

A work session of the Beaufort City Council was held on July 6, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. in the City Hall conference room, 302 Carteret Street. In attendance were Council members Donnie Ann Beer, Mike McFee, and Mayor Billy Keyserling, and Shirley Hughes. Council members Gary Fordham and Mike Sutton were 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 OF THE PROCESS AND USE OF ACCOMMODATION TAX FUNDS**

Mayor Keyserling said that there's been discussion of redundancy and concerns about accountability with A-Tax recipients. Last year, \$57,000 was split among various organizations after the Chamber of Commerce and Main Street Beaufort got their share. There should be accounting for the money that was given out and efforts to see that there wasn't duplication, etc. in the granting.

Ms. Hughes said Ivette Burgess said that they will be contacting Jeff Evans and the A-Tax Committee to schedule a meeting in 2-3 weeks to report on the results for 2009 and then send out the applications for 2010, go through the process, allocate the money, and then convene a series of meetings to discuss what they want to do, how to do the process better, etc. in preparation for next year. The city will request a written report with an expectation of learning how the results were determined as well as a brief presentation from recipients.

**Carlotta Ungaro** said the Chamber of Commerce launched a web site and increased their search engine optimization. They are presenting a report in September. The 3 area Chambers are required by state law to do a report in the fall of the results from the previous year, and in the spring a report on what they plan to do next year.

**Larry Holman** of the Beaufort Black Chamber of Commerce said they have spent their money as they had planned on the business guide for which they received \$10,000 in A-Tax funds. They also have advertised in 3 magazines, predominantly for the African-American market, which they had also planned to use the money for.

Mayor Keyserling asked if the Chambers had ever discussed consolidating their guides. Mr. Holman said it would be difficult. The Black Chamber of Commerce has a smaller book. Ms. Ungaro said the boards' comfort level wasn't there yet. She added that it's "a mature product," but Beaufort's target market still wants a book. Mayor Keyserling asked if they had contemplated an e-marketing campaign. Ms. Ungaro said yes, they do an e-newsletter. Mayor Keyserling said there should be a better, "more unified ways to do this." Ms. Ungaro said informational updates about the Chamber of Commerce can be requested online. Lanelle Fabian said billboards were something new Main Street Beaufort did and worked with Hunting Island and the Chamber of Commerce on a Southern Living ad. She listed other advertising they have done that has brought in leads and business.

Mr. Holman said the Black Chamber of Commerce's visitors' guide is downloadable from their web site.

Ms. Ungaro said industry averages show that most Convention and Visitors' Bureaus are primarily publicly funded. In the average Convention and Visitors' Bureau, 80% of funds are public and 20% comes from private sources and partnerships. In Beaufort's Chamber of Commerce, 50% of funds come from private sources. They get a smaller percentage of tax dollars than neighboring states do, and those other states don't have to deal with grants.

**DISCUSSION REGARDING THE REMOVAL OF PALMETTO AND POLK STREETS FROM SCDOT INVENTORY**

**Isaiah Smalls** said because of Boundary Street improvements, Palmetto and Polk Streets have to be taken out of the DOT system so they can do what they need to do with the Boundary Street project. The application will be sent to the DOT. He explained that Palmetto Street is next to the Chik-Fil-A. He said the city goes back about a block and a half. Mayor Keyserling clarified what needed to be done as far as procedure. Mr. Smalls said at some point, DOT has a policy that if the city takes a portion of the street, that severs that street from the system, and the city may have to take the entire street. Hogarth Street "isn't in the circle" because the city doesn't want to take Hogarth Street.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

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

There being no further business, Councilwoman Beer, seconded by Councilman McFee made a motion to adjourn the work session. The motion was approved unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:36 pm.

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