

A work session of Beaufort City Council was held on February 26, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, 1901 Boundary Street. In attendance were Mayor Billy Keyserling, Councilwoman Nan Sutton, Councilmen Stephen Murray and Phil Cromer, and Bill Prokop, city manager. Mike McFee had an excused absence.

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.

CALL TO ORDER

Councilwoman Sutton called the work session to order at 5:00 p.m. ^[1]_[SEP]She said Mayor Keyserling would be late to tonight's council meetings.

EMPLOYEE NEW HIRE RECOGNITION

Kathy Todd introduced **Shirleak Handfield**, an accounting clerk in the finance department.

Mr. Prokop introduced **Ed Saxon**, who introduced **Joe Mantua**, the new BJWSA general manager.

Maxine Lutz introduced **Heather Seifert**, the new executive director at Historic Beaufort Foundation (HBF).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CITY OF BEAUFORT ORDINANCES' MODIFICATION OR COMPLETE REPEAL ^[1]_[SEP]

Mr. Prokop said staff is going through ordinances and bringing forward those that they believe are unnecessary. He referred to a handout and said in some cases, the state law has changed. For the purposes of the work session, the ordinances pertain to the police department, courts, and the city clerk's office.

On the "false reports issue," Councilman Cromer said state statute provides for the reimbursement of the costs to investigate those cases. It says that "the judge may require" reimbursement, and he wishes the judge *would* require it on false reports. He said there is nothing about false alarms with the fire department, but he would like to see the city get reimbursement of its costs to investigate false alarms "if they have to roll out."

On the noise ordinance revision that Mr. Prokop had pointed out, Councilman Murray said he is "okay with permission granted by the city manager," but he'd "also like to reserve the right for city council to grant the waiver if necessary," so he asked if it could read "city manager or city council." Mr. Prokop said, "Absolutely."

Police Chief **Matt Clancy** said one of the changes recommended is about the texting while driving ordinance; there is now a state law about that, so the city ordinance is

“not necessary or legal to have.” Some ordinances need to be removed because their constitutionality has been challenged by some jurisdictions, he said, so on the advice of **Bill Harvey**, city attorney, the department is proposing that these be taken out.

The city ordinance about alarms is “so antiquated,” Chief Clancy said, and there is an effort to “get a state law that would address the same thing.” Also, there is a very old law about people defending themselves from animal attacks, and the size of the property referred to in it is 25 acres, so they have modified it to a more appropriately sized acreage that people live on now, he said.

Councilman Murray asked if there is “a big issue with false alarms.” Chief Clancy said there are “some,” but officers have agreed that they have to take the calls, even if there have been prior false alarms. In the case of repeated false alarms, police would contact the property owner to recommend checking on it with their security alarm company. Many alarms do not go through dispatch now, but through people’s cell phones, he said.

Mr. Prokop said staff would bring these ordinances to council on a regular basis.

FY 2020 BUDGET PROCESS SCHEDULE

Ms. Todd said this starts next week, with departments beginning to build their budgets, then at the retreat, she and Mr. Prokop will be presenting that information and will get input from council about what they would like to see in next year’s budget.

The city manager’s recommended budget will be at the beginning of the series of presentations, Ms. Todd said, before the departments discuss their goals and requests. The public hearing and first and second readings on the budget will be in June, she said.

Ms. Todd said the revenue projections that come out during the retreat would help to steer department heads in their budgets. If salary and benefit growth is already at 2.5%, there is not much room for expenditure growth, she said. Mr. Prokop said they are looking at things like, if Public Works says it needs a new trailer, and the police department has one that it uses only twice a year, Public Works might be able to use it.

Mr. Prokop asked, after the Beaufort 2030 Future Lab, if they see things they haven't seen before, how they could “build that in the plan” for the budget.

What departments would *like* to have and *must* have will be separated, Mr. Prokop said. Insurance costs are going up, which is “a big hit for us in one year,” he said. Also, the city has to be competitive on salaries and benefits; there have been no increases to medical for 4 years, he said, and staff is hoping that will happen again.

Councilman Cromer asked about workers’ comp insurance rates, and Ms. Todd said they are “good,” and going into 2020, they “should be at or below where we currently sit.” **Ivette Burgess** said staff is hoping that will remain the same this year.

Councilman Murray said he's glad to hear the long-term modeling is rolling out, and about the "cross-departmental collaboration" on budgets, with department heads "working together around the strategic goals."

Councilman Murray said the General Assembly and Municipal Association seem "confident and excited about the local government fund," and that there would be "some meaningful increase and commitment" to it. He asked if any estimates about what that might be have been provided to the city. Ms. Todd said the city "only gets a couple hundred-thousand dollars," from the fund, "so if it goes up 25%" from the current 75%, it would be "something, but it's not anything" to get excited about. It "would be a game-changer if" the assembly "fixed it," she said, but that's not the plan.

CENSUS 2020 INFORMATION SEP

Mr. Prokop said council's packets have key census dates in them. The biggest problem is that "most people don't trust" the census and are concerned about what will be done with the information, he said; also, some aren't honest about some of the information they give. The census staff has asked the city to promote the upcoming census on a regular basis, Mr. Prokop said, so they will do that. A census flier has been put on the website, and those will be changed each month.

Councilman Cromer asked if there is a population threshold for grant money. Ms. Todd said some HUD grants are based on population size. Councilman Murray said there are some transportation grants that depend on population size, too, which Beaufort may qualify for after the census, but the city will also probably have the population to require it to take part in "the MS4 permits," which is "the unfunded mandate . . . from the state" concerning stormwater.

Mr. Prokop said the military "bases are covered by a separate group of people," but people who live off-base are not counted among the base's numbers.

Councilman Murray said what local governments can do to help with the census will be to their benefit.

There being no further business to come before council, the work session was adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, and Section 70 (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Law, **Councilman Murray made a motion, seconded by Councilman Cromer, to enter into Executive Session to receive advice about legal claims. The motion passed unanimously.**