

A work session of the Beaufort City Council was held on November 17, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall Conference room. 302 Carteret Street. In attendance were Mayor Billy Keyserling, Council members Gary Fordham, Donnie Ann Beer, 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.

PRESENTATION FROM THE WAY FINDING SIGN COMMITTEE

The committee consisted of Larry Meisner, Joe Lee, Donna Alley, Lanelle Fabian, Lana Hefner, and LaRose Smith. Mr. Meisner, representing the Beaufort Chamber of Commerce, led a discussion about the committee's findings. The committee was asked to look at the *directional* signs. They did photo inventories of the major thoroughfares to see what made sense. Most of the existing green signs are in good places, but Port Royal could use some additional signs for directions to Parris Island. The entrance may be moved at some point in the future. He discussed the possible re-routing of US 21 around the south. Trucks are already doing this. He said that at some point Ribaut Road was not signed as US 21, and Mayor Keyserling explained the history of that.

Mr. Meisner said destination signs to downtown are small. The committee recommends going to the brown signs for cultural resources, parks, and recreation areas. He pointed out where these would go. Ms. Hefner said right now there are 4 and the committee came up with 8. There are visitors' center signs now, but if the center moves downtown, they'll need to be adjusted. The committee is indicating that the brown signs could be specialized logo signs. Main Street Beaufort may be working on this. On boat landings, the use of a graphic symbol is suggested. On Ribaut Rd., they want to make the signs directing to historic downtown more uniform.

Mr. Dadson asked if there was contact with SCDOT. Mr. Meisner said there had been early on and the representative had said for the committee to "Tell (SCDOT) what you want." Mr. Dadson asked if they could send a letter when/if council agrees and Mr. Lee said yes.

Mr. Lee said the guidelines from Mr. Nesbitt, Division Traffic engineer for SCDOT, were to get rid of the individual designations of each of the Sea Islands. Once across the bridge, each could be identified. It was also suggested to get rid of any signs with distances on them; Ms. Hefner added, "Especially further out." Mr. Lee said they needed a way for citizens to comment on the signs. It's confusing who citizens should call – county or city, etc. – and he suggested a button on the web sites.

Mayor Keyserling asked about reducing clutter and redundancy. Ms. Hefner said the recommendations do that. Co-located signs are ideal, Mr. Meisner said, and there needs to be a balance between sufficient information and less clutter. Mr. Dadson said "it's a net removal of 7." There was brief discussion about efforts to get traffic off Ribaut Road.

Mr. Dadson said council could take an official action to endorse these findings at the regular council meeting and pass it on to SCDOT or wait for Port Royal to come on board and then do that. Councilman

Sutton asked how they plan to cover costs. Mayor Keyserling said SCDOT said this will not happen overnight. Ms. Hefner added that SCDOT had told them to prioritize. Mr. Lee said he didn't know what the cost was. Mr. Lee said the downtown signs' costs are being assessed by Main Street Beaufort. Ms. Hefner said they might be involved with the 8 brown street signs that say downtown and Waterfront Park and changing them to branded signs. Councilman Sutton said he'd like to be able to budget for what the state won't be doing. Mr. Dadson said the sign replacement shouldn't be much more than regular replacement costs. Ms. Fabian said Main Street Beaufort had received an assessment of about 10 signs for \$2000. Ms. Hefner said they've asked for brown DOT signs until the branding is worked out. Mr. Dadson said to ask in the letter to SCDOT for advice on a timeframe. Ms. Fabian said she'd pass along the two quotes Main Street Beaufort has received. Councilman Sutton said he wants things to move along.

Councilwoman Beer asked about the intersection "out here" on Craven Street where it's necessary to change lanes to continue to go straight, and Ms. Hefner said the committee agreed it was a problem but felt they should stick to way-finding. The same occurrence happens in various places throughout Beaufort.

Mr. Dadson said a committee has made recommendations for neighborhood signs which get away from the standard green signs. Ms. Johnson said the Northwest Quadrant neighborhood association is meeting on 11-18 and can give feedback to council after that. Mr. Dadson and Councilman McFee said branding neighborhoods' signs is common elsewhere. A brief discussion of the problem of sign mildew ensued.

DISCUSSION REGARDING CENSUS 2010 COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE

Mayor Keyserling said this is a good opportunity and council should think of nominee names. Mr. Shepherd had said to come up with 10-12 names, Councilman McFee said. He added that the county wouldn't overlap with the city. Mr. Dadson said the purpose of the committee is to encourage comfort of those people who are afraid of the census. Mayor Keyserling said Charlotte Brown or someone from the park committee could be asked for recommendations. He wouldn't leave out Mossy Oaks. There was a discussion of other areas and people who live in them who might be good resources. Mr. Dadson said he'd put this on the agenda for next Tuesday's regular council meeting, and council can present recommendations then, after discussion with the potential nominees. Mayor Keyserling said they're being selected because of their constituencies and won't need to be interviewed.

DISCUSSION REGARDING APPOINTMENTS TO THE HISTORIC DISTRICT REVIEW BOARD

Mr. Dadson had presented council with guidelines for appointments and spots that needed to be filled and when. Councilwoman Beer said she's still interested in 3 consecutive 2-year terms rather than 2. Mr. Dadson said the ordinance is specific. Councilwoman Beer said it could be changed and clarified that she meant number of terms (3), not length (2-years). Mayor Keyserling said council should read it, look for updates, and have it posted on the web after they've read it.

Mayor Keyserling said they need to discuss a process for appointing to the Redevelopment Commission. They need to figure out how to circulate the first 5 resumes that have been received and what to do with others that will come in the future. Ms. Rogers asked if there was a deadline. Mayor

Keyserling said it's a rolling process. Mr. Dadson suggested setting up "an internal clock" within council. Everyone needs to look at the current resumes, and Mayor Keyserling said 2 -3 people could be brought into each meeting. Councilman Sutton said he'd like to have candidates for the Redevelopment Commission come in and interview. Mr. Dadson said he'd put it on the first work session in December.

Mr. Dadson reiterated that Design Review Board and Historic Design Review Board both have positions that need to be filled.

REPORT ON BTAG MEETING

Mr. Dadson cited a letter from the county that asked their bond counsel, Mr. McNair, what county could do about the list of potential projects. He read from the letter with its five questions and answers. Mr. Dadson said the gist of the letter was that county has the discretion to move money around. He said "the answer is more political than legal." The city attorney will look at it. County council didn't elect to make any decisions about what they'd do. The county administrator instructed his staff to "churn" these projects. The staff review was the only decision made.

The cost of the projects jumped to \$300 million. There's an \$85.5 million shortfall so far, because engineering's still not completed. Mayor Keyserling said Mr. Kubic asked what the recommendation would be for spending what is actually coming in, if no projects are deleted but only staggered in their scheduling. Mayor Keyserling believes they'll come back with that recommendation within 30 days. Councilman McFee asked if there was discussion of extending the sunset. Ms. Rogers said she thought Mr. Kubic was highly optimistic, but he isn't talking about deleting anything. Mayor Keyserling said Mr. Kubic was realistic in saying, "Quit counting money that's not there." Mr. Dadson said Mr. Kubic's position is to determine the logical way to take the list of ten and move them forward with the resources that exist and then build support for future referendums.

Mayor Keyserling said those projects not depending on impact fees aren't being affected. Hilton Head got stimulus money and has a surplus. But Bluffton has spent on engineering double what the project was to cost, for example. He feels Beaufort should take the \$4.5 million remaining after the study about the connector and put it into Boundary Street. There will be \$13-15 million in sales tax. He said Sheriff Tanner agreed that there's a need eventually for the connector in order to evacuate which puts the problem further out.

Councilman Sutton said "the record of the obvious" (the results of the connector study) must have some start-up review that would carry itself to other study points. Mr. Dadson said the dollar amount of the study was for studies beyond the current review which are more expensive. Mayor Keyserling said it's unfair to people in outlying areas for whom this route has been talked about for 20 years. He feels a route should be picked, and they should proceed deeper into it.

Ms. Rogers asked who'd attended DOT's exhibit at Beaufort High School. Discussions ensued about the need for the connector and where it should go. Mayor Keyserling said MCAS had said they could accommodate the project with a "No Access Road" back in 2003-2004. Councilwoman Beer said that was before the advent of the F-35 which could adversely affect the planes' flight pattern. Ms. Rogers

asked whose was the final decision about the connector. Mayor Keyserling said nothing will happen unless the county drives it. Ms. Rogers said if the council concurs about what they want and what's best for everyone, the air station would surely work with them. Lady's Island will create static, but they're going to have to move forward.

Mr. Dadson said council needs to convince the county, and the voters will decide on the money. Councilman Sutton said the study's not complete; alternative options need to be offered beyond the location everyone already knew what would be the cheapest. There needs to be a cost comparison with other possible locations. City council's not going to decide where the bridge goes. It won't happen unless the voters support a funding mechanism. Councilman McFee said the first phase of the study was to be on the economic feasibility which is why they came up with Bellamy's Curve. Councilman McFee said that's not even a Northern Bypass.

Councilman Sutton said Lady's Island and St. Helena can't continue to grow if there's not better on and off access and fixed bridges. There needs to be a BYPASS of the city. Mayor Keyserling said it might be a good idea to purchase TDRs on Lady's Island. Councilman Sutton agreed and said it may *never* be economically feasible, but it may get to the point where something else is considered. Mayor Keyserling said his view is to say "Continue." Councilman Sutton agreed and said he wants a REAL feasibility study beyond "Bellamy's Curve is least expensive." Mr. Dadson said Bellamy's Curve has an easement in perpetuity on it and can't be built on.

DISCUSSION ON TIFs I, II AND III

Mayor Keyserling said he feels that the Redevelopment Commission should be told to go back to the board on Boundary Street. Mr. Dadson said until they are done pursuing TIFs, it's unknown if they can agree to fill the shortfall. TIF extension and TIF 3 creation can fill the hole and complete the project. Mr. Dadson said there are charts to show how "it's cash-flowed out" on TIFs 1 and 2. There is a way to raise what's needed, if everyone stays in. Mayor Keyserling asked if the base stayed the same in an extension, and Mr. Cook said yes. Mayor Keyserling confirmed that with the 2009 base, and collection starting in 2032 in TIF 3, there will only be 9 years for the remainder of 3 to collect from it.

Mr. Dadson said there are logical, proven ways to fill. The pressure should stay on on the Northern Crossing. A year ago, council was told the county felt what needed to be completed wasn't in the balance of the contract. The county bidded the balance of the work on a price basis, not negotiated after determining *qualifications*. The contract hasn't been released yet. Mayor Keyserling said that decision wasn't made 8 months ago, and that's the problem. They may have missed the opportunity to find the engineer who knew the most about the process, having done the first part of it.

BUILDING INSPECTIONS

Mayor Keyserling said he's heard concerns on building inspections. He feels as if "the person in charge may be terrific, but the people in the field" may be problematic. Mr. Dadson said when the city is aware of a problem, they go in and fix it.

Several council members agreed they've also heard about the people in the field. Councilwoman Beer said it's not fair for someone to have to fix something and then have *another* inspector say it's not

right. Mr. Dadson said he needs to know about the problems in order to go out and fix it. Councilman McFee said he's on his 7th complaint, and he's asked contractors for something in writing, but they won't document it for him because they have to continue to work with the inspectors. Councilman McFee said homeowners say that people will quit getting permits. Mayor Keyserling said someone told him, "Forget it. I'll go finish the project." Councilwoman Beer said they're afraid to complain in writing because the person they're complaining about is in charge. Mr. Dadson reiterated that he needs to know about it, and that fear is a poor excuse because contractors should have done it right the first time. Code needs to be complied with in a fair way, but the city has to know to do anything.

Councilwoman Beer said holding up CO's or making them pay has happened in the past. Councilman Sutton said the codes are very complicated and hard to understand. Building inspections are based on those documents. He can see there will always be a difference of opinion, but the default needs to be if it's done in accordance with the International Building Code. Inspections need to be consistent. Mr. Dadson said they need to let him know, even if they won't put it in writing, and Codes staff can work it out to the benefit of both parties.

Councilman Sutton told other council members that people with complaints should call him, and he'd like to go out and look, based on his background and experience. He said the number one complaint in his experience was that his guys would do a list of rejections, then there would be another list. If the contracted codes people are fair and consistent and don't leave a site without an inspection report, that will help. Mayor Keyserling said Ronnie was on vacation when the mayor received a complaint. Councilwoman Beer said council members will tell complainants to call the city. Councilwoman Beer said maybe Codes people and contractors could be gotten together to work something out, especially the Homebuilders Association.

HORSE & CARRIAGE WASTE ISSUE

Mayor Keyserling asked about the report re: horse carriages; he'd like a copy of it. Mr. Dadson said it only comes out once a quarter and it's put in the council's packets. Councilwoman Beer said the city used to clean up the messes and the companies were charged. Reading the report is infuriating. Mr. Dadson said it can be on the agenda for a regular session or work session when it comes up next. Citizens who come across horse waste should contact the police who will send someone to pick it up.

BEAUFORT THREE CENTURY PROJECT IN THE CARNEGIE BUILDING

Mayor Keyserling said the Beaufort Three Century project has been leasing an office downtown but can't anymore. He wondered if they could be re-located now to the top floor of the Carnegie Building for them to use until there's a long-term use for it. They need a convenient, visible place to collect oral histories. Mr. Dadson said it's vacant and on hold now. Councilwoman Beer asked what expenses would be besides lights if they didn't adjust temperature. Mr. Dadson said he could "cost it out." Councilman Sutton said this is similar to when the Arsenal was being booked out. Mr. Dadson said that leasing it out short-term keeps them from leasing it out permanently.

Ms. Johnson, representing the project, said the Beaufort Three Century project hasn't asked the city for anything except the A-Tax grant, for which they are grateful. The former space they used was rough, and they realize they may be booted from this space too. She said they would be a minimal

tenant. They'd prefer not to move out of downtown. They're very grateful to their previous donors. Collecting the archive means they have a lot of resources and need a good-sized space to meet in, so they are looking for something very secure and large.

Councilman McFee asked if costs could be determined. Mr. Dadson said OLLI is coming in in a couple of months. Mayor Keyserling felt the lack of enthusiasm shown for the idea was his answer. Councilman Sutton suggested Ms. Johnson talk to Dick Stewart about the building on Scott Street across from the library. Councilman McFee said the city market on Greene and Charles might be a possibility, too.

NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME

Councilman Sutton said he wanted to discuss the continuance of crime in his neighborhood. His neighbor was robbed, a tenant's car was broken into, and he's been burglarized twice and nearly was once again. The past 9 months it's been quiet for him but not for his neighbors. He doesn't know what to do. Councilman Sutton asked if there could be a lawful check of more abandoned secured buildings.

Mr. Dadson said this is upsurge in crime was partly a normal effect of the economic downturn. There's not a significant crime spike. Part of the neighborhood clean-up effort is to find out what people's issues are. The city can patrol, including on private property. Councilman McFee said there's an uptick in burglaries, etc. in Pigeon Point, too. Councilman McFee said sometimes they don't call the cops. At night there aren't a lot of bodies on the street, though they have a lot of lighting. Empty buildings make it easy to hide and to hide stolen property.

Mr. Cook said they've gotten aggressive on vacant lots. Councilman McFee said all those things are positive, but he'd like to see blitzes on dead buildings. Mr. Dadson said they could do an inventory. Mr. Dadson said neighborhood improvement teams can report. Mr. Cook said there's no ordinance to deal with abandoned lots, which will come up in the next neighborhood meeting. Ms. Johnson said minor crime reports aren't seen by average citizens so they're not as aware of crime. She asked if police could work with newspaper to report it. Councilman McFee said filling empty houses will help, too.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before city council, Councilwoman Beer made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Sutton. The motion was approved unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
SHIRLEY HUGHES, ACTING CITY CLERK