

A regular meeting of the Beaufort City Council was held on March 11, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. in the County Administration Building, Ribaut Road. In attendance were Mayor Bill Rauch, Mayor Pro Tem George H. O'Kelley, Council members Donnie Ann Beer, Gary B. Fordham, Mike Sutton, City Manager Scott Dadson. In accordance with 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 6:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The invocation was given by Councilwoman Donnie Ann Beer. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Mayor.

PROCLAMATION

On motion by Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman Fordham, Council voted to adopt the proclamation designating March, 2008 as Disabilities Awareness Month in the City.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joy Locke, Main Street, thanked Council on behalf of Main Street Beaufort and the Arts Council of Beaufort County for co-sponsoring the Heritage of America Rhythm and Blue Jazz Ensemble that took place at the Waterfront Park this past Sunday.

J. W. Rone, Arts Council of Beaufort County, stated the Beaufort Kaleidoscope was a success this weekend in spite of the weather. The film commissioner for the State of South Carolina was here and a panel discussion was held to decide how to bring the film industry into Beaufort in a more effective way.

MINUTES

The minutes of the regular City Council meeting of February 26, 2008 were presented to Council for review. On motion by Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman O'Kelley, Council approved the minutes as presented.

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Leslie Hendricks, Chairman of the Public Art Commission, responded to questions posed by City Council at the January 22, 2008 meeting.

The Commission's recommendation regarding whether the City should accept the mermaid "De Liberte" is that the City should accept the art and as long as the mermaid is in good condition and not a hazard it should be on display.

Regarding the location, the Commission recommends that the mermaid be located at the west end of Cannon/Elliott Park where it will have the most visibility to pedestrians and vehicular traffic. An

alternative location could be Logan Park.

Referring to plaques attached to public art works, Ms. Hendricks said the guidelines for the Public Art Commission state public art should have a plaque. The plaque should be no larger than 5" x 7" overall and should state the title, artist's name, and origin. If it is donated anonymously, it should read "Donated to the City of Beaufort."

She added that at the January 30th Commission meeting, they discovered that mermaid "Auntie Bellum" was placed in Morrall Park located at the corner of Craven and Carteret Streets. The Commission recommends that "Auntie Bellum" remain at this location with the same stipulations as "De Liberte."

Councilman Sutton moved to accept the mermaid "De Liberte." Councilwoman Beer seconded the motion.

Councilman O'Kelley asked Ms. Hendricks for a clarification regarding people being allowed to name public art they donate. Ms. Hendricks stated the mermaid is donated by several people and the Commission feels their names should be on the plaque as long as they will fit on the 5 x 7 plaque. Mr. O'Kelley also inquired about the mermaid at the corner of Craven and Carteret Streets. Ms. Hendricks replied that she believes it was purchased anonymously and placed there by the Arts Council.

Councilman O'Kelley said his concern with placing the mermaid "De Liberte" in the location recommended by the Commission is that a Purple Heart monument has been approved for the west end of that park. He added that the Commission recommended an alternate site; however, the donors indicated they would like the mermaid to be located at the east end of the Park. Ms. Hendricks noted that one of the donors attended the meeting and did not object to the Commission's recommendations. She also mentioned that the Arts Commission was not aware of a monument and that, too, is considered public art. The Mayor inquired about the monument to which the City Manager explained it was first discussed in August. The first phase was the Blue Star Memorial marker which is located at the foot of the Woods Memorial Bridge in Elliott Park. Deanna Bowdish, President of the Arts Council, stated one of the reasons the donors of the mermaid requested it be placed at Elliott Park was because it would be visible to pedestrian traffic in the Historic District. Mr. O'Kelley said he objects to placing the mermaid in between the Revolutionary cannons and the Blue Star Memorial Marker in Elliott Park because that Park, named after Brigadier General Steven Elliott who served in the War Between the States, has a military theme. However, he has no objection to placing it in another park.

Councilman Sutton said it appears this should be delayed until more information is received on the Purple Heart monument.

Council unanimously accepted the gift of mermaid "De Liberte."

The Mayor suggested Ms. Hendricks return in two weeks with a recommendation. The City Manager recommended meeting with Ms. Hendricks on site regarding the mermaid and the Purple Heart monument.

Councilman Sutton moved to accept the 5 x 7 plaque with the wording as recommended by the Commission. Councilwoman Beer seconded the motion.

Mr. Sutton stated those recommendations are in the Public Arts Commission's guidelines. Ms. Hendricks mentioned the only change to the guidelines is "donated anonymously." Mr. O'Kelley questioned whether Council adopted the guidelines and policies or if it is necessary since it is the policies and guidelines of the Commission. The Mayor recommended Ms. Hendricks present the revised guidelines at the next meeting.

Councilman Sutton withdrew his motion regarding the plaques.

BOUNDARY STREET MASTER PLAN/ROAD ENGINEERING

Larry Misner of Kimley-Horn an engineering firm retained by Beaufort County to perform the engineering design on Boundary Street gave an update on the Boundary Street Master Plan and road engineering. He mentioned that they are under contract with the County; however, the City is the manager. Therefore, they are working with both governments.

Mr. Misner explained the Master Plan was prepared based on aerial photography but not on a real survey and in order to perform the engineering and decide exactly where curves, medians, sidewalks, etc. will be placed, a survey is needed. The surveying began the end of November. Another task that has been accomplished is the traffic study. The findings indicated the Master Plan will accommodate the projected 20/30 peak hour traffic volumes.

A median will be placed on Boundary Street to decrease the accidents and their severity as recommended in the Master Plan. In the traffic analysis, they reviewed the roundabouts on both ends of the project. The one on Ribaut Road will provide an adequate service to traffic and performs better than a traffic signal and is recommended. The roundabout at the intersection of Boundary Street and Robert Smalls was also reviewed and a preliminary analysis indicated it would not provide adequate service and in fact would result in long delays. A traffic signal is recommended for that location. They would like the City Council and the SCDOT's comments on that too.

Kimley-Horn recommends the median openings all have left turn lanes and signals. Part of the Master Plan recommends a one-way frontage road and they are recommending that be modified to reduce conflicts.

Councilman Fordham asked how the engineers determined roundabouts are more effective. Mr. Misner said since the Master Plan proposed the roundabouts, both traffic signals and roundabouts were considered at both locations. Both methods were tested with existing traffic. There are other factors to consider, too, it is not just the volumes but also the patterns. He explained traffic signals are more pedestrian friendly than roundabouts. The Master Plan shows crosswalks at the edge of the roundabouts but that will be studied further. Mr. O'Kelley referred to the signalization at both Marsh Road and Palmetto and said they need to know how the roundabout traffic would be affected. If the signal backs vehicles up towards the west or from Marsh Road to the east, will it back up vehicles into the roundabout, he asked. The light at Marsh Road affects the traffic on Ribaut Road now. O'Kelley asked Mr. Misner to explain the statement further about frontage roads stopping approximately 200 feet from the signal. Mr. Misner replied the frontage roads which are part of the

approved Master Plan are there to serve the development along Boundary Street. Rather than vehicles fighting conflicting traffic, they would only be allowed to turn right onto Boundary Street. To turn left the drivers would have to go to the next traffic light. Councilman O'Kelley said the Master Plan was adopted in concept and Council may decide to make changes to that. The City Manager added some things may have to be refined. These are preliminary suggestions and Council's responses are important to the final analysis. On the western side of Boundary where Highway 170 intersects, the signals would be better and maybe that work could be started first. McDonalds restaurant might need to know that information. Mr. Misner said meetings with the property owners along the study area are scheduled.

The Mayor asked the City Manager about the process. The City Manager said the professional study regarding roundabouts is being prepared by Mr. Misner. Council adopted a Master Plan that could accommodate either a T or round intersection. He said the preliminary plan is for a T intersection at one end and a roundabout at the other. Also, it would be good for Council to give direction on that matter because of the development pressure. The Mayor asked for a more thorough briefing so Council can make an informed decision. The City Manager reminded Council that this project is being funded with the penny sales tax. The County is an important part of this but the most important player is SCDOT because the roads belong to them. They have been included in all meetings as has anyone with permitting authority so there are no surprises.

Mr. Misner responding to the Mayor's question regarding the decision on the two intersections said first the County traffic engineer needs to complete the review of the traffic study. Then there is to be a review by SCDOT. Not only will traffic help determine the answer but also rights-of-way for pedestrians, he said. Since the roads belong to the Department of Transportation, they will make the final decision. The City Manager added that Council is to make a recommendation to SCDOT. Mr. Misner stated City Council's input should be sent to SCDOT first for consideration since the road is within the City limits.

COUNCIL REPORTS

SUTTON: Councilman Sutton said the UDAG Fund was discussed during the workshop and he asked if it had been finalized. He reported that the Block by Block project is progressing. Five more buildings were permitted today. The Lowcountry Community Development Commission has money and seeking families who have needs that have housing repair projects in the amount of \$7,000.

BEER: Councilwoman Beer congratulated the Finance Director, Finance Department and the City Manager for receiving the Certificate for Excellence in Finance Reporting. The Finance Director said a representative from GFOA will attend an upcoming Council meeting to make the presentation to Council.

O'KELLEY: Councilman O'Kelley announced the birth of his granddaughter, Virginia Rose O'Kelley, who was born this afternoon.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion by Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman Sutton, Council voted to move into executive session pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 70(a)(2) of the South Carolina Code of Laws to discuss negotiations incident to the appointment/reappointments to the Public Arts

Commission and the Tourism Development Advisory Commission.

OPEN SESSION

Tourism Development Advisory Commission

Upon returning to open session, Councilman O’Kelley moved to reappoint Jeff Evans to the Tourism Development Advisory Commission for a three year term which will expire in March of 2011. Councilman Sutton gave second. The vote was unanimous.

Public Art Commission

On motion by Councilwoman Beer, second by Councilman O’Kelley Council reappointed Lesley Hendricks, Janet Mosely, and Robin Leverton and appointed Deanna Bowdish as the Arts Council’s representative to serve a three year term on the Public Art Commission. These terms will expire in March of 2011.

Historic District Review Board

On motion by Councilman Sutton, seconded by Councilman O’Kelley, Council reappointed Maurice Ungaro and Gregg Huddy to serve a two-year term on the Historic District Review Board. Those terms will expire March of 2010.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

BILL RAUCH, MAYOR

COUNCILWOMAN DONNIE ANN BEER

COUNCILMAN GARY B. FORDHAM

COUNCILMAN GEORGE H. O’KELLEY, JR.

COUNCILMAN MIKE SUTTON

ATTEST:

BEVERLY W. GAY, CITY CLERK