

A work session of the Beaufort City Council was held on September 27, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, 1901 Boundary Street. In attendance were Mayor Billy Keyserling, Councilmen Mike McFee, George O'Kelley, and Phil Cromer, and Fire Chief Matt Clancy. Councilman Stephen Murray was absent (excused).

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**

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

### **DISCUSSION: DESIGNATED MARKETING ORGANIZATION UPDATE**

**Robb Wells** described what the city's designated marketing organization (DMO) does in the "visitor marketing cycle." The target demographics that the DMO focuses on are ages 35+ with "a core age" of 55 – 64. This has been a drop in the age, he said, which has "always been 55+." This was changed "to stay focused in the marketing approach," Mr. Wells said, but demographics can be limiting, so now they target "psychographic descriptors": history, outdoor activities and adventure, culinary, and arts and culture. These are the activities that people are seeking when they come to Beaufort, he said.

The DMO is results-driven, Mr. Wells said. They

- Monitor occupancy, ADR (average daily rate), and RevPAR (revenue per available room)
- Keep a "virtual guest book"
- Generate and respond to leads – inquiries – engagement
- Look at industry trends & insights

Occupancy is up 4%, the ADR is up 4%, and the RevPAR is up 8% year-to-date, Mr. Wells said; "accommodations people" have "indicated to me that they predict they will be up for the fall."

The cost per lead is \$3, Mr. Wells said; the tourism industry average is \$18 to \$25. The DMO has brought that number from double-digits to single, he said. He explained how the DMO gathers contact information from emails, etc., when people request more information, and "we generate that as a lead." The "amount of ad dollars" spent for a specific ad that generates the leads is how the DMO determines the cost per lead, Mr. Wells said. Some ads, like a billboard he cited, are not lead generators, but digital placement and print ads are, he said.

Mr. Wells said social media growth is on "average 1.6K", Mr. Wells said. The DMO is on Facebook and Instagram, for example. BeaufortSC.org is up 14%, and "organic growth" is up 28%. This is people searching out "Beaufort, South Carolina," not finding it using key words, etc.

Mr. Wells said the DMO has earned more than \$8 million in publicity value in 2015 and 2016. He showed some of the sources of that publicity: the *New York Times* ("42 Places to Go in 2016"), *Vogue*, *Condé Nast Traveller*, and *Upscale* magazine, which sent a reporter after "myriad attempts" to reach out to her after the Confederate flag was taken down at the state

capital. There could be more features in the *New York Times*, Mr. Wells said.

Mr. Wells said those “in the inspiration business” inspire “people to travel,” so the DMO does research to see if they are meeting people’s expectations, and if not, how they can do so. They also have done a survey of residents’ perception of tourism.

“The Enrichment campaign” results include hotel revenues increasing “20%+ as a whole”; room demand is up 9%, as of right now, Mr. Wells said. They have generated over 133,000 leads, some with “great ad buys” and some by spending very little money. The DMO has “earned over \$20 million in publicity value,” which Mr. Wells said started with the “Happiest Seaside Town” campaign.

Web traffic continues to shift, Mr. Wells said: 44% comes via computers, a number that is “dropping drastically” from years past. 40% is from mobile devices, which “keeps growing,” and he said “anyone coming to ask for” ATAX (Accommodations Tax) dollars should have a mobile component in their marketing. For the DMO, online and digital media is 61%, and print is 26%.

The DMO works with Trip Advisor to “help (them) tell our story,” Mr. Wells said, and it participates at a co-op rate. So when you search Trip Advisor now, “you see Beaufort-centric ad placement” because of this partnership, rather than Charleston, Savannah, or Hilton Head ads.

The most recent Restaurant Week was successful, Mr. Wells said, and 3 restaurants have asked to participate in the January 2017 Restaurant Week, which is statewide.

Room supply has remained flat for the last eight years, Mr. Wells said, but that will be changing soon; there are “projects in the works, including a renovation to take place in the next few months. There will be “less overnight leakage leaving the area,” he said, which has happened historically because there were not enough rooms for everyone who wanted them. People want the best rates, but also to be “close to base, so the families can participate.”

Tourism development has to continue, Mr. Wells said. “With the addition of Santa Elena into the market,” and other “additions . . . like Tabby Place downtown,” for meeting space, there’s still a need to “sustain our tourism development opportunities,” but Beaufort needs to have “authentic growth,” he said. “We don’t want to do anything that’s detrimental to our story.”

Asked about the occupancy drop, Mr. Wells said if the ADR holds, revenue can stay intact. A large number of rooms added to a destination like Beaufort can have an impact, but they could add 150 rooms downtown and 350 outside of downtown, and that would “not tip the scales negatively.” For the developers who are coming in, Mr. Wells said, “the numbers mesh.” None of them are “saying that the ADR isn’t big enough” for them. They are “seeing opportunity” here, and he expects “flagship companies” will be coming to Beaufort.

Mr. Wells said for every dollar that the city spends on the DMO, the DMO returns \$145 to Beaufort’s tourism industry.

Councilman Cromer asked the DMO's top priorities in tourism development. Mr. Wells said the Spanish Moss Trail is one, and the DMO has "worked with multiple attractions" to "align" those organizations' "marketing initiatives" with the DMO's marketing initiatives. There are other opportunities, too, he said. They are trying to make "this walkable town" attractive to health and wellness tourists, for example. They can work with tour companies that want to get off the ground.

Mayor Keyserling said he was in Hartsville this weekend, and that city generates \$800,000 in hospitality, according to its city manager. They are using Hospitality Tax (HTAX) money to build a water park in a 100-acre park. There are baseball diamonds, tennis courts, etc. He "didn't get the impression that they are spending much money on marketing," he said. They're spending it on "product." Mayor Keyserling said, "Sunoco is a destination for business travellers" there, as well as other industry, Coker College, and the Governor's School, which all draw visitors. He's curious about what Mr. Wells is seeing in other municipalities, and asked if "a large amount" of spending from accommodations and hospitality taxes "on infrastructure for tourists" – as Charleston and other cities do – was a "trend." Mr. Wells said he didn't "think it was a trend," but "certain destinations" have been doing this "for some time." From "a South Carolina travel and tourism standpoint . . . the majority of funds for tourism and development typically come from . . . 3% local ATAX . . . for infrastructure and offset," he said. Charleston "spends a ton of money on advertising," Mr. Wells said, because they generate a lot of ATAX, HTAX, and other taxes. Charleston bonds against its HTAX, he said, as has Beaufort. Any destination has some public money put back into tourism development, as well as into "attracting tourists to fill the . . . product they're putting in."

#### **UPDATE ON TOURISM PERCEPTION SURVEY**

Mr. Wells said the Hilton Head-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce, the Beaufort Chamber of Commerce, and Lowcountry and Resort Islands Tourism Institute at USCB did this survey. He said there were 1,000 participants from around Beaufort County. He showed the sort of questions that the survey asked (e.g., "Tourism has lead to more cultural opportunities," "Meeting tourists from other places is a valuable experience"). Of these, the highest agreement was with "Tourism benefits small businesses in my area," and the highest disagreement was with "Construction of tourist facilities has destroyed the natural environment." "I pay less in taxes due to tourism in my area" was "neutral," Mr. Wells said.

Most residents of Beaufort County support tourism in the area, Mr. Wells said, and believe "we should try to attract more tourists to our area." The majority of people who took the survey were around 70 years old and female; 90% percent did not have children under 18 years old. The income level was varied. Mr. Wells said most people who took the survey "derive no income from the tourism industry." 42% of the residents were tourists before they moved to Beaufort County. He showed where they had moved from; the greatest numbers came from Atlanta and Greenville. As the number of their visits increased, the likelihood that these tourists would become residents increased, he said.

Mayor Keyserling asked what percentage of the sample was from Beaufort. Mr. Wells showed the zip code break down. Mayor Keyserling said it showed the large percentage of retirees.

Councilman Cromer asked Mr. Wells if tourism this summer was down because of the weather; Mr. Wells said in June, some properties were “soft,” and some properties said August was soft as well. They probably need to target events to start in June. Water Festival did well. Councilman Cromer asked if Water Festival put “heads in beds.” Mr. Wells said there’s a spike on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday of Water Festival week. Some events and festivals could generate more overnight visitors. Water Festival and the film festival have participants who say they would not come to Beaufort if it weren’t for this event, Mr. Wells said.

Councilman McFee said when he was selling tickets at Shrimp Festival, “many people” told him they came to Beaufort for the festival and stayed overnight. Mr. Wells said people who filled out the visitor guest book at the Visitor Center said they came specifically for the fall Tour of Homes and the Architects Tour. The area from Savannah to south of Charleston is “getting ready to be saturated for finding private dollars to support festivals . . . at the level we’re looking at,” Mr. Wells said.

Councilman O’Kelley asked Mr. Wells what the percentage of occupancy in Beaufort’s accommodations is for Marine graduation and parents’ day. Mr. Wells said “some accommodations” would have rooms available on those days. Councilman McFee asked if these were the accommodations with “a higher price tag.” Mr. Wells said, “Usually.” Councilman McFee asked if some graduation visitors seek accommodations in Savannah, Hardeeville, etc. Mr. Wells said yes, “some might” do so because of “price point, and some might” because of hotels “spending on great marketing like hotels.com.” He said having additional rooms in the area would help with that “leakage.” Mr. Wells said developing a hotel in the area is a “4 – 5 point revenue stream for a lot of folks.” Councilman O’Kelley said wherever they stay, they have to come into Beaufort and eat somewhere.

Mayor Keyserling asked about the concerns about congestion and traffic in the survey. There seemed to be “an anti-tourism bent to that.” Mr. Wells said that might have been because of the timing of the survey and the beginning of the Boundary Street project. There are some other things that are related to it, though. Mayor Keyserling said more than half those who answered the survey were from Lady’s Island and St. Helena, and were “heavily retirees.” Mr. Wells said the benefits of tourism in our area “outweigh the impacts.” People are “grumpy but generally happy,” Mayor Keyserling said. The congestion idea was “more of a neutral” than a negative, Mr. Wells said.

Councilman McFee asked **Maxine Lutz** if Historic Beaufort Foundation (HBF) records the zip codes of those who participate in the fall tour, and what data HBF finds from that. Ms. Lutz said attendees are in the older demographic (55+), and Mr. Wells said, “It’s a higher household income” that’s attending. Ms. Lutz said attendees are “regional,” adding, “They tend to spend the night,” and “we hear that people make reservations” for the next year’s tour. It attracts a lot of people from out of state who stay on Hilton Head, she said. Mr. Wells said there’s been

an increase in occupancy and ADR during the event. More of the people who come to the Architects Tour are from out of town, Ms. Lutz said, than for the home tour.

Short-term rentals are not counted for occupancy rates, Mr. Wells told **Lolita Huckaby**, but “anecdotally,” short-term rentals “have an affect.” Councilman McFee said short-term rentals pay ATAX, and higher amounts of ATAX collected are a reflection of increased short-term rentals in the marketplace. It is not “spiking,” he said. Mr. Wells said there are approximately 1,700 rooms available in the market right now “in all kinds of properties” (downtown properties, “flag properties” and villas/short-term rentals). The amount of short-term rentals doesn’t make “a dent” in terms of room count, Mr. Wells said.

There being no further business to come before council, the work session was adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

A regular meeting of the Beaufort City Council was held on September 27, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, 1901 Boundary Street. In attendance were Mayor Billy Keyserling, Councilmen Mike McFee, George O'Kelley, and Phil Cromer, and Fire Chief Matt Clancy. Councilman Stephen Murray was absent (excused).

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**

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

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Councilman McFee led the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PROCLAMATION OF OCTOBER AS NATIONAL COLONIAL HERITAGE MONTH**

**Councilman McFee made a motion, second by Councilman Cromer, to accept the proclamation. The motion passed unanimously.**

**PUBLIC HEARING: ORDINANCE REZONING A PORTION OF A PARCEL OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 188 ROBERT SMALLS PARKWAY, FROM GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT TO HIGHWAY DISTRICT**

**Mayor Keyserling opened this public hearing.** The applicant for this project is Carolina Engineering, **Libby Anderson** said. The parcel is currently undeveloped, and the Butler Chrysler auto dealership is seeking to develop this site as a location for its business. The northern half of the parcel is zoned General Commercial (GC) District, she said, which does not allow auto-oriented uses. The proposed zoning is Highway Commercial (HC) District, which is already the zoning in the southern half of the property.

Ms. Anderson described the uses permitted in HC, which include auto-oriented uses. This area is designated in the Comprehensive Plan as G3, and in the Beaufort Code, this area is T5-Urban Corridor or Regional Mixed Use, which is comparable to HC. Robert Smalls Parkway contains a mixture of intense commercial land uses, Ms. Anderson said, including those that are auto-oriented. There should be no greater impact on natural features in the area with this zoning change. There are no sidewalks on Burton Hill Road, but the DRB (Design Review Board) may require one, Ms. Anderson said.

Public notice was made to adjoining property owners, Ms. Anderson said, and no public comments were received. At its September 19 meeting, the Metropolitan Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of this project and that a sidewalk be installed.

Councilman McFee asked if the county office complex that is directly behind this parcel is in industrial zoning. Ms. Anderson said yes, and pointed out the Limited Industrial (LI) zoning and a property that is in the county that is not zoned LI. This property under consideration is in the city limits and is zoned General Commercial, she said.

Councilman O’Kelley asked if “the green area” on the map that includes this property is part of what has been designated as being for “sexually oriented businesses.” Ms. Anderson said those are only allowed as “conditional uses” in LI zoning. “This parcel was” never “envisioned (to be) for industrial activity,” she said, but for commercial activity.

Councilman Cromer asked if there would be “some type of buffer” between this property and what appear to be “some individual lots.” Ms. Anderson said the ordinance requires that there be a “screening device – basically a privacy fence,” if a commercial parcel is adjacent to a residential use or residentially zoned property. The design review process can require an “adjacent use buffer,” which can range from 10- to 50’, “depending on the intensity of the activity,” but “at a minimum, a privacy fence is required,” she said.

Councilman Cromer said the lighting in an auto dealership might be a problem with the residential properties. Ms. Anderson said it will have to have full cut-off lights, and the applicant will have to submit a lighting plan for design review, so the city can have some control over that. **Mayor Keyserling closed this public hearing.**

#### **STREET CLOSURE REQUEST FROM THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. HELENA FOR ANNUAL FALL BAZAAR**

**Councilman O’Kelley, made a motion, second by Councilman Cromer, to approve the request for the November 5, 2016 event. Stellena Mumma** said the church is trying to involve the neighborhood in its bazaar. Last year, they had games for the neighborhood’s children. They are trying to get the feel of an “old . . . English fair,” she said. They hope to involve the whole community. Ms. Mumma showed which streets they are requesting the city to close. The Baptist Church of Beaufort is involved with this as well, she said.

Ms. Mumma said the request is for the street closure from noon on November 4 to 6:00 p.m. on November 5. Chief Clancy said a contract would be required for police services.

Councilman McFee told Ms. Mumma that they have “two accesses to parking lots off of these closed streets.” He asked if they have access “from Charles Street to (the) North Street lot.” Ms. Mumma said they do not, but they would like to “open up that section that’s by Harvey and Battey. We can cut” the wire there for “access coming in that way.” Then they could “close off the entrance that is currently part of the parking lot.” **The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **RESOLUTION ADOPTING SHARROWS AND SIGNS**

**Councilman McFee made a motion, second by Councilman Cromer, to approve the resolution. Dean Moss** said the Spanish Moss Trail “is becoming increasingly busy,” so safe routes between downtown and the trail are needed at North Street and at Bay Street and Depot Road, where there are traffic lights to provide safe crossings. The Friends of the Spanish Moss Trail want to provide signs and indicators on the pavement to guide people and to “indicate that these are passageways” for vehicular traffic, riders, and pedestrians, Mr. Moss said. SCDOT has a policy that will enable this, but “there are lots of little quirks in that policy that don’t work in our

favor,” he said (e.g., a 14’ lane requirement). After getting council’s support in the form of a resolution, they will begin work on encroachment permits, etc.

Councilman McFee said “the major direction” for the sharrows “is to cross Ribaut Road,” and he asked if the intent was to take the sharrows “all the way into town . . . at Depot Road and North Street.” Mr. Moss said yes. Councilman Cromer said the public would need education as to what sharrows are. Mr. Moss agreed and said they would also need to educate tourists. **The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **HORSE CARRIAGE ROTATION SLOTS MINIMUM BID**

Mayor Keyserling said that there had been a council work session about this matter, and the city manager was asked to do research about “hard costs to the city.” Mayor Keyserling said the amount was “\$45,000+.” **Kathy Todd** said staff “obtained information from each of the departments . . . that provide direct support for the carriages.” The costs include salary and benefits, parking spaces, providing water, the kiosk, and “asphalt repair and maintenance” because it “gets worn because of the horse traffic.” The salary and benefits was estimated by determining staff’s “level of effort” at 18% in “a good season,” and “about 80%” in “a not-so-good season,” she said. “We averaged about 50% of the salary and benefits for that direct support,” Ms. Todd said. Direct costs were \$49,000, and “the federal government allows indirect cost rates between 5% and 10%,” so she used 7.5%, which added \$4,000 for a total of \$53,000 in direct and indirect costs to the city “in support of the carriages.” Combined revenues generated by both carriage operators over 3 years were \$429,000 annually, and the city received \$628 per year from business license revenues from the two companies over that same period of time, Ms. Todd said. Her recommendation to the city manager was to keep the minimum bid amount at \$25,000 per operator.

Councilman O’Kelley said he had not gotten the document that pertains to this, which was sent via email. Ms. Todd showed him her document. He said he doesn’t “know how we can determine asphalt deterioration” by the carriages, and he has “trouble with saying we’ve got \$49,000 in fixed costs.” Ms. Todd said, “The bulk of that is salaries and benefits.” Councilman O’Kelley said, “We’re going to have this (police) officer, whether that officer is checking on carriages or writing tickets.” Ms. Todd replied, “50% of the level of effort for that officer was dedicated to the direct costs of the carriages, based on the amount of time spent.” The city does not require this high of a fee of “any other business that uses the city’s streets,” including the tour buses, Councilman O’Kelley said. Councilman Cromer agreed with Councilman O’Kelley that “this seems a little bit high of a percentage.”

**Peter White**, Southurn Rose Buggy Tours, said the carriage companies would be interested in seeing these numbers from the city. Their company has always paid for its own water, he said, and the electricity they use is only “enough to charge laptops for the cash register.” If the parking spaces have an impact, Mr. White said, they would be glad to pay for them out-of-pocket.

Mr. White said other tour businesses also have an impact on the Waterfront Park restrooms,

trash bins, etc. The carriages have rubber wheels like cars do, he said, and though the horses have shoes, the amount of damage is “maybe noticed over 10-year periods” and is seen as “scratches in the pavement.” Mr. White said the carriage tours are a draw that brings people to the city, and they act as the city’s ambassadors.

Mayor Keyserling said if there were no time constraint, he would suggest that this be tabled.

**Nichole Myers**, Sea Island Carriage Company, thanked council for having listened to the carriage operators in the work session. The carriage companies’ “overhead is way more than” the amount that Ms. Todd had cited as the companies’ gross revenues, Ms. Meyers said. She suggested the operators “could put a meter on our kiosk” and pay for the electricity they use, and each company could pay \$35 a month for each of the two parking spaces they use in the Marina parking lot.

Mayor Keyserling said, “We started this conversation” about minimum bid amounts “when we were narrowing it down to two” carriage companies, “and what we were essentially doing . . . is creating a franchise,” because the city is “restricting the right to use (its) streets to two companies.” The carriage companies get “the exclusive right . . . just like the (two or three) vendors in Waterfront Park,” who also “pay a fee to have the exclusive right” to sell food from carts in the park. “I look a little beyond what the costs to the city are,” Mayor Keyserling said, but he said before he discussed that, he wanted the carriage operators to see the figures staff had provided to council about how they had arrived at \$53,000 in costs to the city.

Councilman O’Kelley said Mayor Keyserling is saying that there are two companies that have this “exclusive” right, but that number of companies was set by the city because there couldn’t be five or six carriage companies in a town as small as Beaufort, so “the exclusiveness is set by us.” Mayor Keyserling agreed and said if there were three or more carriage companies that wanted “the right” to operate in Beaufort, since there can only be two companies, “you’re paying for . . . the right to be one of the two that (are) allowed.”

Councilman Cromer said, “The lower the slot fee” the more likely it is “to invite more competition.” Councilman McFee said he had “served on TMAC (Tourism Management Advisory Committee) when we did the bus wars and when we did the carriage wars,” so he has “a much stronger opinion with reference to the percentage of staff” time spent on the carriages. The current carriage companies “are getting along fine,” he said, but these companies might lose their spots “when we go through the 5-year renewal process” if they “lose (their) bid opportunities.” Councilman McFee said council has to “recommend” a minimum bid amount “on the basis of our past history” with the carriage companies, and “that has not been a positive history for ten years.” He told the operators that the \$53,000 that staff had determined is “in part” because of “costs . . . related to the amount of staff time that’s required to mediate the circumstances if the tour companies do not work together.” Other “indirect costs, related to the spacing in there” (i.e., the companies’ two parking spaces in the Marina parking lot) are “not just the cost of the rental (of the) space,” Councilman McFee said, but “because it’s basically taken off of our rolls for your exclusive use during the period of time,

and that's 24-7, as far as we are concerned . . . It removes it from the value cost of our parking availability from the spaces in Waterfront Park." Councilman McFee continued, "Staff interaction and the requirements we have" is "the largest issue." He said, "The wear and tear from the horseshoes" and the "pathmarks from the standpoint of the carriages" does "not go without notice," but he doesn't believe the carriages are creating potholes, so these companies "are good stewards in that respect." However, "the buses do not urinate," Councilman McFee said, and while buses may give off "some diesel byproduct . . . that does not deteriorate our roads over time."

Mr. White said he has seen the tour coordinator, Sgt. **Hope Able**, "possibly twice" this year. 85% to 90% of her time is spent on her other functions "with the police force." She does give the tourism test for new tour guides. Mr. White said he reported cleanup violations over 100 times when Sea Island Carriage Company was run by its former owner. The city had tools to deal with that, he said, but he doesn't believe that operator was ever fined, etc. Mr. White would call Sgt. Able in the morning – 5 days a week – then Sgt. Able would call Sea Island Carriage Company, and then that operator would clean up his spills. There are "many ways to regulate this," Mr. White said, with "a few demerits" before an operator's license is taken away. Mayor Keyserling said again that Southurn Rose Buggy Tours and Sea Island Carriage Company might not win the bid for this contract: "We have to base" the vote on the minimum bid amount "on history," he said. Mr. White said that he's saying that the city has tools so they don't have to place as much demand on Sgt. Able if there are problems.

Ms. Meyers asked if the 50% of \$83,000 is Sgt. Able's salary, and Ms. Todd said it is Sgt. Able's "salary and benefits."

**Councilman Cromer made a motion to set the minimum slot bid at \$20,000.** He pointed out that setting it lower could "invite more competition." **Councilman O'Kelley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **REQUEST FOR USE OF THE DOWNTOWN MARINA BOAT RAMP FROM MEADOWBROOK BAPTIST CHURCH**

**Councilman McFee made a motion, second by Councilman O'Kelley, to approve the request for the church's annual River Baptism October 23, 2016 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.. Ivette Burgess said staff had no objections. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **REAPPOINTMENT TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TDAC)**

**Councilman McFee made a motion, second by Councilman Cromer, to approve the reappointment of Jane Sidwell to the committee. The motion passed unanimously.** There are two positions on the committee that still need to be filled, Ms. Burgess said, and there are people interested in those positions. **The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Chief Clancy said at a city staff meeting, "everything was moving along fine."

## **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Keyserling said he had met with property owners on Broad Street, which he described as “a very complicated project.” A collapsed pipe was found, the pond had to be dredged, and part of that does not belong to Broad Street but to a neighbor. There are a number of people working on this project, he said, and it’s a good example of the need for better communication. The neighbor never complained about the pond “because it was taking all of his storm water,” Mayor Keyserling said.

Mayor Keyserling said he is speaking to the Sea Island Corridor Coalition tomorrow. They have submitted a list of questions, and Ms. Anderson will be there as well. “There’s so much speculation” about Whitehall and the outcome of the traffic study, he said. He invited councilmen to come to the meeting.

## **REPORTS BY COUNCIL**

Councilman McFee said there would be a public meeting for the traffic study being done by the City of Beaufort, SCDOT, and the county for Lady’s Island/the Sea Island corridor at Lady’s Island Middle School at 6:00 p.m. on September 29. The forum will allow the consultants to obtain additional information from the public for the study.

Councilman McFee said that at the Northern Regional Implementation Committee meeting “there was a resolution proposed for the City of Beaufort to withdraw its growth boundaries from Chowan Creek for the new development at Walmart.” He said, “The resolution . . . was amended to include a comprehensive plan (for) parking,” and the suggestion was made “not to specifically attack the Lady’s Island growth boundaries without considering the limitations that the northern section of the island near the air station (has) – with the joint land use study, (which) actually creates a barrier for the protected properties around the air station – . . . as part of the review process when we look at growth boundaries.” Councilman McFee said the group was able to make this not only about Lady’s Island and its growth boundaries but also about “the reality of reviewing all growth boundaries,” and what changes may be needed, because of growth in the Town of Port Royal, Beaufort, and “the northern Beaufort (County) side.”

Councilman O’Kelley said the old Koth’s building now has a business in it that sells nuts.

There being no further business to come before council, **Councilman Cromer made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting. Councilman O’Kelley seconded. The motion passed unanimously**, and the meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.