1500 – \$2000 to prep the area, irrigate, and purchase initial liner trees. Mr. Dadson said they have the funds for that now and could do that without even asking council for it. If

someone removes a tree, they should have to pay a fee in the permit that goes toward replanting.

Mayor Keyserling said the Southside Park idea seems to be supported. He asked for “a broader plan,” including a timeframe and what they might need to get as time goes on. Mr. Dadson said the Tree Board can go ahead and do that and the funds, he reiterated, are there. He said the Tree Board has a great idea about a perpetual fund.

Ms. Lutz asked if there are opportunities to donate funds in memoriam. People have done so in the past, Ms. Hill said. People typically buy trees for that purpose on Arbor Day. Ms. Lutz asked if it could be publicized. Ms. Hill said the Rotarians had bought 6 trees in the past, and they were planted around that time. Ms. Lutz said that information could be on the website with a link to donate a tree to the city.

Mayor Keyserling said there seems to be a lot of support for this idea and asked for a ten-year plan to be put together, integrating the tree farm but also offering a comprehensive plan. Councilman Sutton said “yes, let’s start a Tree Fund,” but do it as an item from the permit process to direct it so that there’s constant funding. He’d like to know that the trees that are planted are coming from the Tree Fund.

Ms. Farior said there will be an interim period for the Tree Fund to grow. The perpetual fund could come from permits, Councilman McFee said, and the line item used for the establishment of the tree farm in Southside Park. Councilman Sutton said this could begin on Arbor Day. Ms. Hill said they were hoping to do just that. Mr. Dadson said he will prepare a line item toward that end.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF CITY OWNERSHIP OF PILOT STREET**

Ms. Anderson said two blocks of Pilot Street would be used for fifteen on-street parking spaces. The DOT would not allow that sort of parking there, so the city needs to own it. Council had asked for more information on the need for parking and that staff notify the neighborhood and interested parties of the request, so they could attend or comment, so public notice to those in the area was made.

**Robert Oetting** said the school district is interested in adding parking to eliminate parking and traffic issues. Council had asked for staffing numbers: there are 129 spaces now, and there are 107 staff at the school at this time. The school is currently at 79% capacity; there will be a need for additional parking to allow the school to grow.

Mayor Keyserling said this issue got bigger than Pilot Street. There’s a whole question of traffic management in the area. He asked if City of Beaufort staff has determined if the parking helps or hinders that problem. Mr. Oetting said they want to do two pieces: One is to add fifteen spaces on Pilot Street so that cars don’t park on the grass. Without taking over the playground green space, they are looking at on-street parking. The second piece is to add a stacking lane on

Prince Street which would act as a third lane. There is a possibility of this occurring with the DOT. The city would need to own the piece of Pilot, however, because the DOT won't do it. On Prince Street, the DOT has said they would be willing to work with them on it, but there are still difficulties. In both cases, they will be using school board property to make this work.

**Yancy O'Kelley** said she had checked parking at the school at random times of the day on different days for 7 days; "today at 2 pm was the least amount of available spaces" at 17. Usually there were 20+ available. Parents come and go, Ms. O'Kelley said. "Something has to be done about the parents queuing up to pick up their kids," she said. She knew that a woman had to get the police to come because the parents wouldn't let her out into traffic. Ms. O'Kelley thinks that for safety, this matter is more pressing than parking.

**Judy Devine** said the pick-up traffic is dangerous and agreed that it's more important than the parking. Parents line up from both sides and merge down Pilot Street, then come from the other direction. This year seems to be the worst, she feels. She can't get out of her driveway and won't go home at pick-up time; additionally people park in her yard and also along the park.

Councilman Sutton said the stacking lane isn't guaranteed to happen but would address the issues of the neighborhood. He's not willing to take over a street until the school district explains what they will do with the fifteen spaces. He would like to see a stacking lane that went all the way around the school, even though it would take up some green space in the playground.

Councilman Sutton asked how the school has recognized the effects of that many parents coming there. They have to know there's a problem. Councilman Sutton said it's a magnet school now, not a neighborhood school, which is why they have so much traffic. If the stacking lane is what the school district wants to do, "they need to figure out a way to do it without killing the neighborhood."

Councilman O'Kelley said, bottom line, he doesn't feel Pilot Street should be taken over. The DOT says they won't allow it, so the school district comes to the city and says *they* should do it. Councilman O'Kelley there's a reason the DOT won't do it, and that may apply to the city as well. There are 2-3 lots across Prince Street that could be a parking lot, if that's what they need. If the school board buys it, it will be a parking lot. There's a place to park there that goes through to DSS and could have an alley to connect to Duke Street. Councilman O'Kelley said he had counted thirty vacant spaces at high noon. He doesn't support taking over the street. It's not a parking problem: "It's a pick-up and drop-off problem," he said.

Mr. Dickerson asked if that property Councilman O'Kelley had mentioned could be used as a holding place for the parents who are blocking traffic on North Street. Mayor Keyserling said people might object to that, too, because they don't want a parking lot between their houses. He asked if they have ever discussed not allowing the queuing there with the police.

Councilman O’Kelley said Hamar Street comes right out where Bay and North come together. Turning to Hamar off Bay would be worse. Mr. Dickerson said there are too many cars blocking up the streets, and it’s ruining the neighborhood.

Councilman O’Kelley said the diagram shows cars splitting when they come down Pilot or King to get more cars in there. If it were possible to go either way and *then* pick up a child it might help. Mr. Dickerson asked why they don’t use the front entrance to the school instead of the side entrances. The front is off of Prince Street. Councilman McFee and Councilman Sutton said this is the bigger problem than the need for fifteen more parking spaces. Councilman Sutton said he’s opposed to “a private entity taking over property and not taking it vertical” with a house. He feels that Mr. Oetting should go back to the school board and say this queuing problem needs to be solved first before the additional parking spaces are considered.

Ms. Lutz suggested car-pooling; a downtown school in another district stated that there had to be four kids in a car to pick up one. Someone else in the public suggested more use of buses.

Mayor Keyserling said he hears that the school board should go back and look at the bigger problem first. Mr. Oetting said the questions are good. In regard to how the unloading and loading are done, the kindergarten – first grade kids are being unloaded at the front door. The 2 - 5 graders unload on Pilot Street. The buses unload on Hamar, so all three streets are being used. They get 800 kids out in 25 minutes. The traffic is one of their largest concerns, Mr. Oetting said. Parents show up an hour ahead of time to wait. The parking spaces on Pilot Street are in line with the parking problem: it provides parking when needed (e.g., a special event) and is also enables parents to park and walk in. Now they park in the grass and go in, he said. The DOT made the school take down the no parking signs in the past, Mr. Oetting said. The city can control more if they own the street. The school district has no control of any of the streets around the school. They want to work with the neighborhood, but they have limited space. The school is succeeding, and it will require working together to solve it.

The police and planning department haven’t had complaints about the inability to get through, Mr. Oetting continued. The school district owns the lot across the street, but a parking lot didn’t fit the downtown process in regard to development. Councilman Sutton suggested staggering the times that the kids arrive and leave. Mr. Oetting said they don’t do that in Beaufort County. Councilman Sutton said he needs to go to the school district and tell them that they *have* to. Mr. Oetting said it’s more complicated than it sounds because of bus routes, different times that kids are picked up, and buses that come from other schools. It sounds like an easier solution than it actually is, he said, and creates more problems than it solves.

Councilman O’Kelley reiterated support for use of the vacant space for a parking lot. He said if the school board does an MOU with the City of Beaufort and then sticks the city with it, he won’t support it. Mr. Dickerson said people could be dropping the kids off an hour before school instead of sitting there with the kids in the car. He advocates the staggering of times as well.

**Officer Sean Alford** said he had “spent weeks out there trying to solve the problem.” The biggest issue is that “all parents are impatient and have to be at work at 8 am.” Parents park in people’s yards and nearly run over teachers. Every time a parent gets out of a car, it adds a half minute. The principal has sent out memos and fliers directing the parents. There’s almost nothing that can be done on the North Street issue. Traffic is blocked in both directions and *does* affect emergency vehicles. Officer Alford said he’s heard complaints about buses on Hamar. The school grew when Shell Point Elementary closed, and they were not prepared at Beaufort Elementary. Each car has one student in it. The police department has tried to tighten things up and getting them in and out in 25 minutes with no one getting hurt is remarkable. Officer Alford said the parking issue won’t solve the traffic problem.

Ms. Pierce said parents with kids at the charter school were parking in her yard, then all the traffic picking up children was routed in one direction; the charter school could be asked for advice, she suggested. Mayor Keyserling said he might speak with the school board president, the police department and others about this issue and they will work on it, and then notify interested parties when they have the next meeting. He asked for the public to send suggestions as they have them.

#### **DISCUSSION REGARDING HAY STREET AND DEPOT ROAD**

The discussion was tabled due to time constraints.

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

A regular meeting of the Beaufort City Council was held on September 25, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, 1901 Boundary Street. In attendance were Mayor Billy Keyserling, Council members Donnie Ann Beer, George O'Kelley, Mike Sutton, 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.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

### **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Don Starkey**, 1099 Otter Circle, commented on the suggestions for the public address system in council chambers. He suggested a sound system for the downstairs conference room as well.

**Rodney B. Bennett, Jr.** complimented council on the job they've been doing but said he had some issues to raise. He said he's concerned about the marina making Beaufort look like Charleston. Mayor Keyserling told him that he would have to address that later in the meeting. He also asked who is in charge of sidewalks on Ribaut and was informed. He went on to say that the sailboats tied up in the Beaufort River and Factory Creek are breaking the law. He has called DNR and the Coast Guard about the boats that don't have their anchor lights on at night. He suggested an ordinance to stop the sailboats from breaking the law.

Ms. Rodgers demonstrated a way to make the microphone work and urged that Mr. Starkey's advice be taken.

### **PUBLIC HEARING: AMENDING THE SECTOR 1 CIVIC MASTER PLAN WITH THE BEAUFORT MARINA RECREATIONAL DAY DOCK AND WATER SPORTS CENTER PLAN**

**Mayor Keyserling opened this public hearing.** Ms. Anderson said the Sector One Civic Master Plan was adopted in November 2011. The Redevelopment Commission came up with the amendment, and the Planning Commission recommended that the wording of the amendment be revised slightly to take out two specific references, and if it was revised thus, they recommended it unanimously.

**Alan Dechovitz** explained how the addendum to the Sector One Master Plan came about. Mr. Dechovitz showed the marina area before Waterfront Park was built. The Master Plan said this was the most underutilized space in downtown. The mix of consumers needs to be greater. To support downtown and provide the city with the revenue it needs, they have to improve the mix of consumers who are coming to Beaufort: regional and local shoppers and tourists to the

area with greater disposable income. Even a small portion of the 70,000 potential boats could come here and bring those with higher disposable income. The water is an underused gateway to the city, according to Mr. Dechovitz. He showed what the day dock would look like and indicated that it would have minimal impact on the view shed. A 250' day dock was what the Redevelopment Commission thought would be most affordable and needed, Mr. Dechovitz said; the Planning Commission had asked them not to be specific as to size yet.

The day dock would represent 20% of the seawall at Waterfront Park, Mr. Dechovitz said. 4 - 5 swings would potentially feel the impact of the day dock. The downtown merchants could experience a significant impact. They would prefer that larger boats go to the downtown marina. The second part of the plan is to build a water sports center to provide a magnet area for paddle sports enthusiasts of all kinds on the west end of the marina parking lot. There are many universities, clubs, and organizations with a great deal of water sport activity, and this, in combination with the Rail Trail, could make Beaufort an exciting destination, Mr. Dechovitz suggested.

There has been concern expressed, Mr. Dechovitz said, about the "dry stack." The Redevelopment Commission's intention is not to have great height or to use a machine to get the boats on and off the stack. People will do that. In the plan, Mr. Dechovitz said, any building on the side would have to conform to the Beaufort style in appearance as defined by the HDRB and codified by the form-based code. They have no intention of doing anything that looks out of place with historic downtown, Mr. Dechovitz said. The recommendations for the size of this building – which the Planning Commission asked them not to specify as of yet – were 3000 square feet or 7000 square feet, the latter which would incorporate the buildings at the marina now. This would be a private sector development overseen by the city, Mr. Dechovitz said. Market forces would decide what design was ultimately presented after review by various design review boards. The Redevelopment Commission's version may be too small. Some downtown merchants have suggested that they might want to move or expand their businesses in that location.

Mr. Dechovitz went on to describe the moorings which would also be a part of the plan. Whoever operates the day dock and water sports center, he said, will be required to have an advertising plan. Mayor Keyserling said this development would go through the same scrutiny that any other development would go through. There will be two readings by council which will be opportunities for the public to comment on the project.

**Peter White** with Suthern Rose Buggy Tours said he had presumed the meetings were more about the dock, but he has concerns that the building proposed would have an impact on the carriages and on the sea wall. It could also affect the cruise ships which help downtown Beaufort. He's for new business and new ideas and he likes the idea of the day dock and the water sports center, but he would like council to notify the carriage companies if there will be an impact on the carriages such as having to move, etc.

Mr. Bennett said he agrees that something is needed. The citizens of Beaufort need a better boat landing. He agrees with having a day dock. He takes his business to Port Royal now because he's a smoker, and they allow that at their marina.

**Jim Kenwalling** said "the only people (he) hangs with are people who boat." They go to the sandbar, but don't include going downtown in their social lives because the day dock can only handle 4-5 boats. There's nowhere for them to park their boats to go downtown, so they go elsewhere for entertainment. The limited amount of boat parking feels as if the downtown is "unfriendly."

**David Boone** said that when the Wounded Warriors were here, he gave them a boat ride, and they wanted to see Parris Island, "the Forrest Gump bridge," the Waterfront Park, and Bay Street. It was a weekday, but the ability to see Bay Street or Waterfront Park could have had to have been eliminated. Some were in wheelchairs, and once they were in the park, it was easily accessible, but the existing day dock doesn't work for people in wheelchairs.

**Joan Sedlacek** said she sent an email to Mayor Keyserling and Ms. Anderson. She feels the suggested changes are coming from "special interest groups." "Tens of thousands," Mayor Keyserling had said, will come to Beaufort, and she hopes that's an exaggeration. She is concerned that residents of Beaufort are being made secondary to the tourists. She would hate to see Beaufort become like St. Augustine. She likes the Waterfront Park the way it is.

**Terry Hussey**, 507 Washington Street, said she is enthusiastically in favor of the proposal. She's not a boater, but she kayaks and has been on a Dragon Boat. She thinks it would open the area for tourists and residents. Right now downtown tourism is solely focused on The Point. The water sports center, it has been said, would come under the HDRB's purview; a temporary structure would not, and she feels whatever goes there should have review.

**Bill Nettles**, Spanish Point, is concerned that "they might be wading into a safety mess by putting this in such close proximity to everything else." Rowing is a beautiful sport, but the big boats in the Marina, plus more boats in an *enlarged* marina, could lead to problems. He thinks it's the wrong place to put it because they are putting too much in one place.

Mr. Dickerson, representing Dragon Boat Beaufort, a not-for-profit organization for cancer survivors, is in support of the amendment. The changes would give them a safe place to paddle. They will have a Dragon Boat Beaufort festival in October 2013, and this will help them have a great festival that will bring 30-40 teams of 20-25 people each. They will be from regional locations. It will drive the economy downtown and add visibility.

Mayor Keyserling told **Henry Chambers** that no one wants to degrade the park, which everyone loves. Mr. Chambers was mayor for 21 years, he said. He reminded those in attendance that "the park is a park." Because it's a park, it is underutilized. It was intended to be underutilized so that there would be space for the citizens of Beaufort to use it. In his opinion, an *extension* of

the dock is the best option. Mr. Chambers said there is “a horrendously long building” which is much greater in scale and size to the other buildings.

Mr. Chambers went on to say that this is the fourth time council has brought this idea up, and four times council has denied it. Waterfront Park is a park to be utilized by *all* citizens of Beaufort and not “special interests.” It’s also “not meant to be an income generator.” He’s concerned it will affect the recreation in the park, and that the area will be like Charleston, given what they did with their similar park. The park is one-of-a-kind, Mr. Chambers said, and in his opinion it is “the finest small town park in America.” They have discussed how to replicate Waterfront Park with cities around the country who want to do the same thing. David Lauderdale wrote an article in The Island Packet / Beaufort Gazette, Mr. Chambers said, that called Waterfront Park “the finest park and basically said that if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.”

Ms. Lutz, 811 North Street, said Mr. Dickerson had said something about bringing a regional event in October 2013, and there will already be 2000 people in downtown Beaufort because of the fall tour of homes. She fears that they are “in danger of loving the Waterfront Park to death.”

Ms. Rodgers said she understands what a conceptual plan is. She feels that what they propose is in the wrong location. The mooring field will be increased to 48-49 slots and will need a larger day dock for non-motorized boats, including dinghies. Mr. Hicks had said at the Planning Commission meeting that he found “a minimum of 250’ nebulous.” The building could be from 3000 – 7000 square feet, Ms. Rodgers said. The strip would block views. She understands the process of going through HDRB, etc. and she hopes that such a board would stop the plan from proceeding.

Ms. Rodgers showed a photo by Carl Joye of the Waterfront Park, adding that the view is “magnificent.” The day dock and the water sports center should be separated, she said. She is in opposition to each plan. She doesn’t want to deprive any water sports enthusiast, but she objects to the location. The citizens voted years ago on a one cent tax for the purpose of acquiring open spaces. She wonders why those citizens haven’t objected to this.

Ms. Rodgers feels the cart is being put before the horse; the most recurrent conversation in Beaufort for years has been parking spaces, but they will lose them in the marina parking lot if they build the water sports center. She feels that if this were a profitable venture, a private entity would have done it already. She wonders if a discussion among the water sports organizations has been had. They “could form a not-for-profit organization and do this themselves without government intervention,” Ms. Rodgers suggested. She feels they “need much more research to find a place for the water sports center which is not in the Historic District.”

In regard to the day dock, Ms. Rodgers said that during the renovation of the Waterfront Park some businesses struggled and then were closed. Other factors have affected downtown

success as well. Locals who bring guests and also tourists find the park to be a “crown jewel,” and cement pilings in front of the sea wall would ruin the view. They will be forced to look at boats and pilings. It would not be just the loss of five benches as Mr. Dechovitz had said, Ms. Rodgers claimed. At high tide, it will affect the view of the river. People don’t need to step off their boats and into a restaurant, she feels. The day dock is underutilized; it could be extended and people made to walk some extra yards to go to a restaurant. They need a genuine assessment of the value of the cruise ships, Ms. Rodgers added. If they’re not beneficial to the city, it’s within the city’s power to change that.

Mr. Chambers summarized Mr. Lauderdale’s editorial from July 2012 in regard to the Waterfront Park which he said “works for everyone.” It would be easily ruined, Mr. Lauderdale said, by “needless clutter.”

**Conway Ivy**, 501 King Street, said he was speaking as an individual, not for the Historic Beaufort Foundation. He supports the general concept that is proposed as far as intercepting traffic down the Intercoastal Waterway. But he questions how this is carried out and what impact it will have. He asked the following questions of the proposal. Though it’s a conceptual proposal, Mr. Ivy said, it “would put in motion many things.” He showed the revised proposal as of 8-26-2012.

- Why shouldn’t an amended plan be put into place to overlay the proposed plan in the Master Plan? He showed a Google map with an overlay on it, showing the 250’ day dock as proposed so people can see scale.
- Why hasn’t there been a discussion of alternatives considered and their pros and cons?
- Why was this alternative selected?

He showed a letter from 8-27-12 from the Army Corps of Engineers and a drawing of their proposal. The report includes the marina with floats and a proposed expansion of the mooring field.

- What caused the change in the day dock plans presented to the Army Corps of Engineers of 8-27-12 and the day dock plans shown at the Planning Commission meeting? He showed two alternatives for the day dock in terms of placement. He’s not proposing anything, he said; he feels like all alternatives should be looked at, the pros and cons gone through, and reasons the decisions was made.
- What are the actual costs of making the day dock expansions as proposed to the Planning Commission last week?
- Of the matching state and federal grants available for the project, how much can be applied to the day dock expansion? What agencies, specifically, will supply these funds?
- How much money does the City of Beaufort have to provide to obtain those funds?
- What marketing studies indicate quantitatively the economic impact and benefit for Beaufort from increased day dock capacity?

- What is the financial pro forma for the day dock expansion with the anticipated return on the total investment?
- What is the current occupancy / use of the existing day dock?
- What is the transient occupancy / usage of the leased day dock facilities?
- What do marketing studies indicate the economic impact of the water sports center and benefit to Beaufort would be?
- What will the temporary and permanent structures cost?
- What is the preliminary financial pro forma for a water sports center with the anticipated return on total investment?
- What is the city's lease income expected to be from a water sports center?
- The conceptual site plan shows the location of a temporary structure; what will the site of the permanent structure be?
- When will the relocation of the carriage pick up point be determined?
- How will parking be provided for those boaters who store their boats in the "boat house"?
- Under the proposed form-based code, does the amendment approve the mass, scale, height, and architecture of the proposed building and its position on the site?

Mr. Ivy suggested a number of facts that would be helpful to the public were the City of Beaufort to investigate and report on them, including explaining the different alternatives that had been looked at and their "pluses and minuses." He feels based on his own experience in business and government that they will not be able to finance this project without financial and engineering details. Though the project is potentially a good one, he feels, poor planning and execution could destroy it.

Mr. Dadson said in order to apply for the mooring permit, the engineers recommended amending the application to include the mooring field, which is what the drawing is for. It's being done because they have to have a mooring field to better regulate mooring. The permit is a current permit that the City of Beaufort never acted on. They amended it to apply for the mooring field, and that's what the permit is about. Mr. Ivy said the Army Corps of Engineers document deals with the mooring field but also contains these exhibits under discussion.

**Frank Glover**, a former member of council and former mayor pro tem, asked "whose agenda is driving this." He wondered if the Planning Commission is bringing it to council for consideration. He feels this day dock is like handicapped parking which people want to use so they don't have to walk far to Wal-Mart. As far as options go, Mr. Glover said, at one point they considered adding another leg to the marina to be used as the day dock; they could add another section parallel to the day dock to accommodate additional need, if it exists. He feels citizens can spend their money better than the government can. He asked if the use of the dry stack storage area would be utilized year round and feels it would get very little use. It could be developed elsewhere if there's need for it, Mr. Glover said. The horse carriage staging area is there now.

**Kevin Cuppia**, owner of Modern Jewelers, agrees that Waterfront Park is a jewel but supports the day dock. He has been on an economic development committee for Main Street Beaufort for years. In response to Mr. Ivy's questions, he said, they have considered other alternatives. They eliminated the 250' by putting it against the sea wall so that it would be less obtrusive and there would only be a few more boats seen than are seen in the marina now. "Looking at boats is not a terrible thing," Mr. Cuppia added. He said when the Waterfront Park was being considered, people feared change, but Mr. Chambers "had vision." The city manager at that time said that they saw the Waterfront Park as an economic driver for downtown.

**Nan Sutton**, 809 Craven Street, said she "agrees to disagree." Her family has lived on the river since 1945. When Mr. Chambers built Waterfront Park, it was the best thing to happen to Beaufort. It is a park, but it's next to the Intercoastal Waterway and a downtown that needs to maintain its vibrancy. She sees nothing negative about this plan. The 250' day dock will not block the view, Ms. Sutton said. The posts will not be any higher than what is on the dock right now. She doesn't feel this is lead by special interest groups and the HDRB will not approve anything that's not right for Beaufort. Ms. Sutton said she believes the park will be made better, not "if it's not broken, don't fix it." She feels they need to look at the bigger picture, as Mr. Chambers did when he built the park. She is buying lottery tickets and said if she wins it, she'll pay for the buildings and the day dock.

**David Cargile** said he was disappointed with Mr. Cuppia's presentation because he served on the business development committee, and he wanted to take credit for it. He was struck by Mr. Chambers saying this park is for everyone; he believes that's correct, and that includes the 12,000 recreational boats in the county. They are not a "special interest," he said. The park was built because something had to be done about tough times, Mr. Cargile said, and those are the circumstances again. Change is inevitable, he said, "and if it's not managed, it will manage you." This is important to keep Beaufort vibrant and have a vital downtown while maintaining the things residents love about it. If they keep kicking the can down the road, Mr. Cargile said, they will find that the concerns about change making Beaufort look like Myrtle Beach will happen. The dock is on "the I-95 of waterways"; people will use this in the community, Mr. Cargile said. People can walk to the remaining swings even if a few are taken out, he concluded.

**Kenneth Wright** is with the Beaufort Power Squadron. They moved here for a longer boating season. A few years ago, they arranged cruises to downtown Beaufort and they brought 50 – 60 people. The downtown marina has to make money, he said, but they had to pay \$28 stoppage fee to go get a \$15 lunch, and people complained about that, so they now go to other places where they can dock for free for lunch. In regard to cruise ships, Mr. Wright said, the Power Squadron did a water depth survey, and it was submitted to the City of Beaufort. Things may have shifted a little, but there's plenty of water until one gets up close to the bridge. As far as the view, he said, he likes boats and feels they add to the view.

**LaNelle Fabian**, Main Street Beaufort, spoke on behalf of downtown Beaufort and said the organization is "the downtown business development organization." The day dock is the best

way to make downtown “as good and as vibrant as it can be.” Main Street Beaufort surveyed downtown merchants and they received an overwhelmingly favorable response on all levels.

**Craig Freeman**, owner of Barrier Island Marine, said boating is “alive and well.” People are seeing the next generation boat. A Marine who’d been out of the service for two days had bought a boat that day. An opportunity is being missed, and he would gladly provide a coupon to use at the establishments downtown. The people buying boats are not transients, they’re locals, Mr. Freeman said. A 20’ boat has 4 – 6 people on it, typically. They strongly support the day dock. The currents are tricky, he said, and there will be more accidents if they do the 2-sided model.

**Bonnie Wright** is with the Beaufort Power and Sail Squadron. Beaufort is literally missing the boat, she said. The town has all the amenities to attract transients to Beaufort. The merchants could attract boaters with offers to those who dock at the day dock.

**Tom Valentino**, 31 Pettigru Drive, is strongly in favor of the day dock. The dry storage he thinks is a good idea, but he feels that it would work better on Lady’s Island or other locations where it would not be an issue. He added that he feels like kayakers would not shop after kayaking.

**Richard Geier**, Pettigru Drive, watches boats on the waterway and said they are going six knots and will want to stop somewhere. If Port Royal develops their port before Beaufort does, that’s where they’ll stop and downtown Beaufort merchants will lose business.

**Blakely Williams**, Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce, expressed the Chamber of Commerce’s support for the day dock and water sports center. The “empty nesters” are often the boaters that would be targeted, she said, and they are an ideal demographic for downtown merchants. This would be a huge opportunity for visitors to the community.

Mr. Starkey said he was here when council voted for expansion of the mooring field. Council said they would have to do something with the day dock because the dinghies would need room. They need to do something, council has decided, but they have to decide what they *can* do. Because the present day dock is 150’ long, that’s only 4- 5 more spaces, and on the weekends, it’s full. He doesn’t want to boat for 1.5 hours and not find a space to put his boat. They need a day dock study like the parking studies that were done.

**Stephen Murray**, 817 Edisto Place, said he hopes council will support this. The day dock’s pros far outweigh the cons, he feels.

Mr. Dechovitz said he appreciates the energy in the room, both pro and con. It shows how much people love the town, he said. In order for some things to stay as they were, we have to accept that some things change, he said. Mr. Chambers’ idea was not obvious or popular at the time, nor was it seen as the economic driver it has become. No one could see that it was the right thing to do but Mr. Chambers; he convinced council, and the Waterfront Park has been

great for the City of Beaufort. He encouraged council to think deeply about this and the benefits of it to downtown.

**Polly Swenson**, Spanish Point, asked Mr. Dechovitz about the water sports center and 3000 square feet going to possibly 7000 square feet. She was concerned about public property going to private ownership. She asked if the rowing club understands this. If the city builds this for them, what will the initial and annual costs be? she asked. Will they pay rent? What is the public / private contribution plan, plan for oversight, liability costs, and costs to the users of the center? She wonders if all these things have been considered and if the members of the rowing club know the costs to them.

Mr. Dechovitz responded that the addendum to the Civic Master Plan allows the city to consider this sort of development. The city does not intend to use public funds to create the building that's under discussion. The city could direct the Redevelopment Commission to go out and find developer(s) who would bid on creating the building. The successful proposal would come to the city, and they might choose to sell or lease the property to the developer, who would in turn decide what to do with its operator. All that's being considered now, Mr. Dechovitz added, "is allowing the possibility for this building to happen."

**Ken Mailiken**, president of the Beaufort Rowing Club, joked that he is *not* a special interest group. He explained how the rowing club would use the day dock for its benefit and the benefit of visitors and locals alike. **Mayor Keyserling closed this public hearing.**

#### **MINUTES**

The minutes of the work session and regular meeting on September 11, 2012 were presented to council for review. **Councilwoman Beer made a motion, second by Councilman McFee, to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **ORDINANCE REVISING SECTION 7.2.G.2.B OF THE UDO, "ATTACHED SIGNS," TO CLARIFY THE METHOD FOR CALCULATING THE SIZE OF ATTACHED SIGNS**

**Councilman McFee made a motion, second by Councilwoman Beer, to approve the revision to the ordinance on second reading. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **ORDINANCE ZONING A PARCEL OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT THE INTERSECTION OF US 21 AND PARRIS ISLAND GATEWAY, HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

**Councilwoman Beer made a motion, second by Councilman O'Kelley, to approve the zoning on second reading. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **ORDINANCE ANNEXING PROPERTY LOCATED AT THE INTERSECTION OF US 21 AND PARRIS ISLAND GATEWAY**

**Councilwoman Beer made a motion, second by Councilman Sutton, to approve the annexation on second reading. The motion passed unanimously.**

**REQUEST FROM BEAUFORT COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS TO HOST THE VETERANS DAY PARADE**

**Councilwoman Beer made a motion, second by Councilman Sutton, to approve the request for the November 12, 2012 event. The motion passed unanimously.**

**REPORTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Councilman Sutton requested that Mr. Dadson do something about the microphone system in council chambers. Mr. Dadson said they understand and are looking for bids to fix it and to get microphones in the downstairs conference room as well.

Councilman McFee said he had attended AMI Beaufort Kids, and he found it to be an “amazing” opportunity to see the confidence-building, the effect on recidivism rates, etc.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before City Council, **Councilwoman Beer made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman McFee. The motion was approved unanimously** and the meeting was adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

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