



City Council Special Meeting Meeting Minutes – Electronic Meeting

March 30, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

7:00 PM

Mayor, Stephen D, Murray III

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

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Phil Cromer

III. CITY COUNCIL ORGANIZATION

A. Mayor Pro Tem Nomination

Councilman Mitchell made a motion to elect Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Cromer as Mayor Pro Tem.

Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Cromer made a motion to elect Councilman McFee as Mayor Pro Tem.

Interim Mayor Pro Tem, Cromer withdrew his name for consideration.

Councilman Lipsitz seconded the motion to elect Councilman McFee as Mayor Pro Tem.

Councilman McFee accepted the nomination.

All were in favor.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

No Public Comment

V. MINUTES

B. Worksession and Regular Meeting - March 9, 2021

Motion to approve was made by Councilman Cromer and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

Minutes approved as presented.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Request for Co-Sponsorship from Lowcountry Wind Symphony for use of the Waterfront Park for a Spring Concert on Saturday, May 1, 2021.**

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

Mr. George Smedley with the Lowcountry Wind Symphony gave background on the organization and spoke about the Spring Concert that they wish to conduct and that the event is free to the public.

Approval was unanimous.

B. Request for waiver of Alcohol Ordinance from Beaufort Power Squadron for the America's Boating Club District Annual Dinner Meeting, Friday, April 23, 2021 at the Waterfront Pavilion.

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

Approval was unanimous.

C. Request from Beaufort Water Festival for use of the Waterfront Park, street closures, sale of alcohol, use of seawall, day dock, waiver of Noise Ordinance and Co-Sponsorship for Opening Ceremonies for Water Festival 2021, July 16-25, 2021.

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

Commodore Erin "Tank" Morris pointed out that in their request to Council dated March 24, 2021, the dates in item number one should read July 13, 2021 through July 27, 2021. He spoke about the Festival and what it means to the Community and stated that all guidelines, recommendations, and safety protocols in place by the state and local government would be adhered to.

Councilman Cromer asked if the requested items were the same as in the past.

Linda Roper, Downtown Operations and Community Services Director stated that the only difference was that they were requesting a \$7,500 Co-Sponsorship for the Opening Ceremonies Fireworks display. This request is normally \$5,000.

Bill Prokop, City Manager, stated that the City is also giving them a one-time 50 percent discount on the park fee.

Mayor Murray agreed with Mr. Prokop by saying that we all needed to give a little extra help to get the economy going, and that he is certain they will have a safe and successful Water Festival.

Approval was unanimous.

D. Extension of emergency ordinance requiring individuals to wear face covering in certain circumstances and locations in the Municipal limits of the City of Beaufort.

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

Mr. Prokop stated that a 30-day extension will give us the opportunity to see where things are heading now that the positive rate has dropped below 5 percent. There is still a concern since only 33 percent of the local population has received the vaccination.

Councilman Cromer stated he would rather see Council strongly recommend rather than mandate. There should be more personal responsibility, both corporate and individual. He is

willing to support another 30 days, but after that, if we are still below the 5 percent threshold then the ordinance should be lifted.

Mayor Murray is supportive of another 30-day extension. He feels that we are close, but from the information that was received from the medical professionals, we need to have a 70/80 percent vaccination rate to help prevent spreading. He understands the concerns and asked the public for continued patience.

Approval was unanimous.

VII. REPORTS

City Manager's Report

Mr. Prokop thanked everyone for a successful Council Retreat and stated that the draft with recommended changes will be out soon for review and comment.

The Mossy Oaks Stormwater project is about 99 percent complete. A ribbon cutting date will be announced within the next two to three weeks. He stated that this project is very successful. The system is working as designed.

He urged all citizens to get vaccinated.

The Southside Park survey has concluded. There was a total of 1,171 responses. The committee has published the survey results. He thanked the committee for their hard work.

The First Friday event is taking place on Friday, April 2, 2021, downtown. He hopes that all will attend and support local businesses.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Murray thanked Council and Staff for a great retreat. He was encouraged by the thoughts and debates that transpired.

Would like for those that feel comfortable in doing so, to please head downtown and support the downtown merchants during the First Friday event.

He also encouraged residents to go get their vaccines.

In closing, he shared a quote that said, "Don't believe everything you read on the internet". He suggested that we do the research needed, and to not take all things at face value.

Councilman Lipsitz

Nothing to report.

Councilman Mitchell

Councilman Mitchell stated that on March 25, 2021, he and the Mayor had a conversation with Laura Rose with Clemson University about establishing Community Gardens. He hopes to present more about this subject soon.

He has been in conversation with other community members about the Green Street Gym, in hopes of revitalizing the facility.

Lastly, he reported that he had taped a small message that will be aired on the Radio. Station 94.5 will be running the segment that urges the community to continue to wear their masks.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee

Council was thanked for their support as Mayor Pro Tem, and appreciated the confidence bestowed upon him.

Councilman Cromer

Nothing to report.

VIII. ADJOURN

7:42PM

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Cromer, and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee.

All in favor.

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