



City Council Regular Meeting
Meeting Minutes – City Hall Council Chambers, 2nd Floor

January 28, 2020

I. CALL TO ORDER

7:16PM

Mayor, Billy Keyserling. All members of Council in attendance.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee

III. PROCLAMATIONS/COMMENDATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

A. Character Education Proclamation - Hannah Garland, Beaufort High School

Motion to approve made by Murray and seconded by Cromer. Proclamation read by Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee and presented to student by Mayor, Keyserling. Proclamation accepted by student.

Motion to approve made by Murray and seconded by Cromer.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

2LT Chris Hulbert with the State Guard of South Carolina gave an overview of what the SCSG is and what they do. The SCSG works directly for the Governor of South Carolina.

V. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Declaration of 1403 Harrington Street as Unfit for Human Habitation - Ken Meola, Codes Enforcement Officer

Ken Meola gave extensive history and explained why staff is recommending this property Unfit for Human Habitation. He stated that proper notices have been given to the property owner, Patricia Pinckney. He also shared photos of the property.

Shemuel Nahum Yisrael, Current tenant at 1403 Harrington Street. Mr. Yisrael stated that the signs that were put up at the property references that the property needed to be demolished. This is not the case. The property just needs to be cleaned. He is currently working on trying to help the property owner to clean the property. He asked if the property is cleaned, at what point can she (property owner) occupy the house?

Mr. Meola stated that based upon what happens here this evening and the property was deemed Unfit for Human Habitation; the property owner would have 14 days to clean the property. If the property was cleaned within the 14 days, the City would not take any action.

Patricia Pinckney, Property owner - 1403 Harrington Street. Mrs. Pinckney stated that she has never asked Mr. Yisrael for anything other than to leave her property. He has filed a Civil Suit that now has become a Civil matter. She continued by saying that Mr. Yisrael has sold everything that was in the house. She has pictures of him going to pawn shops trying to sell her property. I have never given him permission to live in my house. He invades my privacy recording me walking from my car to my house. He does not have permission to record me. This man has been a pest. He is living in area that has no water, no electricity, no windows.

Mayor Keyserling stated that what she is describing is a Civil matter and not what is being discussed this evening. The issue at hand is whether or not the property is suitable to live in.

Kay Merrill, 813 Audusta Place. Mrs. Merrill read some notes and along with other neighbors is asking for their neighborhood back. She expressed safety and health concerns for all.

David Townsend, Pigeon Point Neighborhood Resident. This is an ugly circumstance. We are all embarrassed when visitors come over and the City of Beaufort should be embarrassed. Mr. Townsend reiterated the health and safety concerns. He's also concerned that the tenant is running a business without perhaps the proper licensing.

Collette Fairmen, 1402 Church Street. Lives behind the property being discussed and her home is trying to be for sale due to this ongoing issue. She doesn't understand how this individual cannot be made to leave the property if he does not own it. She does not see how this property can be cleaned up with the individual on the property.

Janet Pierson, 1405 Harrington Street. The Pierson's bought their home 4 years ago. Had they known at the time what was going to transpire, they would not have moved here. They recognize the importance of this vote and are encouraged that the City is taking action.

VI. MINUTES

B. Worksession and Regular Meeting December 10, 2019

Motion to table minutes was made by Councilman Murray and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, Mike McFee.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Ordinance amending Part 3 Chapter 2 Sections 3-2002 of the City Code of Ordinances concerning fees for docking on the seawall at the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park and fines for violation of regulations regarding discharge into the waterways - 2nd Reading

Motion to approve made by Murray and seconded by Cromer.

Linda Roper, Downtown Operations Director gave a brief overview of the amendment being proposed. The proposed change is to raise the rate from 50 cents per linear foot to \$1.00 per linear foot per day for use of the Seawall. The penalty for discharging in the waterways was also changed in this proposed ordinance to match the federal amount of \$50,000.

Ordinance was approved in 2nd and final reading unanimously.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Request for street closure from LowCountry Habitat for Humanity for 3rd Annual LowCountry Habitat Turkey Trot 5K on Thursday, November 26, 2020. In addition, request for waiver of the event permit fee

Motion to approve made by Murray and seconded by Cromer.

Rhonda Carey, Events & Tour Operations Coordinator gave an overview of the event.

Event was approved unanimously.

- B. Request from the Cultural District Advisory Board for use of and waiver of fees for the Pavilion at Waterfront Park to sponsor a presentation of the “Before I Die” project on February 7-21, 2020

Motion to approve made by McFee and seconded by Cromer.

Rhonda Carey, Events & Tour Operations Coordinator gave an overview of the event.

Event was approved unanimously.

- C. Declaration of 1403 Harrington Street as Unfit for Human Habitation

Motion to approve made by Mcfee seconded by Sutton.

Councilman Murray stated that these requests are not taken lightly, and he recognized Mr. Meola for all his efforts with trying to assist in this matter. He stated that he is in favor of voting to deem the property Unfit for Human Habitation but is surprised about the loophole, the camping loophole. He asked City Staff and Legal to bring City Council that would close that loophole as soon as possible. He would like to have a Worksession discussion to try and prevent something like this from happening again. Councilman Murray asked Mr. Meola does he have an estimate for the clean up and Mr. Meola stated that the average estimated cost is about \$7,500.

The request was approved unanimously.

- D. Resolution in support of the goal of establishing the South Coast Cyber Center

Motion to approve made by Murray and seconded by Cromer.

Councilman Murray that this resolution comes as a recommendation and support of the Higher Education Task Force. Lots of collaboration and stakeholder involved with this initiative.

Resolution was approved unanimously.

- E. Resolution in Opposition to House Bill 4431

Motion to approve made by Murray and seconded by Cromer.

Kathy Todd, Finance Director gave a brief overview of what HB 4431 is and discussed the financial impact if this bill where to pass this year in the 2020 legislation.

Resolution was approved unanimously.

IX. REPORTS

City Manager's Report - City Manager Bill Prokop assured Council and residents in attendance that Staff would be looking into the loopholes regarding what was discussed this evening. He continued by thanking all those that are serving on the current task forces. All entities are collaborating. The playground equipment at the Waterfront Park will be improved. He wanted to make sure that it was realized that the improvements will be done with grant money. Mr. Prokop thanked the work that organized by the Cultural District Advisory Board (CDAB) for the benches project.

Mayor's Report. No Report.

Reports by Council Members. Councilman Cromer mentioned that the Beaufort History Museum is having a Civil War reenactment March 13-15, 2020. Councilman Murray stated that he shared the Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation annual review this evening with members of Council. The report can also be found online at the Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation website.

X. ADJOURN

8:59PM

Disclaimer: This document is a summary. All City Council Worksession and Regular Meeting minutes are recorded. Live stream can be found on the City's website at www.cityofbeaufort.org (Agenda section). Audio recordings are available upon request by contacting the City Clerk, Ivette Burgess at 843-525-7018 or by email at iburgess@cityofbeaufort.org.