I. **Call to Order**

Philip Cromer, Mayor


II. **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee

III. **Presentations**

A. Recognizing Communications Manager, Kathleen Williams, and Lindsey Edwards with the Police Department, on winning Silver Wing Awards at the South Carolina Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, at their annual Mercury Awards.

City Manager, Scott Marshall, recognized Kathleen Williams on receiving the Silver Wing Award of Merit for the City of Beaufort’s website redesign. The Police Department was honored with a Silver Wing Award of Excellence in the Social Media Facebook Engagement category for its entry “Connecting the Police Department and the Community”. This is a well-earned recognition for the social media manager, Lindsey Edwards.

IV. **Proclamations/Commendations/Recognitions**

A. Character Education Proclamation - Kevin Doctor, Beaufort High School.

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

  *All were in favor, motion carried.*

V. **Public Comment**

Paul Trask, 610 Bladen Street spoke regarding meeting minutes and the Woods Bridge. Written communication is attached.

VI. **Minutes**

A. Special Worksession - May 8, 2024.

  *Motion to approve was made by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.*
Minutes approved as presented.

B. Worksession and Regular Meeting - May 14, 2024.

Motion to approve was made by Councilman Mitchell and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.
Mayor Pro Tem, McFee, abstained from the vote, as he was not in attendance at the meetings.
Minutes approved as presented.

C. Special Worksession - May 17, 2024.

Motion to approve was made by Councilman Lipsitz and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.
Minutes approved as presented.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Ordinance to amend Fiscal Year 2024 Budget for Revenues and Expenditures of TIF II Fund and Capital Projects Fund - second reading.

Motion to approve was made by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.
First reading was held on May 14, 2024. No changes made since first reading.
Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, gave a brief summary of what is being proposed.
Councilman Scallate made a motion to postpone this discussion until the June 11, 2024, meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.
Paul Trask, 610 Bladen Street, addressed Council. Written communication is attached.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. The Davis-Waddell Wedding requests a waiver of alcohol in the park, drinking in public, and a waiver of the noise ordinance for a wedding on Saturday, October 26, 2024, at Whitehall Park.

Motion to approve was made by Councilman Lipsitz and seconded by Councilman Scallate.
All were in favor, motion carried.

B. Request from CAPA and the Exchange Club of Beaufort to host the 30th Annual Ghost Tours, October 11 - 13, 18 - 20, and 25 - 27, and request two (2) complimentary parking spaces from October 10 - 28, 2024.

Motion to approve was made by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.
All were in favor, motion carried.

C. Authorization for City Manager to enter into a contract for the S C Highway 170 Sidewalk Extension Project.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to postpone this discussion. Councilman Scallate seconded the motion.
All were in favor, motion carried.
D. A resolution certifying the property located at 1409 King Street, Beaufort, South Carolina, Parcel I.D. No. R120 004 000 1009 0000, +/- .8684 acres as abandoned building sites pursuant to the South Carolina Abandoned Buildings Revitalization Act, Title 12, Chapter 67, Section 12-67-100., seq., of the South Carolina Code of Laws (1976), as amended.

Motion to approve was made by Councilman Lipsitz and seconded by Councilman Scallate.

Curt Freese, Community and Economic Development Director stated that last year the Historic District Review Board approved a revitalization of Justice Square. This includes part of the old jail project. The developer has approached the city to use the South Carolina Abandoned Buildings Revitalization Act to get income tax and property tax credits to develop those properties. They have been vacant for many years. They just need a resolution from City Council to proceed.

All were in favor, motion carried.

E. Ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of an easement for the placement of utility infrastructure on real property known as Southside Park by the City of Beaufort to Dominion Energy of South Carolina, Inc. - first reading.

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

JJ Sauve, Assistant City Manager, stated that earlier this year Council approved the Southside Park Project Phase I, which is currently underway. It was determined that a utility easement would be necessary for Dominion Energy to provide electrical infrastructure within the park. Dominion Energy will be responsible for maintaining the lines.

All were in favor, motion carried.

IX. REPORTS

City Manager’s Report

Congratulated Chief Price on her selection as the new Police Chief. She is also the first female Police Chief for the City of Beaufort.

Spoke about some of the events that were held over the Memorial Day weekend.

Reported that Beaufort was one of two towns in South Carolina that have been named among the top 20 friendliest cities in the south by Southern Living Magazine. We were number 2 behind Covington, Louisiana.

Stated that upgrades are being made to the Pigeon Point playground equipment.

The permanent Harriet Tubman monument will be unveiled at the historic Tabernacle Baptist Church, 901 Craven Street, on Saturday, June 1, 2024, at 1:00 pm.

First Friday will be held on June 7, 2024. Bay Street will be closed.

The first annual June Music Festival will be held at the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park on Saturday, June 8, 2024.

The Police Department Future Guardians Initiative Summer Camp Program will occur June 17 - 19, 2024. Deadline for registering is May 31, 2024. See the Police Department’s social media page for more information.
The Fire Department will be holding another CPR Class for high school students on Saturday, June 29, 2024. See their social media page for more information.

Public works will be sponsoring a Touch a Truck event on Saturday, June 15, 2024, at the Pigeon Point Park from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm.

Wished his wife, Ginger, a Happy 20th Anniversary.

**Mayor’s Report**

Attended the American Flood Coalition Local Elected Leaders Summit in Washington, DC.

Will be attending the Harriet Tubman monument unveiling on Saturday, June 1, 2024, at 1:00 pm at the Historic Tabernacle Baptist Church at 901 Craven Street.

**Councilman Mitchell**

Reported that the artist who sculpted the monument of Harriet Tubman is Ed Dwight. He recently became the oldest person to go into space courtesy of Blue Origin. He was a former test pilot and astronaut and was the first African American to have entered the astronaut training program.

**Mayor Pro Tem, McFee**

Attended a Northern Regional Plan Implementation Committee (NRPIC) meeting.

Participated in the events at the Gullah Festival.

**Councilman Scallate**

Thanked the City Manager and staff for a very transparent process concerning the search for a new Police Chief.

He, and Councilman Mitchell, attended a Northwest Quadrant meeting.

Thanked Beaufort County Council, and Department Heads Countywide, for a new alerting system for First Responders.

**Councilman Lipsitz**

Participated in a Police ride-a-long.

Attended the 103rd birthday celebration for May Lepionka along with other members of Council.

Congratulated Mike Moore, from York County, on being named the next Beaufort County Administrator.

All of Council congratulated Stephanie Price on being named the new Police Chief.

Members of Council participated in the Memorial Day Events.

**X. ADJOURN**

7:40 PM

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Lipsitz and seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

All were in favor, motion carried.
Disclaimer: This document is a summary. All City Council Worksessions and Regular Meetings are recorded. Live stream can be found on the City’s website at www.cityofbeaufort.org (Agenda section). Any questions, please contact the City Clerk, Traci Guldner at 843-525-7024 or by email at tguldner@cityofbeaufort.org.

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (a)(d)(e), as amended, notification of regular meetings was given at the beginning of the calendar year. A copy of the agenda was posted on the City’s bulletin board and website www.cityofbeaufort.org twenty-four hours prior to the meeting. A copy of the agenda was given to the local news media and requested public on file.
Letter To Beaufort City Council

Date: May 30, 2024

From: Paul Trask
       610 Bladen Street
       Beaufort, SC 29902

To: tguldner@cityofbeaufort.org
cc to: pcromer@cityofbeaufort.org
       mmcfbee@cityofbeaufort.org
       mmitchell@cityofbeaufort.org
       pscallate@cityofbeaufort.org
       nlipsitz@cityofbeaufort.org
       smarshall@cityofbeaufort.org
       jsuave@cityofbeaufort.org

Please include the contents of this letter verbatim to the minutes of the next Beaufort City Council Meeting.

The comments contained in this letter are made solely in my capacity as a private citizen. They are not made in my capacity as a member of the City of Beaufort Planning Commission. They are not made in any capacity as a member of the Trask family. They are not made in any capacity as owner and/or manager of any business entity, nor on behalf of any organization.

Contents:

A. Re: City of Beaufort Work Session Agenda Packet May 28, 2024

I appreciate the time and effort made in the preparation of the DRAFT City Council Standard Operating Procedures Manual. Since time ran out at the work session, I was unable to give my comments. I am listing my recommendations for edits below:

1. There should be a paragraph 5 added to Section 5.04 Electronic Communications:

   Proposed paragraph 5. “City Council Members are provided with a cityofbeaufort.org email address which should be used for the conduct of all city business. Council members should never use a private email address for the conduct of city business.”

   Question: Should the City provide members of the various boards and commissions with an email address? I don’t know the answer to this question. I believe that an email sent by a citizen to a board member in regard to a project or matter before that City board may constitute a public record under the law and would need to be available for public inspection. This issue should be discussed.

2. 8.07 Electronic Video Recording of Meetings:

   As I have mentioned more than once and most recently at the May 28 2024 Council Meeting, I do not believe the City’s policy of relying on a video recording to serve as part of the minutes of a public meeting is compliant with South Carolina law. SC 30-4-90 requires written minutes to include the substance of what is said. The City has discontinued the time-honored policy of capturing the substance of citizen comments at public meetings. I believe the law is intended to capture in writing the substance of what a citizen says at a public meeting just as much as the substance of what a councilman or member of staff says.

   1.
Furthermore, the City proposed language in 8.07 states that the video recordings are to be kept for six years. To the extent that the City purports that these recordings are “minutes” then the recordings are in direct violation of the SC Dept of Archives regulation below:

**General Records Retention Schedules for Municipal Records 12-604.2. Council Minutes A. Description: Record of proceedings at meetings of the municipal council which includes written descriptions of the financial and administrative business conducted. Information includes dates of meetings, names of council members present, claim approvals, petitions, bids, proposals, other matters discussed by or brought to the attention of the council, and attachments. B. Retention: Permanent. Microfilm for security.**

It seems clear that the City’s intention is for the recordings to serve as official minutes, hence the City’s disclaimer which always appears on the written minutes.

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Finally, the videos recordings of all these meetings appear to be linked to Facebook. How can the City be assured that the recordings will even be preserved for 6 years? Does the City have control of the storage of this data? Is there an agreement to that effect? Is reliance on a 3rd party to store video data on behalf of the City complaint with SC law and records retention requirements?

This is an issue that requires thoughtful discussion. The City should return to the policy of accurately and substantially recording the minutes of these public meetings in writing. The video recordings are fine as an adjunct to the written minutes.

3. **8.08 C. Public Comment on Agenda Items Only:**

In the first paragraph, the word “Council” should be replaced with “Mayor”. The Mayor runs the meeting and should have the discretion to permit more time for a citizen to speak.

**8.08 H. Consent Agenda:**

The idea of the consent agenda is a good one for making meetings run smoothly and efficiently. However, items vi. Final approval of leases and agreements and viii. Second reading of ordinances should never be matters included on a consent agenda.

In the last paragraph of this section, it needs to be clarified that “any” or “a” Council Member may request to pull a consent agenda item. The language in the draft reads in the plural and suggests that more than one council member is required to exercise such discretion.

**8.08 P. Addressing the Council – Manner – Limits:**

In the paragraph, the 2nd and 4th word “Council” need to be replaced with the work “Mayor”.

Again, I think this document will certainly help streamline City meetings and I appreciate the effort to develop this DRAFT.
B. Re: Ordinance to Amend Ordinance 6-23 and the RFP 2024-108 Hwy SC 170 Sidewalk Extension:

Council has tabled the 2nd reading of this amending ordinance in order to study the matter more fully. This matter is a case study of why the City should exercise great caution when entering into a contract for public work and the expenditure of public funds.

It is a given that this project was identified as a priority capital project during the 2024 strategic planning sessions.
However,
The project generated only 2 bids.
The spread between the bids was $88,355.73 or 31% of the low bid. RED FLAG
The low bid was $97,621.80 or 52% above the budget. RED FLAG
The low bid included a price of $123,292.30 for the components to install (4) light poles. RED FLAG

The City should not proceed with a cost overrun of this magnitude just because the project was prioritized. Under the circumstances, this project should be de-prioritized. The City should adopt a policy to require tabling and further analysis of any project which comes in above 15% of its budget.

This particular project, while worthy, is not in the best interest of the citizenry at this price. This project should be shelved indefinitely and taken up when the business circumstances are more favorable to secure a reasonable price.

The TIF2 funds should therefore be kept for this future purpose and for other appropriate uses and kept working to earn interest in the meantime. I would appreciate confirmation that the corpus of the TIF2 money is working to earn interest income.

C. Re: County 2024 Transportation Tax Initiative:

My concern is that another decade will go by and the traffic situation flowing from the Woods bridge down Carteret and Boundary and through downtown itself will worsen. The Woods bridge will break down from time to time as it has historically done (perhaps catastrophically).

Why isn't the City at least advocating for the 3rd bridge crossing at Brickyard Point? Forward thinking and consideration of this issue is vital.

Summary of Northern Bypass Issues

2003 Wilbur Smith Study
1. Complete bypass loop; Westerly, Northerly, and Easterly
2. Decided to focus on the Northerly across the river from US21 to Brickyard Rd.
   a. "relieve traffic congestion in the downtown Beaufort area by providing an alternative to the Woods Memorial Bridge"
3. 2020 projections would reduce Woods bridge traffic by 5,000-7,000 vehicles per day and McTeer bridge traffic by 2,000-3,000 vehicles per day.

3.
2007 Northern Regional Plan
1. Northern Beaufort County expected to grow from +80,500 to +123,500 by 2027. 53%
2. Listed transportation improvement projects to be completed by 2025
3. Some completed, some not.
4. Listed need to study 3rd River Crossing – Northern Bypass

2012 Beaufort County 1% Sales Tax Progress Report
1. Thomas & Hutton “Preferred Alignment” environmental assessment for northern bypass completed.
2. “Parallel Road portion of the Boundary Street improvements has been put on hold, with the intention of construction in the future as development occurs.” P23

2018 Ladys Island Area Plan – Single Page
1. Questions whether 3rd crossing will create more growth on Ladys Island – St. Helena
2. Concedes that if growth continues, a 3rd bridge would be necessary

2019 Ladys Island Plan
1. Manage growth:
   a. Limitations on Sewer/Septic
   b. Limit Fill Dirt
   c. Purchase Land & Conservation Easements
2. Continues To Push Bicycle/Pedestrian way but nothing gets done
3. Continues To Push Village/Connector Streets but nothing gets done
4. Projects that additional 8,795 dwelling units are possible which exceeds projected 2035 demand.
5. Admits that continued growth is likely but advocates to avoid need for 3rd bridge by making numerous local street and pathway improvements.

2023 Northern Regional Plan Implementation Committee Agenda
1. Floats concept that 3rd bridge is actually a replacement bridge for Woods as it continues to age.
2. Lists as a future agenda item the concept for the so called “replacement bridge”

Discussion of a 3rd bridge has been ongoing for over 20 years.
Growth continues and will not stop. Traffic will continue to increase. Woods Bridge will continue to age.
Frustration is evident. Traffic on Ladys Island is terrible. Result: the rise of local groups calling for limitations on growth. Traffic snarls and congestion on Carteret, Bay, Ribaut and Boundary will worsen.
Traffic woes cannot be cured by localized connector streets and multi-use paths alone. These are subordinate parts of the full solution which requires the Northern Connector.