

A work session of the Beaufort City Council was held on June 15, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall Conference room, 302 Carteret Street. In attendance were Council members Donnie Ann Beer, Gary Fordham, and Mike McFee, Mayor Keyserling, City Manager Scott Dadson, Shirley Hughes, Mack Cook, and Ivette Burgess. Councilman Mike Sutton was absent.

In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d) as amended, all local media were duly notified of the time, date, place, and agenda of this meeting.

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

DISCUSSION REGARDING FINAL REPORT ON MUSEUM ARTIFACTS

Mr. Dadson said the process of determining what was in the museum and preserving it properly started a year ago. Dave Smoot and Donna Alley made a presentation to the group. Mr. Smoot said he had sorted through the situation at the Arsenal which he learned was “a challenging opportunity.” He presented a written report to the group. He said there are three cases of “hodge podge.” Very little is of museum-quality; there may be enough to fill 3 display cases and most of it is “very miscellaneous” and not suitable to a narrative about Beaufort. Councilman McFee asked if any of it was relevant to the upcoming tricentennial; Mr. Smoot replied that very little, if any, is. He added that other museums start with less and grow from there. Councilman Fordham asked about artifacts of stuffed animals from Asia and Africa, and Mr. Smoot said those had been treated with arsenic during taxidermy and had leaked so they were disposed of.

Mayor Keyserling asked if there was anything valuable financially to a third party. Mr. Smoot said there is a Civil War era Spencer carbine weapon, but it’s not in condition to be displayed. Restoring it would cost thousands of dollars, but it might be worth \$35,000. A specialty museum might be interested in the hair jewelry. There are several dozen museums scattered through the US which might accept some of the memorabilia, but that is a “high-ticket process,” he said. Mr. Smoot said all of the pieces that are known about are in the attic of the courthouse. Historic Beaufort Foundation still has some items in their custody, and there’s no list of those items that he knows of. There may be up to two storage units with city property in them, but he knows nothing about it.

Mr. Dadson asked Ms. Alley how that happened. Ms. Alley said Historic Beaufort Foundation was in charge of the museum and moved out of the Arsenal, then took some things to storage. Some are at the Verdier House, including art and historic documents. There are still items in storage but no one knows where they are or what’s there. Councilman Fordham said the city needs to find out what is in storage, and Historic Beaufort Foundation should be given a date to turn these things over.

Ms. Alley said this process began because there were people concerned when the Arsenal was moved out of. Mr. Dadson said he’d write a letter to Historic Beaufort Foundation requesting an accounting. The remaining artifacts need to be put somewhere; they’re presently in the new police court building, which is secure and dry and a better place than they were in. Ms. Alley

said they're boxed properly and inventoried and in better condition than they have been in decades. Ms. Alley said there is a nice art collection, some of which might be good enough to be placed elsewhere.

Mayor Keyserling said he doubts that any of the things can be tracked down to be returned to the original owners. Ms. Alley said the current inventory has been matched up against multiple inventories attempted since the 1940s. The original ownership is rarely noted. One item's original owner was verified, and the item was returned to them. Mr. Smoot suggested that the collection should be gone through and what the city decides to keep is all they need to find space for. Ms. Alley agreed that this was a sound recommendation. Mayor Keyserling said they should keep what is salvageable and of value. Mr. Smoot said he's tried to establish how many items there are but he can't even estimate but could only guess 15,000 individual items. Mayor Keyserling said the relevance to the Beaufort community should be the first criteria in making a choice, then the item's condition. Once they have narrowed the inventory down this way, they can come up with a plan.

Laura Von Harten said that the things that have relevance should be kept and cherished and those that are of value to other areas could be acquired by them with a deed of gift from the city, and those things that can't be associated with a particular area could be sold at auction.

DISCUSSION REGARDING REBUILDING TOGETHER AND USE OF CENTER FOR CIVIC AND COMMUNITY DESIGN

Mayor Keyserling said in 2004 when he was on council there was an effort to help people in the Northwest Quadrant, so groups went to Charleston and Savannah to see how they were handling similar issues. Charleston has a center that's an off-shoot of their planning department. Their function was to mediate between the city and those who might want to do something that could compromise the downtown area, i.e., MUSC going to N. Charleston if they couldn't go higher: the group resolved that issue. The plan for the Beaufort center was to be a resource for neighbors to rebuild and help them find resources, etc. Mayor Keyserling said the idea was that an architect can get through the process smoothly, whereas someone else probably couldn't. The group was to be physically in the Northwest Quadrant, but the council at that time decided not to have it be part of the city. The initial group's chair wasn't strong; the group didn't survive and had no city funding. Mayor Keyserling has enquired about the status of that group and its 501(c)3 status. The Northwest Quadrant Task Force has had a meeting or two, and they basically said they haven't done anything with it and they don't object to that being picked up by another organization.

Mr. Dadson said the Redevelopment Commission was interested in that "shell" to be used for the Rebuilding Together program or other similar things. The city attorney has reviewed the matter, and has said that though it's expired, it can be continued, if the board of directors could be reconstituted by the city council, since there's no longer a quorum of original board members. That board could then renew the registration with the secretary of state. Mr. Dadson said the board of directors could be the Redevelopment Commission members and 4 people

from the Northwest Quadrant neighborhood association. Mayor Keyserling asked if then it would essentially be part of the Redevelopment Commission, and Mr. Dadson answered yes.

James Bellew said that's not what he's requesting. He wants the 501(c)3 to be a separate organization with a separate chapter and its own by-laws. Though members of those groups could be on the board of directors, it can't have any connection to a government entity. He would like it to be a private non-profit. Mr. Dadson said the city attorney had said that the people with the authority to put that together are the city council which could reconstitute the board, and then they can form another board. The Rebuilding Together group doesn't have to have a relationship with the council. Councilman Fordham asked Mr. Bellew, if council reconstitutes the board, what Mr. Bellew wants. He replied that he would like it reconstituted in the way the city attorney said it should be, then transferred to the new board he is putting together right now, which is comprised of people from all over the city including the Northwest Quadrant. The idea is to house it in that neighborhood. They want it to be officially handed over.

Mr. Dadson said if the council reconstitutes the board, they should be careful how they do that and should put some controls in it. If Rebuilding Together uses this specific 501(c)3, council has some risk. So they might say that 4 of the Redevelopment Commission start the board and "spin it," unless a quorum of the original members could do it, but David Tedder has said that's not possible. Mr. Dadson went on to say that the Redevelopment Commission is supportive of both Rebuilding Together and this 501(c)3 and has no other purpose for it. Mr. Bellew asked about the timeframe under discussion so that he knows when he can move forward. Mayor Keyserling said Mr. Bellew needs to decide if he's on Redevelopment Commission, and he doubts that Wendy Zara can be on the board. Mr. Dadson said the Redevelopment Commission has no interest in controlling this group, but they do have an interest in it serving its stated purpose.

Councilwoman Beer said a Redevelopment Commission member like Ms. Zara could be on both, but Mayor Keyserling said she'd have to recuse herself if Rebuilding Together came to the Redevelopment Commission for funding. Mayor Keyserling said he wants to avoid the impression that a city commission is funding its own non-profit. Mr. Dadson said the reconstitution of the board of directors will be on the council's regular meeting agenda.

Ms. Von Harten asked that the entire Beaufort County area be included during the final process of choosing the board of directors. Mr. Bellew said it will be similar in structure to Habitat for Humanity.

DISCUSSION REGARDING RIVERVIEW SITE SELECTION

Mr. Dadson pointed out a paper about the establishment of a permanent facility for Riverview. At the end of July, the "visioning" workshop will take place, and the city will participate in the process if they choose to and can present a list of sites it wants considered. Since the council retreat, an internal committee is looking at revising the open space plan and updating it. He has also asked them to include civic space, not just open space. When the comp plan was adopted,

and with the transition into form-based code, the city becomes most dense at the town level; it's currently only at half-capacity at its core. To have the optimum environment, cities need to be better and have open space and civic infrastructure. 5 or 6 neighborhoods in the city have been identified as needing more block-level planning. Mr. Dadson said this charter school is local and is also part of the state-wide charter, so it is part of the local school system. They are in the Battery Creek Elementary school presently. It's been popular, and students are on a waiting list. Mr. Dadson feels it meets the criteria for a civic space and merits zoning preference, etc. This school in its charter wants to be part of a neighborhood and close to recreation and sporting areas, natural resources and walkability, etc.

At the beginning of the process, they considered the traditional neighborhood/city as a whole as potential sites. If the council considers schools in the city to be important, the committee should continue in the process, and council and the committee should have a conversation about sites. They want to build an appropriately urban-style facility. The rent the charter school pays inhibits it, while no other city school has to do so. Northern Beaufort County schools are not near capacity. Parents who want to educate their children with a choice. He thinks Riverview would take off if the city gave a steady hand politically and offered them a good running start. He thinks schools in the city are as important as parks to make neighborhoods desirable. Mayor Keyserling said if there were a school in the middle of the city, people would want to live there. Mr. Dadson said he feels they should advocate for appropriate blocks and neighborhoods and places they think development of a school would be good.

Merritt Patterson said the school would be about an 80,000 square foot building. Councilwoman Beer asked if the Beaufort Elementary space would be available. Mr. Patterson said it's been discussed somewhat, but three schools are embedded in Beaufort Elementary, and the school board likes it like it is. They want the charter to be independent though it must meet state standards. Mr. Dadson said they don't want to lose the community-level schools, either. Mayor Keyserling offered that council should consider a resolution to encourage the school and what Mr. Dadson and others are doing. The decision-making process is unclear to him, and there are a lot of players. The school board is 11 individuals and it's complicated. He thinks it's consistent with the comp plan to grow the city from within. He would urge the school board, if there's existing capacity to use it, and the city could help them.

Councilman McFee asked if it's realistic. Mr. Patterson said there are several valid sites in the city, which is ideal. Mayor Keyserling said he would like to see if the county would like to join the city in this. Mr. Patterson said there's a lot of synergy to that, and "at the end of the day, it's about a \$13-18 million construction project." Much of the money comes from a per-student charge and also from the debt service. Mayor Keyserling asked if the \$9800 per student is the standard for all students, and Mr. Patterson said no. Mr. Dadson said a Mossy Oaks student is more. Mayor Keyserling said they're basically taking money allocated for education and putting it into capital which is legal. Mayor Keyserling asked if the operating money was the same. Mr. Dadson said they can educate very well with less money.

Ms. Von Harten said the county's mission it to make rural *and* urban areas better, and this is consistent with that. Mr. Dadson said this will have to meet every standard; the difference is that they want to be part of the neighborhood and can use shared civic space as part of it. Mayor Keyserling said the schools in Beaufort were always overcrowded but when they built schools in rural areas, the city-based schools were abandoned.

Ms. Von Harten asked about changes if the F35Bs come to Beaufort. Mr. Patterson told her about the logistics of the planes, and Ms. Von Harten clarified that she was referring to a greater influx of students. Councilwoman Beer said that such an influx would affect Laurel Bay. Mr. Patterson said that if the simulation unit is obtained, it will bring a lot of technical people. Ms. Von Harten clarified that the contractors' kids don't go to the same school that the children of the active military go to.

Mr. Patterson said it might be a good idea to review other possible sites that the Riverview group hasn't thought of yet. The current site they have no plans for. Beaufort Elementary may remove AMES Academy from their school, but then it will be very empty. Mr. Dadson said that they really want those families living in the city to be "the driver of this."

DISCUSSION REGARDING BOARDS AND COMMISSION VACANCIES

Mr. Dadson said they need to fill positions on Redevelopment Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBOA), Historic District Review Board (HDRB), Housing Authority, and Design Review Board (DRB). Mayor Keyserling said they should seek to fill the vacancies first. They have some applications, and he asked if they should do a story about what's being sought. Mr. Dadson said he's made some calls as well. He recommended asking Gene Rugala and Ms. Zara who they might recommend. Ms. Hughes said that if council wants to schedule interviews next week, there's a conflict with a military event. Mr. Dadson said he'll schedule interviews for June 29. He said he's asked Rob Carson to come to the next council meeting at 5 pm to discuss hurricane preparation. There will be an executive session afterwards.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Keyserling added to the agenda a discussion about the expansion of the national cemetery. It's the mayor's understanding that the owner of the property wants about twice what the property is worth. No government agency can buy property for more than its appraised value. Mayor Keyserling thinks the expansion would be a good thing for the city and an asset to growth. He said they should look first to see if the place is safe. The city doesn't need to be involved. They should find out if the Department of Veterans Affairs wants it. Mr. Dadson said it's a good suggestion for Councilwoman Beer to "chase up" Joe Wilson to help them figure out what to do.

Councilman McFee said he'd sent an e-mail about product licensing for the logo. He asked when Councilman Sutton would be back in town and available. They want to do a press release before Water Festival. They have a logo selected, but the artist hasn't been notified and only the committee knows who did it. There needs to be a kick-off for the event, a fundraiser, and something tangible for the legacy of the tricentennial. They need to work on their budget; the

committee would like to do a "First Night" celebration on December 31, 2010 including some activity in Waterfront Park earlier in the evening and then fireworks which would kick-off the celebration for the year. He described some other efforts under discussion.

Councilman McFee said council needs to discuss the city's role in the tricentennial. Ms. Hughes said she and Councilman McFee will work up a presentation. The council needs to decide what to do with their money if they have any. Mayor Keyserling said that in his conversations with potential donors to the "300 donors" plan, they're interested in doing so if they would match the city on costs that would go into a sort of endowment for the future. Mayor Keyserling said B3C is doing that; Councilman McFee said it's not contradictory, though they don't really need fourth century funds because the Community Foundation already has one. There should be something "ego tangible," he said, which commemorates their gift. Mr. Dadson suggested the city's role could be an endowment, i.e., for the arts through current institutions or the parks. Councilman McFee said the city is committed to planting 300 trees.

Ms. Von Harten brought up the possibility of the county changing its form of governance. Of the forms the state allows, currently they have Form 3, with a county administrator. They are considering Form 4, in which there would be a county manager who would hire a treasurer and an auditor. The discussions have just begun and will affect the city's finances. They need to know the pros and cons from all angles. Mayor Keyserling said he has some concerns about the way in which this matter is arising and when. He thinks it should be a conversation but maybe can't be "pure" right now because of current circumstances. He doesn't want to do it in the context of current elections. Ms. Von Harten said there would need to be a referendum and those currently in office would serve out their terms though she didn't know if that was as-of-election-day. She said there has been public interest in having this discussion.

Councilwoman Beer has reserved the Waterfront Park for a 9-11 celebration. Mr. Dadson said the city will be co-sponsoring it. She wanted to inform council that it was in the works.

Mayor Keyserling said in reference to the retirees' health care, the municipality carrier has applied for the federal subsidy. Ms. Hughes clarified that the applications and procedures have just come out. No one knows how the money will be allocated. It's not to be used as a reimbursement and can only be used to maintain or reduce the overall cost of the retirement plan going forward. They will apply for the plan, but there's no guarantee on any of it. Rules and regulations still haven't been determined.

Ms. Von Harten said county council hasn't finalized its budget; they've held flat for a couple years and there's some talk of a tax increase but it's not been determined. She feels the county will need to make up for services that others have been responsible for in the past that will be lost in coming years. Mr. Dadson encouraged them to not duplicate city services.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

ATTEST: _____
IVETTE BURGESS, CITY CLERK