



City Council Regular Meeting
Meeting Minutes – City Hall Council Chambers, 2nd Floor

November 18, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

7:01 PM

Philip Cromer, Mayor

Members of Council in attendance - Philip Cromer, Neil Lipsitz, Michael McFee, Mitch Mitchell, Josh Scallate.

II. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Michael McFee, Mayor Pro Tem

III. PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS

Dennis Ross, 13 Ridge Road, spoke in favor of New Business, Item I.

Dave Stack, 7 Ridge Road, spoke in favor of New Business, Item I.

Jen Clementoni, 35 Ocean Marsh Lane, spoke in favor of New Business, Item G.

Randy Mikals, 80 Dolphin Point Drive, spoke in favor of New Business, Item I.

Grant McClure, Coastal Conservation League, spoke in favor of New Business, Items G and I.

IV. MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

V. PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Cromer presented Al Amelly, from Public Works, with a plaque upon his retirement with 22 years of service to the City of Beaufort.

VI. PROCLAMATIONS/COMMENDATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

A. Character Education Proclamation, Chyna Mikell, Beaufort Middle School.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

B. Proclamation proclaiming November 2025 as Alzheimer's Awareness Month.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

C. Proclamation proclaiming November 20, 2025, as World Pancreatic Cancer Day.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

D. Proclamation proclaiming November 29, 2025, as Small Business Saturday.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

E. Proclamation proclaiming November 30, 2025, as Artists Sunday.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

F. Proclamation proclaiming December 5, 2025, as Arbor Day.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

Items approved are listed below:

A. Capital Projects Monthly Report.

B. Community Development Monthly Report.

C. Downtown Operations Monthly Report.

D. Finance Department Monthly Report.

E. Fire Department Monthly Report.

F. Human Resources Monthly Report.

G. IT Monthly Report.

H. Municipal Court Monthly Report.

I. Police Department Monthly Report.

J. Public Works Monthly Report.

K. Request from Gullah Traveling Theater for co-sponsorship of the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park to host the Sea Island Christmas Taste of Gullah and Rice Cook-Off on Saturday, December 6, 2025, from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm.

L. Request from The Beaufort Railroaders for 10 parking spaces for the 31st annual railroad exhibit in the Beaufort Library, December 7 - 14, 2025.

- M. Request from Chabad Greater Hilton Head for co-sponsorship for Chanukah Menorah Lighting on Sunday, December 14, 2025, 3:30 pm - 7:00 pm in the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park.
- N. Request from Holy Trinity Classical Christian School to host the 7th annual Swing Bridge Run 5K on Saturday, October 31, 2026, from 6:00 am to 10:00 am.
- O. Request from Beaufort Yacht Club for a waiver of drinking in public in the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park on Saturday, December 6, 2025, from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm for their annual Christmas Party.
- P. Approval of the Council Meetings Schedule and Holiday Schedule for 2026.

VIII. MINUTES

- A. Worksession and Regular Meeting - October 14, 2025.

Motion to approve was made by Councilman Lipsitz and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee.
Minutes approved with correction.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

- A. An Ordinance to amend City of Beaufort Ordinance 2025/13 regarding the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 City of Beaufort Budget to provide for the revenues and expenditures of General Fund, Parks and Tourism Fund, Stormwater Fund and American Rescue Plan Act Fund - Second Reading.

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

- B. An Ordinance to update the Operation of Golf Carts within the City of Beaufort pursuant to § 56-2-90 of the South Carolina Code - Second Reading.

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

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Request from Project Freedom 326 for street closures to host Juneteenth Parade on Friday, June 19, 2026, from 8:30 am to 11:30 am.

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

- B. An Ordinance to amend the Code of the City of Beaufort, Part 6 -Health and Sanitation, Chapter 1 - Garbage Collection and Disposal - First Reading.

Motion to approve was made by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.
Linda Roper, Downtown Operations Director, provided an overview of the proposed changes.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- C. An Ordinance amending the Business License Ordinance of the City of Beaufort to update the Class Schedule as required by Act 176 of 2020- First Reading.

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

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, provided the reason as to why the ordinance needed to be updated.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- D. An Ordinance to amend City of Beaufort Ordinance 2025/13 regarding the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 City of Beaufort Budget to provide for the revenues and expenditures of General Fund, Stormwater Fund, and Capital Projects Fund - First Reading.

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

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, provided an overview. The proposed budget amendment authorizes the addition of one full-time Public Works position dedicated to grounds maintenance at City Hall, the Police Department/Municipal Complex, Fire Station Headquarters, and Fire Station No. 2, as well as the capital acquisition of a stand-on mower. Also, there were additional funds needed for the Battery Shores Drainage Project.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- E. Tourism Development Advisory Committee (TDAC) State Accommodations Tax Grant Award Recommendations.

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

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, went over the proposed amounts to be awarded to each entity. The budget for Fiscal Year 2026 is \$649,420.00 with \$616,074.00 being awarded.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- F. Authorization to allow the City Manager to enter into a Contractual Agreement for Washington Street Park Phase II.

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

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, provided an overview. The City received 5 bids. Beaufort Construction was selected as the most responsive bidder.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- G. An Ordinance to amend Chapter 3 of Part 6 and Chapter 2 of Part 3 of the City of Beaufort, South Carolina's Code of Ordinances to make the release of balloons within the City of Beaufort unlawful - First Reading.

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

City Manager, Scott Marshall, provided an overview of the proposed change to the ordinance. This would prohibit the release of balloons anywhere inside the city limits and not just on city-owned property.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- H. Ordinance to amend Chapter 4 of Part 6 of the City of Beaufort, South Carolina's Code of Ordinances to adopt the Beaufort County Animal Control Ordinance - First Reading.

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

Scott Marshall, City Manager, provided an overview. These changes are being requested by Beaufort County Animal Control, who provides animal control services for the City.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- I. Resolution opposing the proposed installation of erosion control structures at 5 Cane Island Farm Road (R123 018 0000 076 0000).

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

Scott Marshall, City Manager, provided a summary. This resolution would oppose the installation of shoreline stabilization structures along the property. This would be nearly a mile-long section of riprap to protect the shoreline from erosion.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- J. Resolution to approve a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Beaufort and Beaufort County regarding the 1st South Carolina Volunteers of African Descent Park.

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

Scott Marshall, City Manager, provided an overview of the items outlined in the agreement. Both parties maintain access rights to the property. The City and County will commit \$100,000.00 and \$56,500.00 respectively toward the creation of a comprehensive Master Plan. The City will serve as lead entity for planning, contracting, and project management of improvements. The County will review and approve all plans before implementation. The City will maintain the property using standard practices until improvements are constructed. The County will support the City's efforts to obtain grants following adoption of the Master Plan.

All were in favor, motion carried.

- K. Resolution authorizing the temporary waiver of parking fees in the Downtown Marina Parking Lot and delegating authority to the City Manager to set the end date of the Free Parking Period.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

- L. A resolution empowering the City Manager to issue temporary licenses for the advertising and sale of merchandise on public property in Downtown Beaufort, South Carolina by Downtown Merchants and Retailers whose businesses may be adversely affected by construction associated with the Charles/Craven Street Stormwater Project.

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

Scott Marshall, City Manager, provided a summary. This resolution authorizes the City Manager to issue temporary licenses permitting downtown merchants and retailers to advertise and sell merchandise on public property during construction related to the Charles/Craven Street Stormwater Project. The action is intended to support business continuity while normal access and visibility are disrupted, and it temporarily relaxes specific sections of the City Code that otherwise prohibit such activities.

Councilman Scallate made a motion to amend by adding the language bolded below. The motion was seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

A RESOLUTION EMPOWERING THE CITY MANAGER TO ISSUE TEMPORARY LICENSES FOR THE ADVERTISING AND SALE OF MERCHANDISE ON PUBLIC PROPERTY **AND TO ESTABLISH TEMPORARY ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICTS** IN DOWNTOWN BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA BY DOWNTOWN MERCHANTS AND RETAILERS WHOSE BUSINESSES MAY BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATED WITH THE CHARLES/CRAVEN STREET STORMWATER PROJECT

WHEREAS, certain portions of Charles Street and Bay Street in downtown Beaufort have been closed to pedestrian and vehicular traffic as a result of the work being done on those streets associated with the Charles/Craven Street Stormwater Project;

WHEREAS, the above-referenced street closures may have an adverse effect on the business of merchants and retailers adjacent to the portions of the streets which are closed;

WHEREAS, downtown merchants and retailers, and their ability to continue their business operations, are vitally important to the economy and sense of place of Beaufort;

WHEREAS, Sections 7-2002 and 7-2003 of the City of Beaufort's Code of Ordinances (hereinafter "Code") disallow business advertising on public property;

WHEREAS, Part 7, Chapter 9 of the Code regulates sidewalk and only allows for the sale of food, beverages, or merchandise in public spaces if certain requirements are met;

WHEREAS, Sections 7-7002, 7-7003, and 7-7004 of the Code regulate the consumption, possession, and transportation of beer and wine in public places, public conveyances, and vehicles, prohibiting such activities without special permission of City Council or other specified approvals;

WHEREAS, the establishment of a temporary entertainment district in downtown Beaufort, permitting the responsible possession and consumption of beer and wine in open containers by visitors within designated boundaries, could enhance the pedestrian experience, promote economic vitality, and mitigate the adverse impacts of construction on local businesses by encouraging foot traffic and extended stays in the area;

WHEREAS, any temporary entertainment district established pursuant to this Resolution shall at all times remain subject to, and fully compliant with, all applicable provisions of South Carolina state law (including but not limited to 2024 Act No. 188 and S.C. Code Ann. Title 61), as well as any other federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or permitting requirements that govern the possession, consumption, or sale of beer and wine in public places; and

WHEREAS, the City Council intends that the authority granted herein shall not exceed, and shall always be limited by, the scope of authority granted to municipalities under South Carolina law;

WHEREAS, it is important that the City Manager be able to work with downtown merchants and retailers in an effort to ensure the continuance of their business operations during the construction associated with the Charles/Craven Street Stormwater Project;

WHEREAS, the City Manager should be empowered to grant exemptions to any City ordinance which regulates advertisement and sales on public property, to issue temporary licenses allowing for the advertisement and sale of merchandise on public property, **and to establish temporary entertainment districts allowing for public possession and consumption of beer and wine** to ensure the continuance of downtown merchants' and retailers' business operations; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Beaufort, South Carolina (hereinafter "City Council") finds that it is in the best interest of the City and its residents to empower the City Manager to take such actions as are necessary to allow for the continued business operations of downtown merchants and retailers.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Beaufort, South Carolina, duly assembled and by authority thereof, that while construction associated with the Charles/Craven Street Stormwater Project is ongoing, the City Manager may issue downtown merchants and retailers a license to advertise and

sell their merchandise on public property and may, at his discretion, **establish one or more temporary entertainment districts within downtown Beaufort.** Any such license issued by the City Manager for advertising and sales shall clearly describe the nature of the license granted and clearly state any restrictions associated with the grant of the license, to include without limitation the period of time for which the license will have effect. **Any such temporary entertainment district established by the City Manager shall clearly define its geographic boundaries, hours of operation, permissible activities, and any other conditions or limitations deemed necessary by the City Manager to ensure public safety and order, to include without limitation the period of time for which the district will have effect.** During the period of time that any such license is in effect and the licensee remains compliant with the provisions of the license, the licensee will not be found to be in violation of Sections 7-2002 and 7-2003 of the Code or Part 7, Chapter 9 of the Code. **Similarly, during the period of time that any such temporary entertainment district is in effect and participants remain compliant with its provisions, the restrictions on public consumption, possession, and transportation of beer and wine under Sections 7-7002, 7-7003, and 7-7004 of the Code shall be deemed temporarily suspended within the boundaries of the district, and no violations of said sections shall be enforced therein.**

Councilman Lipsitz would like to see “Beer and Wine” in place of “alcoholic beverages.” He also wants to see this effective only on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights (during twilight hours) instead of being allowed 7 days a week. Police Chief Stephanie Price was asked to speak about these changes. The Police Department is supportive of beer and wine only and would like to see the hours reduced when the time comes to have that discussion.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee inquired if the transportation of the alcoholic beverages would be allowed between the districts if more than one is established, or must they stay within that one district.

Councilman Mitchell does not disagree with the concept as he feels this is something we should do but does not feel comfortable with the responsibility falling solely on the City Manager’s shoulders and feels it should fall on Council. Councilman Lipsitz was in agreement.

Councilman Scallate was agreeable to accept the switching of terms by replacing “alcoholic beverages” with “beer and wine” in his amended motion.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to amend by replacing the words “beer and wine” where “alcoholic beverages” was used within Councilman Scallate’s amended motion. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

All were in favor of the amended motion.

All were in favor of the main motion.

M. Approval of order denying Beaufort Redevelopment Incentive Program Appeal.

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

Scott Marshall, City Manager, stated City Council was asked to consider and affirm the attached Order denying the appeal submitted by David Hornsby and HD Company, LLC regarding the City’s denial of a property tax reimbursement request under the Beaufort Redevelopment Incentive Program. The appeal concerns whether the appellants were entitled to reimbursement for taxes associated with development that occurred on a parcel they once owned but later sold prior to any construction. After holding a formal appeal hearing on October 14, 2025, reviewing written submissions from both parties, and applying the requirements of the Redevelopment Ordinance, City Council unanimously voted to deny the appeal.

All were in favor, motion carried.

N. Reappointment of Dick Stewart to the Beaufort Jasper Housing Trust.

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

Dick Stewart was reappointed for a three year term. The term will be January 2026 - January 2029.

All were in favor, motion carried.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT – NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Kimberly McGuire, 13 Bostick Circle, spoke about overdevelopment of Beaufort especially near Old Salem Road.

Cherimie Weatherford, 818 Bay Street, spoke about renting Tabby Place for a week for an event called Mistletoe Market, December 11 - 13, 2025.

Mandy McNew, 211 Scott Street, spoke about several items which included effects of the Bay/Charles Street intersection closure.

XII. REPORTS

City Manager's Report

The corner of Bay and Charles Street was closed last week to facilitate construction of the Charles/Craven Drainage project. It's hard to imagine the closure coming at a worse time for our business community. The good news is all holiday events will take place this year and downtown will look as Christmasy as ever.

Staff has been working with the Chamber, the CVB, BAHA and communicating with downtown merchants on several incentives underway to ensure downtown remains vibrant this holiday season. We have several initiatives underway or coming soon:

Free Parking at the Marina Parking Lot - This was Launched early on November 8, 2025, and will remain in place as long as needed to support the business community during construction.

"Downtown Dollars" Program - Shoppers can purchase Downtown Dollars at 60 cents on the dollar and spend them at participating businesses at full face value. The first opportunity to purchase will be on Black Friday near the clock on West Street Extension.

Enhanced Holiday Lighting - We're expanding and brightening holiday lighting throughout downtown to ensure an even more festive and welcoming atmosphere.

Storefront Décor Support - Downtown merchants can receive up to \$100.00 in reimbursement for holiday decorations to help create a warm and inviting holiday streetscape.

Coordinated Marketing and Public Service Announcements - In partnership with the CVB, we are securing expanded advertising and public messaging to highlight that downtown Beaufort is open, active, and offering new incentives for shopping and dining.

Night on the Town will be on Friday, December 5, 2025, with cookies, hot chocolate, Christmas Lights, the lighting of the City Christmas Tree and SANTA!

Gullah Taste of Christmas and Rice Cookoff at the Waterfront Park on Saturday, December 6, 2025, from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Light up the Night Boat Parade will be on Saturday, December 6, 2025 at 5:30 pm at the Waterfront Park.

Annual Christmas Parade on Sunday, December 7, 2025, will begin at 3:00 pm.

Also, this year, be sure and visit the Mistletoe Market presented by Freedman's Arts District at the Beaufort Inn's Tabby Place December 11 - 13, 2025, from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm. - Step into a magical holiday market filled with twinkling lights, festive music, and the joyful bustle of downtown artists, restaurants, and retailers offering unique finds, styles, treats and more. Wander from booth to booth with libation in hand, enjoy live music that lifts your spirits, and let the cheerful gift-wrapping station take one more thing off your holiday to-do list.

The City of Beaufort and the Waterfront Advisory Committee (WAC) want to hear from YOU! As planning continues for improvements to Waterfront Park, your input will help shape the future design and priorities for this beloved downtown space. The QR code for the survey is being pushed out in newsletters and other communications from the City, and we will also be installing a kiosk in the first floor of City Hall where the survey will also be available.

I launched the first edition of a weekly newsletter from the desk of the City Manager. It is called the Bridge Report, because it will be published on Mondays and is meant to bridge the activities of the previous week with a preview of the upcoming week. If you are not receiving it, please reach out to our PIO, Ashley Brandon, to be added to the mailing list.

Mayor's Report

Thanked staff for working diligently to make this Holiday Season a good one for the Downtown Merchants.

Attended many meetings and events that included a visit with the Lady's Island Elementary School Honors Class, and the 120th anniversary of the Beth Israel Synagogue.

Councilman Scallate

Spoke about the Waterfront Advisory Committee Survey that has been published.

Thanked the State for stepping in to manage the Charles/Craven Street drainage project.

Encouraged all to support local downtown businesses.

Councilman Mitchell

Attended a housing solutions event along with Mayor Cromer and Councilman Lipsitz.

Spoke about the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the 1st South Carolina Volunteers of African Descent Park. This will be coming in front of Beaufort County Council for approval on December 8, 2025.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee

Spoke about upcoming meetings for the Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS) and the Northern Regional Plan Implementation Committee (NRPIC).

Mentioned that the Hallelujah Christmas Singers are going to be performing at the Tabernacle Church on the Friday after Thanksgiving.

Councilman Lipsitz

Urged everyone to shop local.

Members of Council thanked Al Amelly for his 22 years of public service to the City.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70) (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Discussion regarding the purchase or sale of property.
- B. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70) (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Receipt of legal advice on current and pending litigation.
- C. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70) (a) (1) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Discussion regarding personnel employed by City Council.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to go into Executive Session and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to come out of Executive Session and seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

All were in favor, motion carried.

No actions from Executive Session.

XIV. ADJOURN

11:35 PM

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

Disclaimer: This document captures all actions taken by Council and summarizes discussions. 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.

approved: December 9, 2025
Traci Guldner

