



# NEWS RELEASE

**For immediate release**

**Tuesday, May 13, 2014**

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## **Beaufort to lease part of Municipal Courts building to federal probation office**

Following through with its original intent when the municipal complex was designed, the Beaufort City Council today approved a long-term lease of space in the Municipal Court building to the federal probation office for about \$60,000 annually for the first five years.

The second five-year term carries a base lease of approximately \$50,000 annually. The first term is higher because it factors in costs to renovate to the new client's needs, said Kathy Todd, finance director for the City of Beaufort.

To accommodate the new partner, the Beaufort Police Department's administrative offices will relocate to the second floor of the courts building.

"When we designed and built the Municipal Court and City Hall buildings, we designed them with space to lease to tenants or, in the far future, for city needs," said Beaufort City Manager Scott Dadson. "The General Services Administration of the federal government came to us and said they were interested in long-term use of our space. It's an ideal partnership."

The U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services System provides probation and pretrial services through the U.S. district courts. Their Beaufort offices have been housed at 1501 Bay Street, the federal courthouse.

Federal officials announced in 2012 that Beaufort's 19<sup>th</sup> century federal courthouse would be one of six throughout the South to close, part of an effort save more than \$1 million a year in rent. The federal government's lease with the county on the courthouse in Beaufort expires in mid-July.

With City Council's approval of the lease, the next step will be to design and renovate the space to meet the federal probation team's needs, Todd said. The goal is to have the 1,648 square feet renovated and ready by July 1.

Revenue received through the lease likely will be plowed back into the city's TIF 2 fund to support other redevelopment in key areas of Beaufort, Todd said.

"When we designed and built the municipal complex of our City Hall, the police offices and city court, we intended all along to lease some of that space to agencies and organizations that were a good fit with what we do," Dadson said. "Putting the federal probation team into the building with our police is an ideal partnership."

Once the move is completed and the police administration is relocated to the second floor of the Municipal Courthouse, there will still be about 4,500 square feet of space available for other tenants, Todd said.

"It's an ideal situation for both parties. We have good space in a great location for them, and they have a need that we can meet," Todd said. "Our taxpayers and city residents will see their municipal complex used to a higher potential, and we earn money each year from leasing to the federal government."

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