

A regular session of Beaufort City Council was held on April 9, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Beaufort Municipal Complex, 1901 Boundary Street. In attendance were Mayor Billy Keyserling, Councilwoman Nan Sutton, Councilmen Mike McFee, Stephen Murray, and Phil Cromer, and Bill Prokop, city manager.

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.

**Councilman Murray made a motion, second by Councilman Cromer, to adjourn the executive session. The motion passed unanimously.** Mayor Keyserling said the item discussed in executive session is on the meeting's agenda.

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Keyserling called the regular council meeting to order at 7:38 p.m.

#### **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Councilman McFee led the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Tom McMahan** said he was presenting council with a petition from city residents to deny the liquor license application for the proposed "Pink Pub" at 902 Boundary Street because they object to "that type of business so near to campus housing" and Bridges Preparatory School.

#### **MINUTES**

**Councilman McFee made a motion, second by Councilman Cromer, to approve the minutes of the special city council regular meeting on March 12, 2019.** Councilman Cromer said on page 2, in the third paragraph from the bottom, in the second line, he misspoke, and he'd like to clarify that "a large number" should be "a surprising number."

Councilman McFee said on page 1, the call to order was for the "special regular session," not a work session. **The motion to approve the minutes as amended passed unanimously.**

**Councilman McFee made a motion, second by Councilman Cromer, to approve the minutes of the council work session on March 19, 2019.** <sup>[11]</sup><sub>[SEP]</sub> **The motion to approve the minutes as submitted passed unanimously.**

**Councilman McFee made a motion, second by Councilman Cromer, to approve the minutes of the work session and regular meeting on March 26, 2019.** Councilman Cromer said in last sentence, it should be "a 'vac' truck," not "a back truck." **The motion to approve the minutes as amended passed unanimously.**

**ORDINANCE AMENDING PART 9 CHAPTER 1 OF THE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES TO REPEAL SECTIONS 9-1002 AND 9-1003**

**Councilman Murray made a motion, second by Councilman McFee, to approve the ordinance amendment on second reading. Ivette Burgess said this is second reading, and it is being brought to council as part of the ordinance cleanup. The motion passed unanimously.**

**ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 5.8.4.A OF THE BEAUFORT CODE – “DESIGN STANDARDS FOR EXTERIOR LIGHTING” – TO ALLOW LIGHT POLES IN AUTOCENTRIC AREAS TO BE A MAXIMUM OF 30 FEET ABOVE GRADE**

**Councilman McFee made a motion, second by Councilman Murray, to approve the ordinance amendment on first reading.** Mr. Prichard said the maximum height would be 30’ above grade in autocentric areas. In pedestrian-oriented areas, the maximum height would be 15’. The MPC recommended these for the maximum heights, he said, and recommended that the planning director should make these decisions.

Mr. Prichard said, in a parking lot, from a distance of 20’, a 25’ light pole would look shorter than a 15’ light pole looks on the sidewalk. He read the changes to the ordinance.

Mayor Keyserling explained the need for the ordinance amendment. Councilman Murray said there will be “some transition” before more pedestrian-oriented areas will be possible.

**Councilman Murray made a motion, second by Councilman McFee, to amend the ordinance to include a provision that light poles over 15’ in the Historic District must be approved by the HDRB (Historic District Review Board).**

**Chuck Symes**, 507 Craven Street, said he approves of the amendment. He understands the city’s position on development and redevelopment, but protecting the Historic District is “one other major function” of the city. He’d prefer that the Historic District be excluded from the ordinance, but he said he accepts the compromise Councilman Murray has proposed.

Mayor Keyserling said people could appeal this, whether there is an ordinance or not, but this is a way to protect the Historic District.

Councilman Murray said the Beaufort Code was passed, but there are a couple of sites that the city wants to have redeveloped, and 15’ light poles wouldn’t look good there. Some sites in the Historic District might come up for redevelopment in the next few years, and this amendment would allow public input on that, and allow the citizen-advisory board (HDRB) to be able to vet those projects and determine what makes sense for each of them individually. Mr. Symes said he understands that, but he feels “the

Historic District is unique.”

**Peggy Simmer** lives in the Historic District and has a parking lot behind her house. She said she appreciates Mr. Symes’ comments and Councilman Murray’s compromise.

**Mike Sutton** said anyone can go to SCE&G and apply for a street light permit. He suggested that people measure all the different sizes of light poles in the area.

**Maxine Lutz**, 811 North Street, thanked council and staff for further discussion of this ordinance. She’d still like to know what areas in the Historic District are considered autocentric. She thought of “ten,” including “the large dirt parking lot that the Baptist Church owns,” the post office, the downtown marina parking lot, the flat surface parking lot that 303 Associates owns, and “the Dowling block” on Bladen Street. Ms. Lutz agrees with Mr. Symes that the maximum light pole height should be 15’ in the Historic District, with people able to ask the city for more height, if need be.

Mr. Prichard said a parking lot is autocentric “on its face,” but he’s a little concerned that 15’ poles “might give [the Historic District] something they don’t want” and that isn’t good for it. For example, a parking lot full of old streetlights would “look like a parking lot full of candles,” he said. With taller lights, there can be fewer of them, and they can be full cut-off. Mr. Prichard said even if an area in the Historic District is autocentric, if it’s redeveloped, that would be discussed at the HDRB meetings.

Mayor Keyserling said based on the Civic Master Plan, he personally feels that none of those places Ms. Lutz mentioned, or “anything downtown – especially in the Historic District” – would be considered autocentric if it were to be “improved.”

Councilman Murray said he thinks Mayor Keyserling is saying that if someone wants a variance for light poles, they could go to the ZBOA, but he has confidence in the HDRB to determine if there *should* be a variance. He felt Mr. Sutton’s point was good: Other than on Craven Street, the rest of the neighborhood (i.e., The Point) has “utility lights.” If those were pulled off, and they were required to go through the regulatory process, they wouldn’t want to replace them with 15’ or shorter lights, Councilman Murray said. Ms. Lutz replied that The Point is not “autocentric.”

Mr. Prokop said he doesn’t think there’s any light pole shorter than 20’ on Newcastle Street. They wanted to light the basketball court in Washington Street Park, so those poles will have to be taller than 15’, he said, adding that the light poles in many cases in the Historic District are already taller than 15’.

**Heather Seifert**, Historic Beaufort Foundation (HBF), said the organization would like “specific language that excludes 30’ light poles in the Historic District.”

Mr. Symes said he realizes there are “tall poles in The Point with dangling wires,” and

he'd "love to get rid of them" and have shorter, "more historic-looking" light poles. Those poles have been there for a long time, he said, but this discussion is about what residents want in the future and what they want it to look like.

**The amendment to the motion passed unanimously. The amended motion passed unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF THE CITY MANAGER ENTERING INTO LEASE AGREEMENT WITH SAFE HARBOR MARINAS (SHM BEAUFORT DOWNTOWN MARINA, LLC)** [L] [SEP]

**Councilman Murray made a motion, second by Councilman McFee, to approve the city manager entering into the lease agreement.** This agreement was the subject of the executive session, Mayor Keyserling said. Mr. Prokop said there are "a few technical areas" that need to be finalized in the lease. He introduced **Jason Hogg** and **Jeff Rose** from Safe Harbor. Both expressed their excitement about this partnership.

Mayor Keyserling said council went over the lease in executive session, and there are some small issues that need to be worked out by the attorneys, but he thinks everything will be ironed out by the next council meeting.

Mr. Prokop thanked staff and volunteers for all of their work on this. This lease is "a win-win," he said, and Safe Harbor has committed to donating \$50,000 to the Beaufort Pride of Place program.

**Councilman Murray made a motion, second by Councilman Cromer, to table this item. The motion passed unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF THE CITY MANAGER ENTERING INTO LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF BLUFFTON POLICE DEPARTMENT** [L] [SEP]

**Councilman Cromer made a motion, second by Councilman Murray, to approve the city manager entering into the agreement.** Mr. Prokop said this a memorandum of understanding between the Town of Bluffton and the City of Beaufort police departments. Both cities' attorneys have worked on this new memorandum of understanding to allow Beaufort police officers to respond if Bluffton requests support and vice versa, he said. **The motion passed unanimously.**

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Prokop said the Santa Maria ship has come in. The downtown merchants said the First Friday event last week was very successful.

The city is getting ready for the best Taste of Beaufort ever on May 3 and 4, Mr. Prokop said, and the city is planning for "National Tourism Travel Week" a couple of weeks after that.

Mr. Prokop thanked **Rick Griffin** and his staff for their years of work at the marina. The

new management at the marina has “a national reputation for being one of the most professionally run operations” in the US, he said.

Mr. Prokop welcomed Ms. Seifert as the new executive director at HBF.

April 22 is Earth Day, Mr. Prokop said, and Public Works, Beaufort County, and Port Royal will be taking that day to pick up trash all over the county; he asked others to also pick up litter.

Budget review for the upcoming year will begin at the council’s work session on April 23, Mr. Prokop said.

### **MAYOR’S REPORT**

Mayor Keyserling mentioned the Henry Louis Gates special on Reconstruction on PBS. There was a special presentation of the program for Young Leaders of Beaufort, he said, and it was “terrific.”

### **COUNCIL REPORTS**

Councilman Murray said Friday is Co-working at the Corridor, and at 8:00 a.m. Friday, Lady’s Island Middle School students who are headed to the world-level robotics competition.

Councilman Murray said, through a partnership with the Beaufort Arts Council and the Pat Conroy Literary Center, **Tjawangwa Dema**, author of “The Careless Seamstress,” will be giving a reading at the Mather School at TCL on April 10.

**There being no further business to come before council, Councilman Cromer made a motion, second by Councilman Murray, to adjourn the regular council meeting. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.**