



# City Council Regular Meeting Meeting Minutes – Electronic Meeting

February 23, 2021

## I. CALL TO ORDER

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7:00PM

Mayor, Stephen D, Murray III

All of Council members in attendance - Phil Cromer, Neil Lipsitz, Mitch Mitchell, and Mayor Murray.

## II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Phil Cromer

## III. PROCLAMATIONS/COMMENDATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

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### A. Character Education Proclamation - Contrell Holmes, Beaufort High School

Motion to approve was made by Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Cromer and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

Approval was unanimous.

### B. Resolutions thanking the Affordable Housing Task Force for their service - Deborah Johnson, Patrick Cunningham, Joe Mantua, Benjie Morillo, Sue Sagui, Lise Sundrla, Mike Sutton, Stacie L.K. Van Vulpen, Linda Bridges and Tom Hermann

Motion to approve was made by Mayor Pro Tem, Cromer and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

The Resolution was read by Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Cromer.

Approval was unanimous.

## IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

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No Public Comment

## V. MINUTES

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- A. Regular Meeting - September 22, 2020
- B. Worksession and Regular Meetings - October 13, 2020
- C. Worksession Meeting - October 20, 2020
- D. Worksession and Regular Meetings - October 27, 2020

Motion to approve was made by Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Cromer and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

Minutes approved as presented.

## **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

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**A. Approval to allow City Manager to negotiate and enter into Lease Agreement for the Carnegie Building with the Greater Beaufort-Port Royal Convention and Visitors Bureau.**

Motion to approve was made by Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Cromer and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

**Bill Prokop, City Manager**, gave an overview of the Lease Agreement for The Carnegie Building, 701 Craven Street. The Lease Agreement will last 7 years and 3 months starting April 1, 2021 and ending June 30, 2028.

**Robb Wells, President and CEO of Greater Beaufort-Port Royal Convention and Visitors Bureau** stated they appreciate the opportunity to move into the building and are excited about the partnership with the City of Beaufort.

Approval was unanimous.

**B. Approval to allow City Manager to enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Beaufort County for Special Projects and Associated Services.**

Motion to approve was made by Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Cromer and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

**Bill Prokop, City Manager**, gave an overview of the agreement between the City of Beaufort and Beaufort County. This would allow both entities to work together on special projects and utilize engineering services. This is a good way for us to combine resources and save costs.

Approval was unanimous.

**C. Waiver of Penalties and Interest on Business License payments.**

Motion to approve was made by Interim Mayor Pro Tem, McFee and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

**Kathy Todd, Finance Director**, explained the Resolution to defer Penalties and Interest on Business License payments from May 1, 2021 until June 30, 2021. She showed a comparison of the fund balances for Business License Taxes between the last two Fiscal Years. She stated that 25 percent of the businesses have already paid to take advantage of the early payment discount.

**Mayor Murray** inquired about property tax collections and if there is an anticipation that the Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) will need to be used if Council was to approve this deferment.

**Mrs. Todd** stated that right now we are 2 million dollars behind on property tax collections. She stated that we are getting distributions regularly and she does not see the need to be using the Tax Anticipation Note if the February 15, 2021 distribution from the County Treasurer is as high as she anticipates.

Approval was unanimous.

**D. Ordinance amendment of Part 5, Chapter 4, of the City Code of Ordinances, Sections 5-4001 through 5-4051, Flood Damage Prevention, to conform with the SC Department of Natural Resources model Flood Damage Prevention ordinance, in order to meet the National Flood Insurance program's updated requirements - 1st Reading.**

Motion to approve was made by Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Cromer and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

Bruce Skipper, Building Official, went over the proposed updated version on how the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance will read. This update is necessary to come into compliance with new flood maps that came out in 2017 by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). A solid approach is being taken to keep the minimum elevation level at 13 feet.

Jessie White, Coastal Conservation League Director, stated that the keeping of the elevation level of 13 feet is supported and commends the City for taking a proactive approach on this issue. A letter that was sent to City Council has been attached to these minutes.

Approval was unanimous.

## **VII. REPORTS**

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### **City Manager's Report**

City Manager began by stating that progress continues with the Mossy Oaks Storm Water Project and should be completed by the end of March on time and on Budget and thanked all the partners for their cooperation. He also mentioned that the Spanish Moss Trail in Basin 1 is back open.

Mr. Prokop reminded citizens of the Special Election on March 2nd and encouraged everyone to get out and vote.

The Grand Opening of the Washington Street Park is on Friday, March 5th and he wants everyone to go by and visit the new park.

Tree trimming by Dominion Energy is in progress and is finishing up. This project should be completed on schedule.

First Friday event is also coming up on March 5<sup>th</sup>.

The City Council Retreat is taking place on March 22nd and March 23rd. Time and location will be announced within the next few weeks and will be streamed live on Social Media.

### **Mayor's Report**

Mayor Murray stated that COVID cases in the hospital seem to have peaked per Beaufort Memorial Hospital Staff, and went on to say that there is a limited amount of vaccines available, and that he continues to work with the State Delegation to get access to more doses for our area.

February 24th, the Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce is hosting an event - Beaufort Lessons Learned. There will be a discussion on the Georgia Cyber Center visit and how the region can support the Military and Cyber Security.

Congratulations to The Beaufort Center for Dentistry on their grand opening, and to USCB on being recognized as a top producer of Fulbright Scholars.

Mr. Bobby Jenkins was congratulated on his retirement after 56 years of public service to the community and thanked him for his dedication.

Lastly, Mayor Murray stated that today, 106 years ago, Robert Smalls passed away.

### **Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Cromer**

Mr. Cromer thanked the Affordable Housing Task Force for all their work on the committee.

**Councilman Lipsitz**

Stated that the Southside Park survey is being formulated and should be completed by next week for distribution.

**Councilman Mitchell**

Mr. Mitchell thanked Neil Pugliese for all his work on the Stormwater project.

**VIII. ADJOURN**

**7:54PM**

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Motion to adjourn was made by Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Phil Cromer and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

All in favor.

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Disclaimer: All City Council Worksession and Regular Meeting minutes are recorded. Live stream can be found on the City's website at [www.cityofbeaufort.org](http://www.cityofbeaufort.org) (Agenda section). Audio recordings are available upon request by contacting the City Clerk, Traci Guldner at 843-525-7024 or by email at [tguldner@cityofbeaufort.org](mailto:tguldner@cityofbeaufort.org).



February 23, 2021

Beaufort City Council  
1911 Boundary Street  
Beaufort, SC 29902

Dear Beaufort City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the Coastal Conservation League regarding Agenda Item VII.D, amendment to the City's Flood Damage Prevention ordinance in compliance with the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program's updated requirements.

We commend the City for retaining important protections for the safety and well-being of people and property within our natural Lowcountry landscape. While FEMA's base flood elevation will be lowered under the new maps, the City is wisely retaining the 13-foot design elevation requirement from its current ordinance and incorporating that standard into the proposed updated ordinance. This is an important and proactive step toward enhancing community resilience in a changing environment that is experiencing both increases in growth and development alongside increases in flooding, storm events, and rising sea levels.

While we are supportive of the City's proposed amended ordinance, we offer the following technical comments and/or questions for Council and staff's consideration prior to final adoption:

1. Proposed Sections 5-4032 (1) & (2) would require that residential and non-residential construction "shall have the lowest floor elevated to the most restrictive of the design elevation of 13 feet **or** the base flood elevation plus one foot of freeboard." (emphasis in original).
  - Including "or base flood elevation plus one foot of freeboard" as an option here could allow new development to meet either the 13 ft design standard **or** the FEMA base flood elevation standards at 9 ft, plus one foot of freeboard. If the intention is to maintain design standards at 13 ft, including "or base flood elevation" would undermine that intent. Is it necessary, then, to include "or base flood elevation"? If not, we recommend modifying the language so as to remove that phrase.
  - Additional clarification on how the term "most restrictive" is defined, interpreted, and applied under the ordinance may be helpful.
2. Proposed Section 5-4032 (11) appears to slightly weaken the requirements needed to utilize fill for residential and non-residential construction by breaking them apart into separate sentences that do not flow as naturally. We recommend the language be modified to more closely align with the existing standard, such as:

An applicant shall demonstrate that **other methods of elevation were considered and that fill** is the only alternative to raising the building to meet the residential and non-residential construction

requirements of section 5-4032(1) or 5-4032(2) to the most restrictive of the minimum design elevation of 13 feet or base flood elevation plus 1' of freeboard and meet the residential and non-residential construction requirements of section 5-4032(1) & (2), **and that the amount of fill used will not affect the flood storage capacity or adversely affect adjacent properties.**

Lastly, we encourage the City to also adopt the proposed fill dirt ordinance and coastal resilience overlay ordinances drafted by the County, which are main growth management measures arising from the Lady's Island Plan.

Thank you for your attention to and consideration of these significant matters.

Jessie A. White

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