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Webinar ID: 861 4151 9967



City of Beaufort
1911 Boundary Street
Beaufort Municipal Complex
Beaufort, South Carolina 29902
(843) 525-7070

**City Council Worksession Meeting Agenda
January 27, 2026**

Statement of Media Notification

"In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, all local media was duly notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting."

Worksession Meeting - Planning Conference Room - 5:00 PM

Please note, this meeting will be broadcast via zoom and live-streamed on YouTube. You can view the meeting at the City's page; City Beaufort SC

- I. Call to Order - Philip Cromer, Mayor**
- II. Employee New Hire Recognition**
 - A. Municipal Court - Paige Summers
 - B. Police Department - Ian Tiarks
- III. Historic District Task Force Committee Interviews**
 - A. Interviews to be conducted by Council for the Historic District Task Force Committee
- IV. Discussion**
 - A. Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report
 - B. Discussion of establishing a Pilot Social District in Downtown Beaufort
 - C. Discussion on creating a Downtown Advisory Board
 - D. Noise Ordinance
 - E. Discussion of the Merits of Adopting a "No Comments" Policy on the City's Facebook Page
- V. Executive Session**
 - A. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70) (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Receipt of legal advice and discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements
- VI. Adjourn**



City of Beaufort
Department Request for City Council Agenda Item

To: City Council **Date:** 01/09/2026
From: Curt Freese, Community Development Director
Item Name: Interviews to be conducted by Council for the Historic District Task Force Committee
Meeting Date: January 27, 2026
Department: Community Development Department

Background Information:

Introduction:

The following will be interviewing with the Council for possible consideration for this board:

Stacey Applegate
Bradford Fleming
Scott Gibbs
Jodie Miller
Martin Nash
Marius Payne
George Reynolds
Sue Sagui
Margaret Jerry Stocks
Marc Sviland
Fred Washington Jr

Background:

The Task Force will review policies, ordinances, and long-term strategies relating to the preservation, cultural identity, and economic vitality of the Historic District. With a strong emphasis on community representation, the committee will gather public input, evaluate enhancement opportunities, and present recommendations to City Council.

Serving on the Historic District Task Force is a chance to meaningfully impact the future of Beaufort's most iconic and historically significant area. Members will help shape policies that protect and enhance the district, ensure that community voices are represented in decision-

making, and collaborate with diverse stakeholders to safeguard Beaufort’s cultural and architectural legacy for the next generation. This is a unique opportunity to contribute to both preservation and progress in one of America’s oldest and most celebrated historic cities.

Who We’re Seeking

The City is accepting applications from Beaufort residents who live within the Historic District, including:

- Three (3) full-time residents living inside the overall City Historic District
- Two (2) full-time residents living in the Northwest Quadrant of the Historic District

An additional four members will be appointed from existing boards and organizations, including the Planning Commission, Historic Review Board, Historic Beaufort Foundation, and the Freedman’s Arts District.

Eligibility & Expectations

Applicants must:

- Be full-time residents of the City of Beaufort
- Demonstrate an interest in historic preservation, community character, and/or thoughtful development

Task Force members will collaborate with City staff, stakeholders, and fellow residents to ensure the district continues to serve as a cultural, aesthetic, and economic anchor for Beaufort.

Legal Authority:

Staff Recommendation:

Placed on Agenda For:

Attachments:

1. Stacey Applegate - HDTFC - 12-7-25_Redacted
2. Bradford Fleming - HDTFC - 12-30-25_Redacted
3. Scott Gibbs - HDTFC - 12-20-25_Redacted
4. Jodie Miller - HDTFC- 11-16-25_Redacted
5. Martin Nash - HDTFC - 12-31-25_Redacted
6. Marius Payne - HDTFC - 12-29-25_Redacted
7. George Reynolds - HDTFC - 12-31-25_Redacted
8. Sue Sagui - HDTFC - 11-15-25_Redacted
9. Margaret Jerry Stokes - HDTFC - 11-17-25_Redacted
10. Marc Sviland - HDTFC - 11-05-25_Redacted
11. Fred Washington Jr - HDTFC - 11-10-25_Redacted

Traci Guldner

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Sunday, December 7, 2025 9:09 AM
To: Traci Guldner
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

Select the board, commission or committee you are interested in applying for. You can choose more than one board.

Historic District Task Force Committee

**Note: Members of planning-related boards are required to take six hours of introductory training within their first year of service and three hours every year thereafter.*

Applicant Information

First Name Stacy

Last Name Applegate

Home address [REDACTED]

City BEAUFORT

State SC

Zip 29902

Day Phone Number [REDACTED]

Email Address [REDACTED]

If you do not reside in the City of Beaufort, do you Own property in the city?

Business address [REDACTED]

Business hours

Variable

Statement of qualifications and interest

As a Beaufort resident, homeowner, and long-standing community advocate, I am deeply committed and passionate about the preservation, vitality, and long-term diversity of the Beaufort Historic District. My personal, civic, and volunteer service over the years has given me a well-rounded understanding of what it takes to protect not only our historic structures, but also the culture and community that make this district meaningful.

I previously served on the Historic District Review Board from 2020 to 2022, including two years as Secretary. In that role, I remained committed to fairness, clarity, and upholding the intent of our preservation guidelines while helping residents navigate the review process. This experience strengthened my belief that strong preservation depends on transparency, consistency, and a respect for the district's architectural heritage.

My connection to the neighborhood is also personal. After purchasing and renovating a contributing structure at 1301 Greene St, on a careful budget, I gained firsthand experience with the review process and practical challenges of purchasing, renovating and maintaining historic properties.

Beyond this, I have been actively involved in community leadership and cultural preservation efforts throughout the district. I have served as Secretary of the Northwest Quadrant Neighborhood Association since 2022, and I was the first Executive Director of the Freedman Arts District, work that deepened my commitment to honoring and preserving the district's African American history. I also serve on the Board of Second Founding of America, collaborating with Reconstruction-era partners to elevate important historic sites such as 1313 Congress Street.

My community involvement includes serving on the planning committee for the Taste of Beaufort in Washington Street Park, volunteering with Love Beaufort to help neighbors with home repairs and participating as an active member of United Church. I wrote and submitted the SHPO grant that created and paid for the Washington St Park Historic Marker. In addition, I was a huge advocate for the City of Beaufort/Beaufort Housing Trust Repair Program partnership, which plays a critical role in supporting housing stability and maintaining the character of long-standing neighborhoods.

I'm also a Chair Volunteer with the Beaufort Film Festival, and purchased the flags that line Carteret Street, an effort to help keep our district vibrant and welcoming.

As a graduate of Leadership Beaufort's Class of 2025, I have a broader understanding of our city's needs, strengths, and opportunities, particularly around growth, preservation, and community identity.

In my professional life, I am a Realtor with Keller Williams Realty. My work in real estate, particularly with historic homes, has given me practical insight into how preservation policies affect feasibility, affordability, property values, and long-term community sustainability. This perspective complements my civic experience and ensures I understand both the policy side and the real-world implications for residents and homeowners.

Together, these experiences reflect my deep investment and passion, personally, professionally, and civically, in the future of the Beaufort Historic District. I care deeply about upholding architectural integrity, ensuring fair administration of the rules, and supporting a diverse, inclusive community. I would be honored to bring this perspective and commitment to the Historic District Task Force.

Please Enter Basic
Resume Information
Below

Stacy Christine Applegate, MHR, SPHR, SHRM-SCP

Summary

Applicant for the City of Beaufort's Historic District Task Force.

Education

University of South Carolina – Columbia, SC

- Master of Human Resources
- Master of Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism
- Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (Finance)

Experience

Keller Williams Realty/Coastal Real Estate Solutions -
Beaufort, SC April 2017 – Present
REALTOR®

Freedman Arts District – Beaufort, SC October 2022 –
November 2023
Executive Director

HRL Laboratories, LLC – Malibu, CA March 2016 – February
2017

Human Resources Consultant

California Wildlife Center (CWC) – Calabasas, CA June 2015 –
January 2016
Executive Director

Charlotte Country Club (CCC) – Charlotte, NC October 2012 –
June 2015
Human Resources Director

Novant Health – Charlotte, NC July 2006 – October 2012
HR Business Partner/Employee Relations Specialist/Sr
Compensation Specialist

Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) – Charlotte, NC March
2000 – June 2006
Director of Compensation and Benefits/Compensation Analyst

Arthur Andersen – Charlotte, NC January 1999 – March 2000
Human Resources Consultant

Outback Steakhouse – Columbia, SC November 1992 – May
1998
Key Manager/Corporate Trainer

Volunteer Activities _____

- Leadership Beaufort - Class of 2025
- Second Founding of America – Board of Directors (2025 –
present)
- Northwest Quadrant Neighborhood Association – Member
(2017-present) Secretary (2022-present)
- City of Beaufort Flood Awareness Committee – REALTOR®
Representative (2023–present)
- LOVE Beaufort Volunteer – (2022-present)
- Beaufort/Jasper Association of REALTORS® - Education
Committee (2024-present)
- Beaufort International Film Festival – Chair Volunteer (2017-
present) Volunteer of the Year - 2023
- Freedman Arts District – Executive Director (2022–2023)
Volunteer (2023-present)
- 100 Women Who Care – Member (2023-present)
- Dragonboat Beaufort – Paddler with Leadership Beaufort
Alumni Association (2022-2024)
- City of Beaufort Historic District Review Board (HDRB)–
Secretary - (2020-2022)
- UNITED Community Task Force – Volunteer (2018-2020)
- Historic Beaufort Foundation – Docent (2018-2019)
- Charlotte Emergency Winter Shelter (EWS) - Board of

- Directors (2000-2006) Secretary (2004-2006)
- NC Dept of Wildlife – Small Mammal Rehabilitator (2000-2015)
 - Men’s Shelter of Charlotte – Emeritus Board of Directors (2012-2015)
 - Habitat for Humanity, Salvation Army and Men’s Shelter of Charlotte – Volunteer (2000-2015)
 - Gastonia Sister Cities High School Exchange Program - Chaperone to Lima, Peru (2012)

Electronic Signature Agreement

I agree.

Electronic Signature

Stacy C Applegate

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Traci Guldner

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Tuesday, December 30, 2025 7:20 PM
To: Traci Guldner
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

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City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

Select the board, commission or committee you are interested in applying for. You can choose more than one board. Historic District Task Force Committee

**Note: Members of planning-related boards are required to take six hours of introductory training within their first year of service and three hours every year thereafter.*

Applicant Information

First Name Bradford

Last Name Fleming

Home address

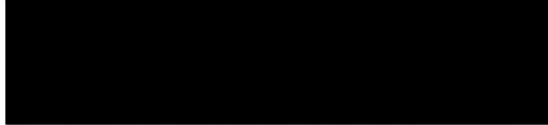


City Beaufort

State SC

Zip 29902

Day Phone Number



Email Address

If you do not reside in the City of Beaufort, do you Own property in the city?

Business address *Field not completed.*

Business hours	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Statement of qualifications and interest	Have been involved in preserving & renovating historic homes as well as new construction or over 34 yrs. Firmly believe that preservation and new development can coexist in Beaufort with the proper foresight/ long term planning.
Please Enter Basic Resume Information Below	<p>HBF: Preservation Committee 2018 - present</p> <p>OLT: Stewardship Committee 2023 - present</p> <p>Madaket Conservation Association: (Treasurer) 2007 - 2021</p> <p>Nantucket Historic District Commission: (chair) Madaket Advisory Board 2010 - 2021</p> <p>Maddaquet Admiralty Association: (Ship's writer) 2010 - 2021</p> <p>Dark Harbor Inc. (Principal) 2003 - 2014</p> <p>Fleming Design & Millworks: 1991- 2023</p>
Electronic Signature Agreement	I agree.
Electronic Signature	Bradford L. Fleming

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Traci Guldner

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Saturday, December 20, 2025 9:17 PM
To: Traci Guldner
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

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City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

Select the board, commission or committee you are interested in applying for. You can choose more than one board.

Historic District Task Force Committee

**Note: Members of planning-related boards are required to take six hours of introductory training within their first year of service and three hours every year thereafter.*

Applicant Information

First Name	Scott
Last Name	Gibbs
Home address	[REDACTED]
City	Beaufort
State	SC
Zip	29902
Day Phone Number	[REDACTED]
Email Address	[REDACTED]
If you do not reside in the City of Beaufort, do you	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Business address	<i>Field not completed.</i>

Business hours	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Statement of qualifications and interest	<p>I am a life-long resident of the City of Beaufort. I lived in the Northwest Quadrant before it was called the "Northwest Quadrant". I am of the Gullah Geechee Culture.</p> <p>I am interested and have a passion of being a part of preserving and promoting the Historic District 's unique heritage.</p>
Please Enter Basic Resume Information Below	<p>I attended the local schools and am a graduate of South Carolina State University. Upon graduation, I was employed by the SC Department of Social Services for 33 years. During retirement, I became involved with many nonprofit and civic organizations. To name a few, the Beaufort County Youth Conference, The Gullah Festival of South Carolina Board of Directors, The Charles Lynn Brown (Gym) Community Center Task Force, The Gullah Traveling Theater, Inc. and The Economic Opportunity Commission (EOC) Board of Directors.</p>
Electronic Signature Agreement	I agree.
Electronic Signature	Scott A. Gibbs

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Traci Guldner

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Sunday, November 16, 2025 9:46 PM
To: Traci Guldner
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

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City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

Select the board, commission or committee you are interested in applying for. You can choose more than one board.

Historic District Task Force Committee

**Note: Members of planning-related boards are required to take six hours of introductory training within their first year of service and three hours every year thereafter.*

Applicant Information

First Name Jodie

Last Name Miller

Home address [Redacted]

City Beaufort

State SC

Zip 29902

Day Phone Number [Redacted]

Email Address [Redacted]

If you do not reside in the City of Beaufort, do you *Field not completed.*

Business address *Field not completed.*

Business hours *Field not completed.*

Statement of qualifications and interest *Field not completed.*

Please Enter Basic Resume Information Below *Field not completed.*

Electronic Signature Agreement I agree.

Electronic Signature Jodie Miller

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Traci Guldner

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Wednesday, December 31, 2025 5:24 PM
To: Traci Guldner
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

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City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

Select the board, commission or committee you are interested in applying for. You can choose more than one board.

Historic District Task Force Committee

**Note: Members of planning-related boards are required to take six hours of introductory training within their first year of service and three hours every year thereafter.*

Applicant Information

First Name Martin

Last Name Nash

Home address

City Beaufort

State SC

Zip 29902

Day Phone Number

Email Address

If you do not reside in the City of Beaufort, do you Own property in the city?

Business address *Field not completed.*

Business hours	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Statement of qualifications and interest	Permanent resident in the Northwest Quadrant living in an historic freeman's cottage. The Thomas Young house.
Please Enter Basic Resume Information Below	Retired and available with a vested interest in the history and tender loving care of my neighborhood!
Electronic Signature Agreement	I agree.
Electronic Signature	Marty Nash

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Traci Guldner

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Monday, December 29, 2025 3:23 PM
To: Traci Guldner
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

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City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

Select the board, commission or committee you are interested in applying for. You can choose more than one board.

Historic District Task Force Committee

**Note: Members of planning-related boards are required to take six hours of introductory training within their first year of service and three hours every year thereafter.*

Applicant Information

First Name Marius

Last Name Payne

Home address

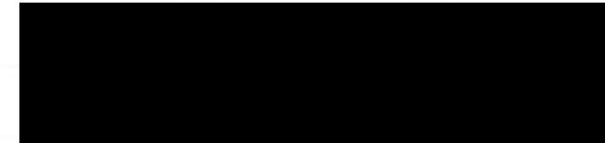


City Beaufort

State SC

Zip 29902

Day Phone Number



Email Address

If you do not reside in the City of Beaufort, do you own property in the city?

Business address *Field not completed.*

Business hours *Field not completed.*

Statement of qualifications and interest *Field not completed.*

Please Enter Basic Resume Information Below *Field not completed.*

Electronic Signature Agreement I agree.

Electronic Signature Marius S. Payne

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Traci Guldner

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Wednesday, December 31, 2025 10:40 PM
To: Traci Guldner
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

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City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

Select the board, commission or committee you are interested in applying for. You can choose more than one board. Historic District Task Force Committee

**Note: Members of planning-related boards are required to take six hours of introductory training within their first year of service and three hours every year thereafter.*

Applicant Information

First Name George

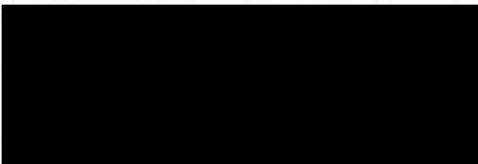
Last Name Reynolds

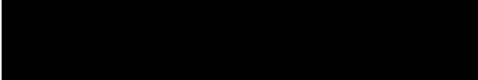
Home address 

City Beaufort

State SC

Zip 29902-4624

Day Phone Number 

Email Address 

If you do not reside in the City of Beaufort, do you *Field not completed.*

Business address *Field not completed.*

Business hours

Field not completed.

Statement of qualifications and interest

My interest in historic properties began in high school, where I followed my college prep classes with vocation drafting and architectural drawing courses. Growing up outside Winston-Salem NC, forays into the Old Salem community had a real impact on me. I met my future wife early my freshman year at Clemson and when she said her Georgia home was built in 1842, I had a stack of the precursor publication to "Preservation" to discuss with her, as I'd been a member of the National Trust for multiple years.

We currently own the Jackson Reed house (circa 1879) on Duke Street. Since moving here, we've participated as docents in multiple home tours with the HBF, as well as being engaged with OLT, HBM, BCHS, and the Nemours Wildlife Foundation (cooked in the recent Pineywoods Chili contest). Other Beaufort-area activities include multiple engagements as a certified salt-water fishing instructor for DNR and oyster-reef building activities with SCORE. I'm also a graduate of the Beaufort County Sherriff's Citizen Police Academy, and have volunteered at the Heritage PGA golf tournament (hole #5 steward for three years).

When we lived in Delray Beach FL, I was founding president of the Seagate Neighborhood Association preserving our historic (by coastal Florida standards) neighborhood by successfully advocating traffic calming and other road modifications to reduce cut-through and speeding traffic.

When living in Clemson, I was especially active in various church activities (actor in a walk-thru nativity play, building fund co-chair, Christian Education committee) and the local athletic booster club. In the later, I served the local club as secretary and as the live auction committee chair for the signing-day banquet, which was our largest scholarship fundraiser, and required close interaction with "celebrities" and high-dollar donors.

There are common threads to all of these experiences: Everyone's input is invaluable, but most everyone also requires some customized touches in recruitment and enlistment. Common sense and passion can overcome bureaucracy and inertia, but creativity is often required. You can never anticipate where cross-pollination can occur, so looking left and right can be just as important as driving straight ahead. We love our forever home here in Beaufort, and look forward to finding ways to preserve the unique and historic things that make it

Please Enter Basic
Resume Information
Below

special while accommodating and directing inevitable pressure and change.

George is recognized as an innovative mechanical engineer and as a product development executive in various multinational (Europe, China, Brazil) settings, but more importantly, as an early advocate for advanced logistics and supply chains solutions in retail, industrial, automotive, and energy. George holds four US patents. He received his BS degree with honors from Clemson University.

Experience

PerfectID / Syrma SGS, remote & on-demand - Austin, Texas / Principal Consultant, Mar 2022 – Present.

Sciens et Fidelis, LLC, Beaufort, South Carolina / Principal, Mar 2022 – Present.

Panasonic North America, remote - Rochester, New York / Director, Business Development, Jan 2019 - Mar 2022.

Omni-ID, remote - Rochester, New York / Senior Director, Strategic Accounts and Vice President Worldwide Sales, Feb 2010 - Jan 2019.

RLD Consulting LLC, Clemson, South Carolina / Principal, Oct 2007 - Feb 2010.

Avery Dennison, Atlanta, Georgia / Vice President RFID Worldwide Sales and Marketing, Jan 2006 - Sep 2007.

Tyco, Boca Raton, Florida / Vice President RFID and VP EAS, Jan 2002 - Jan 2006

Sensormatic, Boca Raton, Florida / Vice President, Hard Tags Group and Product Line Engineering, Oct 2000 - Jan 2002.

Education

Clemson University, BS Mechanical Engineering, 1983 (3/51/4.0 GPA). Activities included Alpha Tau Omega, Central Spirit, Tau Beta Pi, and 3 technical internship work experiences.

Electronic Signature
Agreement

I agree.

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Traci Guldner

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Saturday, November 15, 2025 11:19 AM
To: Traci Guldner
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

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City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

Select the board, commission or committee you are interested in applying for. You can choose more than one board.

Historic District Task Force Committee

**Note: Members of planning-related boards are required to take six hours of introductory training within their first year of service and three hours every year thereafter.*

Applicant Information

First Name Sue

Last Name Sagui

Home address

City Beaufort

State SC

Zip 29902

Day Phone Number

Email Address

If you do not reside in the City of Beaufort, do you *Field not completed.*

Business address *Field not completed.*

Business hours	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Statement of qualifications and interest	Have owned property since 2015, did new construction, hence went through the historic district codes process, worked 5 years for a local contractor, also additional exposure to historic district building and restoration policies, sat on a short term rental board prompted by the hospitality board, sat on the CLB center task force (just outside of the NWQ neighborhood), was secretary to the NWQNA from July 2018-2021. I was also active with the United Church back in 2018/19 for involving after school activities for children in the neighborhood under an agreement with CLB center. Through the NWQNA sat on a board to work with the no-profit that represents the Washington Street Park. I have a passion for the NWQ and the history of Beaufort, with a vision of bringing together the history and people of the NWQ prior to it's gentrification with the growth that has happened over the past 25years to the current continued growth happening in the quadrant.
Please Enter Basic Resume Information Below	Been self employed most of my life. Have had several different professions... 16yrs in the restaurant industry including owning and operation for 5 of those 16 years, owned and operated an apartment 10 unit building for 11-1/2 yrs, Lived in Cozumel Mexico, working with tourism and holistic health care out of a beach front hotel for 19yrs. I am bilingual (Spanish/English).
Electronic Signature Agreement	I agree.
Electronic Signature	Sue Sagui

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Traci Guldner

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Monday, November 17, 2025 10:01 AM
To: Traci Guldner
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

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City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

Select the board, commission or committee you are interested in applying for. You can choose more than one board.

Historic District Task Force Committee

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Applicant Information

First Name	Margaret(Jerry)
Last Name	Stocks
Home address	[REDACTED]
City	Beaufort
State	SC
Zip	29902
Day Phone Number	[REDACTED]
Email Address	[REDACTED]
If you do not reside in the City of Beaufort, do you	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Business address	<i>Field not completed.</i>

Business hours	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Statement of qualifications and interest	I am a native Beaufortonian and live in the historic district of Beaufort.
Please Enter Basic Resume Information Below	I have served on the TMAC Board twice. I also served on the board that was formed to develop guidelines for short term rentals in the Historic District. I also served as treasurer, secretary, and President of the Old Commons Neighborhood Association.
Electronic Signature Agreement	I agree.
Electronic Signature	Margaret Stocks

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Traci Guldner

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Wednesday, November 5, 2025 3:37 PM
To: Traci Guldner
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

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City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

Select the board, commission or committee you are interested in applying for. You can choose more than one board.

Historic District Task Force Committee

**Note: Members of planning-related boards are required to take six hours of introductory training within their first year of service and three hours every year thereafter.*

Applicant Information

First Name Marc

Last Name Sviland

Home address [REDACTED]

City Beaufort

State SC

Zip 29902

Day Phone Number [REDACTED]

Email Address [REDACTED]

If you do not reside in the City of Beaufort, do you own property in the city?

Business address *Field not completed.*

Business hours	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Statement of qualifications and interest	I have lived in the Northwest Quadrant of the city of Beaufort since November of 2018. I am the vice chairman of the city's Zoning Board of Appeals on my second term. I am active n the historic district with our neighborhood and helping folks around the neighborhood. I have a deep concern about what happens in the historic district of Beaufort, and how buildings both new and old are handled and how we can continue to improve the historic district and the preservation of those structures that can be preserved and getting rid of the blight that plagues this era.
Please Enter Basic Resume Information Below	20+ year Navy career, primarily in leadership roles; 25 years in government contracting primarily in leadership and management roles; Habitat for Humanity of the Lowcountry building houses in northern Beaufort County and Habitat for Humanity workshop as a fine craftsmen and cabinet maker. Artist Sunday demonstrator in woodturning as well as operations manager for the Freedman's Arts District Chalk it Up festival.
Electronic Signature Agreement	I agree.
Electronic Signature	Marc D Sviland

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Traci Guldner

From: noreply@civicplus.com
Sent: Monday, November 10, 2025 11:28 AM
To: Traci Guldner
Subject: Online Form Submittal: City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

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City of Beaufort Board and Commission Application

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Applicant Information

First Name	FRED
Last Name	WASHINGTON JR
Home address	
City	BEAUFORT
State	South Carolina
Zip	29902
Day Phone Number	
Email Address	
If you do not reside in the City of Beaufort, do you	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Business address	<i>Field not completed.</i>

Business hours	<i>Field not completed.</i>
Statement of qualifications and interest	Lived and grew up in Historic District - with the exception of time I attended school and worked in Boston, MA for 8 years.
Please Enter Basic Resume Information Below	After returning home in 1972 I worked for BJHCH, Inc; Beaufort County School District; Director of the Beaufort County Department of Social Services for 27+ years. I also served on Beaufort City Council for approximately 12 years; and the Beaufort County School Board for a few years.
Electronic Signature Agreement	I agree.
Electronic Signature	Fred S. Washington, Jr.

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)



City of Beaufort
Department Request for City Council Agenda Item

To: City Council **Date:** 01/20/2026
From: Alan Eisenman, Finance Director
Item Name: Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report
Meeting Date: January 27, 2026
Department: Finance Department

Background Information:

Introduction:

David Irwin, Audit Partner with Mauldin & Jenkins, will present financial and compliance audit from City of Beaufort's FY 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, will present financial overview of FY 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

Background:

Legal Authority:

S.C. Code Ann. § 5-7-260; Title 5, Chapter 7

Staff Recommendation:

Placed on Agenda For:

Attachments:

1. Financial and Compliance Audit Presentation
2. Annual Comprehensive Financial Report Overview Presentation

City of Beaufort, South Carolina



Financial & Compliance Audit – June 30, 2025



Presented by:

***David Irwin, CPA
Partner***



Purpose of Today's Presentation

- **Overview of:**
 - **Independent Auditor's Report**
 - **Compliance Reports**
 - **Financial Statements**
- **Required Communications**
- **Answer Any Questions**

Audit Opinion

- **City: responsible for financial statements.**
- **M&J: to express opinions.**
- **Auditing Standards = *Generally Accepted Auditing Standards and Governmental Auditing Standards***
- **Financial Audit : Unmodified (Clean) Opinion**
 - **Highest level of Assurance**
 - **Financial Statements are fairly presented in all material respects, in accordance with GAAP**

Compliance Reports

Financial Report contains two (2) Compliance Reports:

▪ **Single Audit Report**

- **Compliance audit**
- **Required > \$750k in federal expenditures**
- **Unmodified (Clean) Opinion**

▪ **Yellow Book Report**

- **Report on City's Internal Controls and Compliance**
- **Not Intended to Provide an Opinion**
- **No Material Weaknesses or Significant Deficiencies Noted During Our Audit**

Overview of Financial Statements

- **City prepares an Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR)**
- **ACFR goes above and beyond basic reporting requirements**
- **Submitted annually to Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)**
- **City awarded ACFR Certificate for 18th year in a row**

Overview of Financial Statements

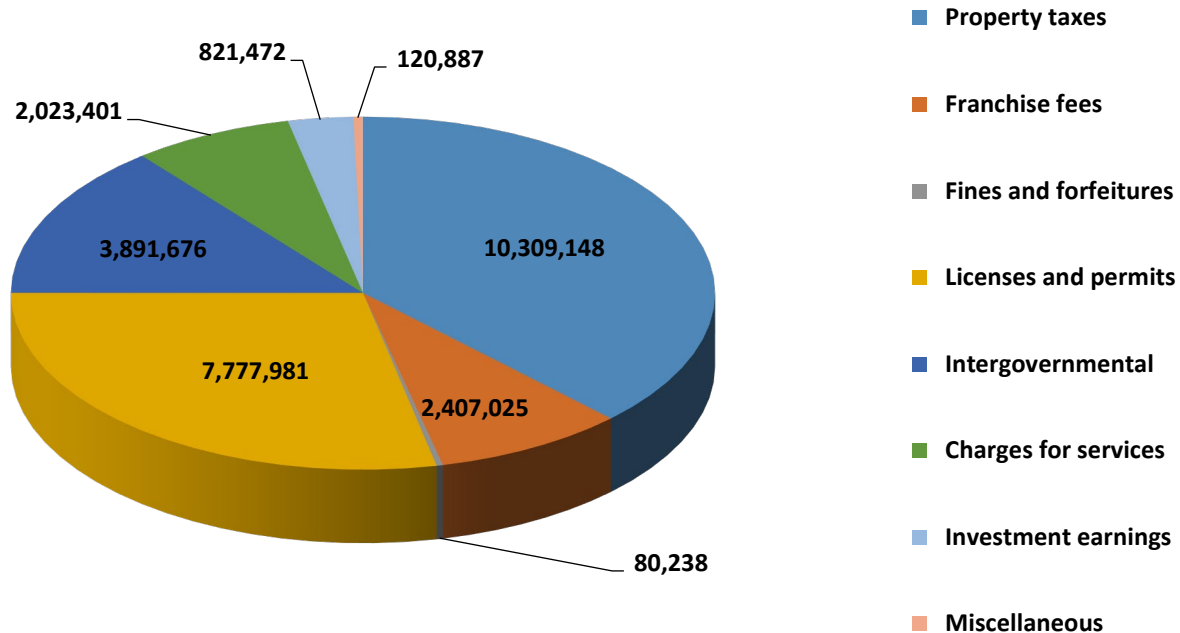
- **Management’s Discussion & Analysis (MD&A)**
 - **Written by Management**
 - **Introduces and Summarizes Basic Financial Statements**
 - **Comparative Information**

- **City’s Financial Statements Include Three (3) Components**
 - **Government-Wide Financial Statements**
 - **Fund Level Financial Statements**
 - **Notes to the Financial Statements**

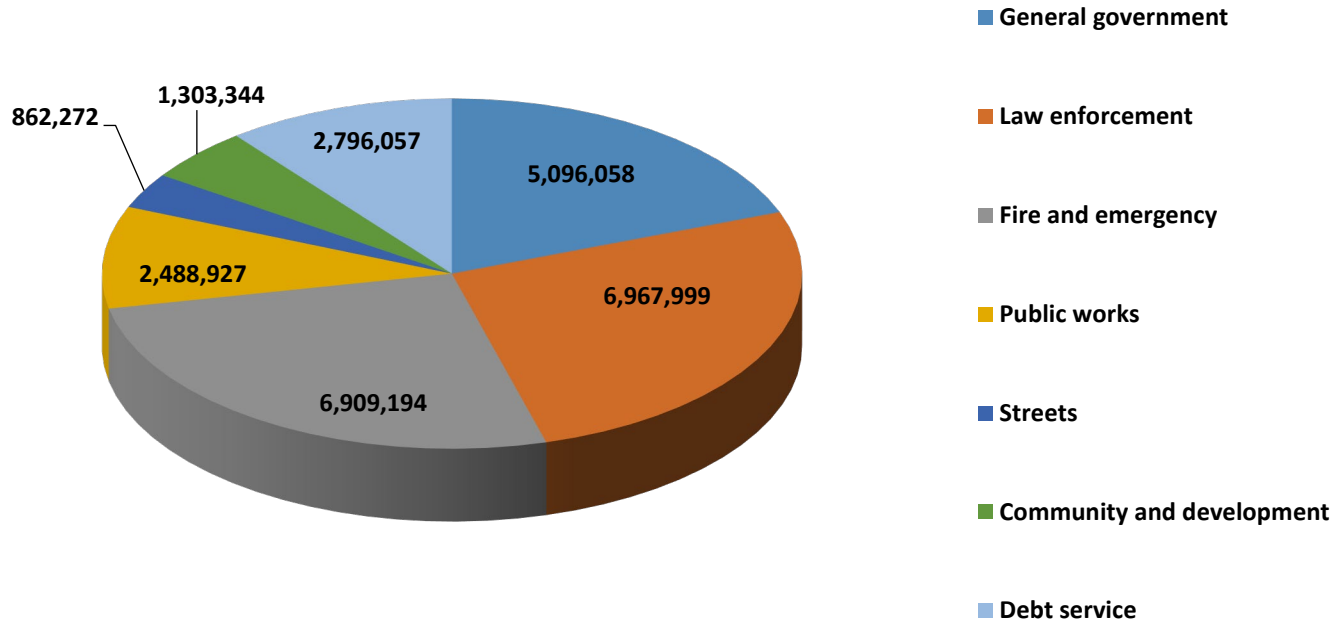
Government-Wide Financial Statements

- **\$123.3 Million = total assets and deferred outflows**
- **\$76.2 Million = capital assets, net of A/D**
- **\$57.8 Million = total liabilities and deferred inflows**
- **\$65.5 Million = net position *(or equity)***
- **\$40.9 Million = revenues (\$40.2M in FY24)**
- **\$32.7 Million = expenses (\$33.6M in FY24)**
- **Increase in Net Position of \$8.2M vs \$6.6M increase in PY**

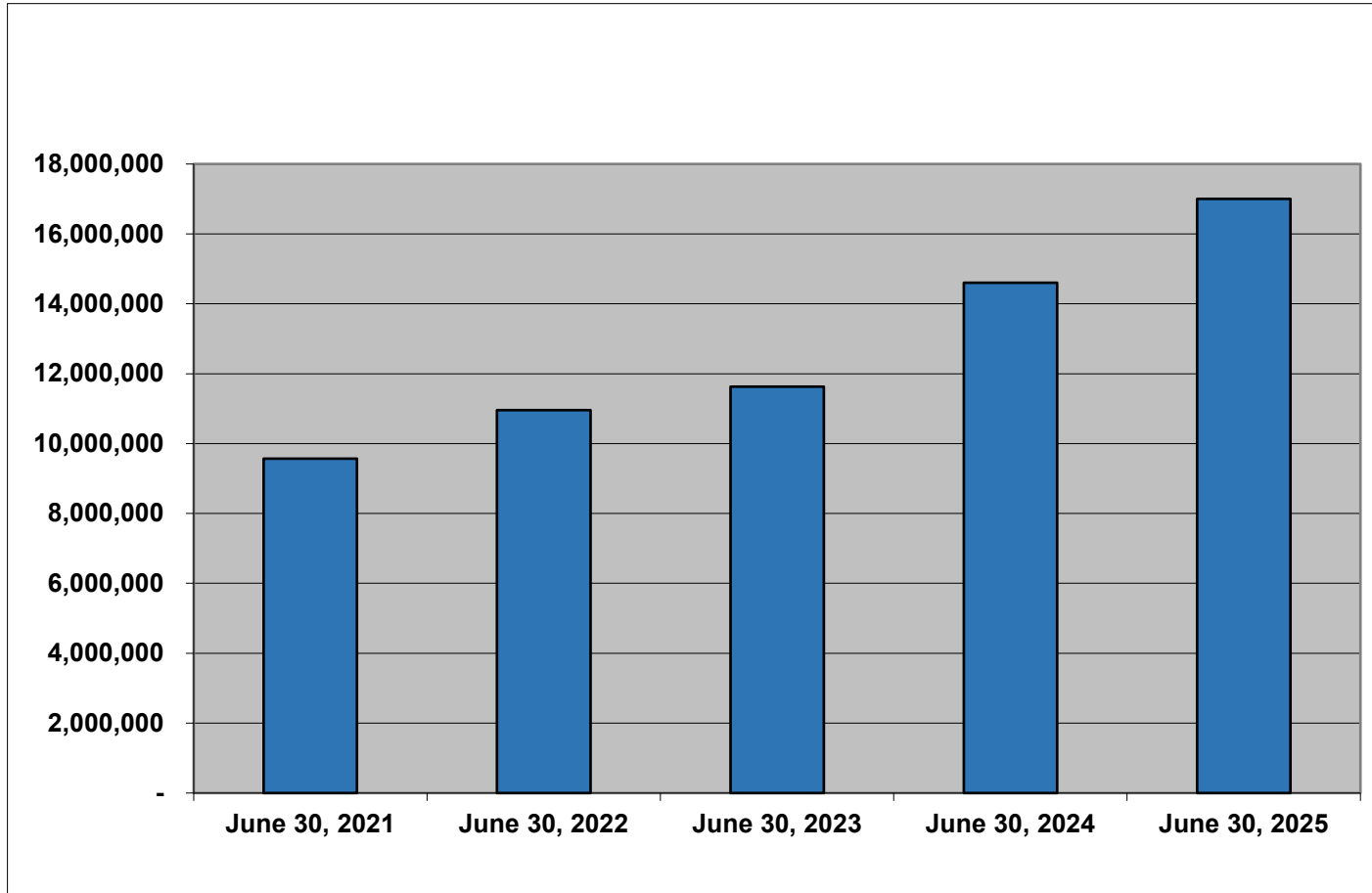
General Fund Revenues



General Fund Expenditures



General Fund - Fund Balance History



Importance of Maintaining a Strong Fund Balance

- **Cash flow through beginning of next fiscal year**
- **Significant emergencies and unanticipated expenditures (i.e. weather-related costs)**
- **Flexibility for discretionary funding needs**
- **Potential for better interest rates on debt issues**
- **Important in uncertain economic times**

Required Communications

- **Clean Opinion and No Audit Findings**
- **We Received Full Cooperation from Management and Staff**
- **No Disagreements with Management**
- **No Significant Issues Discussed with Management**
- **No Uncorrected Misstatements**
- **We are Independent of the City as Required by Government Auditing Standards**

Closing

We appreciate the opportunity to serve the City of Beaufort and look forward to serving the City in the future.



Annual Comprehensive Financial Report Overview

Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2025

January 27, 2026



Management Discussion and Analysis

INTRODUCTION

As management of the City of Beaufort, SC, we offer readers of the City of Beaufort's financial statements this narrative overview and analysis of the financial activities of the City for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025. Management encourages readers to consider the information presented within this discussion and analysis in conjunction with additional information presented as part of this report. Readers are directed to the transmittal letter, financial statements, notes to the financial statements and statistical information to enhance their understanding of the City's financial performance.

This report presents the financial highlights for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025 and contains other supplementary information.



The following table presents a summary of the City's Net Position as of June 30, 2025.

	2025	2024	Change	% Change
Assets:				
Current and other assets	\$ 42,735,657	\$ 43,291,975	\$ (556,318)	-1.29%
Capital assets	76,234,082	71,175,720	5,058,362	7.11%
Total assets	118,969,739	114,467,695	4,502,044	3.93%
Deferred outflows of resources:				
Deferred loss on debt refunding	131,165	181,940	(50,775)	-27.91%
Deferred pension charges	4,198,828	2,946,983	1,251,845	42.48%
Total deferred outflows of resources	4,329,993	3,128,923	1,201,070	38.39%
Liabilities:				
Long-term liabilities	43,724,888	45,221,343	(1,496,455)	-3.31%
Other liabilities	12,893,367	13,446,356	(552,989)	-4.11%
Total liabilities	56,618,255	58,667,699	(2,049,444)	-3.49%
Deferred inflows of resources:				
Deferred pension credits	1,166,483	549,049	617,434	112.46%
Net position:				
Net investment in capital assets	51,576,030	47,587,663	3,988,367	8.38%
Restricted	16,017,954	15,118,227	899,727	5.95%
Unrestricted	(2,078,990)	(4,326,020)	2,247,030	51.94%
Total net position	\$ 65,514,994	\$ 58,379,870	\$ 7,135,124	12.22%

Government-Wide Financial Highlights

- The assets and deferred outflows of the City exceeded its liabilities and deferred inflows at the close of the most recent fiscal year by \$65,514,994 (net position). Unrestricted net position is reported as (\$2,078,990) due to the effects of reporting net pension liability in accordance with GASB Statement No. 68, Accounting and Financial Reporting for Pensions - an amendment of GASB Statement No. 27, which is not an accurate representation of the City's financial position to meet the government's ongoing obligations to citizens and creditors. Excluding net pension liability (\$18,390,355) from net position, results in \$16,311,365 unrestricted net position available to meet the City's ongoing obligations to citizens and creditors.
- The City's total cash position at June 30, 2025 was \$39,629,758 compared to \$40,438,725 at June 30, 2024, a slight decrease primarily due to the City's prudent spending along with the use of bond funds for capital projects.
- As of June 30, 2025, the City's long-term indebtedness, including the liability for accrued vacation and net pension liability, had decreased a net of \$2,220,284 from June 30, 2024. The \$1,320,184 for issuance of leases and subscription arrangements contributed to the increase in debt along with \$3,503,974 decrease from scheduled debt payments led to the overall net decrease.
- The City's bond rating from Standard & Poor's is AA and an Aa2 rating from Moody's Investors Services for general obligation debt.
- Property taxes support 39% of the governmental services to citizens and the community in fiscal year 2025.



The following table presents a summary of the City's Statement of Activities as of June 30, 2025.

	2025	2024	Change	% Change
Revenues:				
Program Revenues				
Charges for services	\$ 17,456,653	\$ 16,757,852	\$ 698,801	4.17%
Operating grants and contributions	3,173,343	4,084,295	(910,952)	-22.30%
Capital grants and contributions	2,043,899	949,262	1,094,637	115.31%
General Revenues				
Taxes	16,206,210	15,740,559	465,651	2.96%
Other	2,054,136	2,695,613	(641,477)	-23.80%
Total Revenues	40,934,241	40,227,581	706,660	1.76%
Expenses:				
General Government	6,813,467	8,910,386	(2,096,919)	-23.53%
Law Enforcement	7,889,955	7,248,593	641,362	8.85%
Fire and emergency	7,204,743	7,069,621	135,122	1.91%
Public works	3,365,403	3,187,849	177,554	5.57%
Culture and recreation	2,138,450	2,336,789	(198,339)	-8.49%
Streets	1,724,979	1,321,481	403,498	30.53%
Community development	2,724,498	2,667,960	56,538	2.12%
Interest	842,374	901,907	(59,533)	-6.60%
Total Expenses	32,703,869	33,644,586	(940,717)	-2.80%
Change in net position	8,230,372	6,582,995	1,647,377	25.02%
Net position - beginning of year, as previously presented	58,379,870	51,796,875	6,582,995	12.71%
Restatement (see Note 3-G)	(1,095,248)	-	(1,095,248)	-100.00%
Net position- beginning of year, as restated	57,284,622	51,796,875	5,487,747	10.59%
Net position - end of year	\$ 65,514,994	\$ 58,379,870	\$ 7,135,124	12.22%

Government-Wide Revenue Highlights

Overall revenues increased \$706,660 or 1.7% over the preceding year. Key elements of significant changes in governmental activity revenues are as follows:

- Charges for service increased \$698,801 or 4.1% primarily as a result of additional fire services support from Town of Port Royal (\$321,267), business development growth increasing fire impact fees (\$212,802) and building permits (\$185,159).
- Operating grants and contributions decreased a net \$910,952 or 22.3% which is mostly due from a federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant revenue recognized during the fiscal year for an increase of \$1,074,807 along with decrease of state grants of \$1,975,559 from a cybersecurity and workforce initiative grant received in the prior fiscal year.
- Capital grants and contributions increased by \$1,094,637 or 115% primarily as result of capital grants for infrastructure related to Allison Road Project that completed construction towards the end of fiscal year 2025 and Downtown Drainage Projects continued in the engineering and design phase.
- Taxes increased a net \$465,651 or 2.9%. Property taxes increased \$638,776 from growth in assessed property values and accommodations taxes decreased \$281,200 as tourism activity slowed down slightly from last year's record tourism year.
- Other General Revenues decreased \$641,477 or 23.8%. The City recognized one-time insurance proceeds and sale of property in the prior fiscal year.

Government-Wide Expense Highlights

Overall expenses decreased \$940,717 or 2.8% over the preceding year. Significant changes in expenses within governmental activities are as follows:

- General government expenses decreased \$2,096,919 or 23.5% predominately from grant-related disbursements for cybersecurity and workforce initiatives recognized last year.
- Law enforcement expenses increased \$641,362 or 8.8% predominately from a combination of personnel and benefits increases of \$235,239 along with recording amortization expenses related to the City's implementation of *GASB 87 Leases*.
- Street expenses increased \$403,498 or 30.5% mostly due to depreciation for the recently completed Allison Road project.



The following is Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance as of June 30, 2025.

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>TIF II Fund</u>	<u>Capital Projects Fund</u>	<u>Parks and Tourism Fund</u>	<u>American Rescue Plan Act Fund</u>	<u>Stormwater Fund</u>	<u>Other Governmental Funds</u>	<u>Total Governmental Funds</u>
REVENUES								
Property taxes	\$ 10,309,148	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,309,148
Other taxes	-	-	-	4,485,690	-	-	977,810	5,463,500
Franchise fees	2,407,025	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,407,025
Fines and forfeitures	80,238	-	-	-	-	-	-	80,238
Licenses and permits	7,777,981	-	-	-	-	-	299,242	8,077,223
Intergovernmental	3,891,676	-	1,813,104	-	2,501,162	-	-	8,205,942
Charges for services	2,023,401	-	-	660,693	-	1,360,751	-	4,044,845
Investment earnings	821,472	171,067	88,026	376,008	195,311	34,964	43,637	1,730,485
Miscellaneous	120,887	-	-	197,339	-	-	5,425	323,651
Total revenues	<u>27,431,828</u>	<u>171,067</u>	<u>1,901,130</u>	<u>5,719,730</u>	<u>2,696,473</u>	<u>1,395,715</u>	<u>1,326,114</u>	<u>40,642,057</u>
EXPENDITURES								
Current:								
General government	5,096,058	-	-	-	288,948	-	713,722	6,098,728
Law enforcement	6,967,999	-	-	1,411,202	-	-	23,480	8,402,681
Fire and emergency	6,909,194	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,909,194
Public works	2,488,927	20,000	-	-	-	733,671	-	3,242,598
Culture and recreation	-	-	-	1,792,080	-	-	-	1,792,080
Streets	862,272	-	-	-	-	-	-	862,272
Community development	1,303,344	-	-	977,410	-	-	-	2,280,754
Debt Service:								
Principal	2,383,092	-	-	603,858	-	345,000	52,358	3,384,308
Interest and other charges	412,965	-	-	370,743	-	170,755	11,296	965,759
Capital Outlay	-	26,814	7,341,782	187,280	462,929	-	-	8,018,805
Total expenditures	<u>26,423,851</u>	<u>46,814</u>	<u>7,341,782</u>	<u>5,342,573</u>	<u>751,877</u>	<u>1,249,426</u>	<u>800,856</u>	<u>41,957,179</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over (under) expenditures	<u>1,007,977</u>	<u>124,253</u>	<u>(5,440,652)</u>	<u>377,157</u>	<u>1,944,596</u>	<u>146,289</u>	<u>525,258</u>	<u>(1,315,122)</u>
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES (USES)								
Issuance of leases	1,100,604	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,100,604
Issuance of subscription arrangements	219,580	-	-	-	-	-	-	219,580
Transfers in	72,640	-	5,937,189	-	-	-	-	6,009,829
Transfers out	-	-	-	(3,439,758)	(1,749,285)	(728,271)	(92,515)	(6,009,829)
Total other financing sources (uses)	<u>1,392,824</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,937,189</u>	<u>(3,439,758)</u>	<u>(1,749,285)</u>	<u>(728,271)</u>	<u>(92,515)</u>	<u>1,320,184</u>
Net change in fund balances	2,400,801	124,253	496,537	(3,062,601)	195,311	(581,982)	432,743	5,062
Fund balances - beginning	14,601,115	3,832,844	1,405,394	10,287,870	483,971	1,731,116	1,715,115	34,057,425
Fund balances - ending	<u>\$ 17,001,916</u>	<u>\$ 3,957,097</u>	<u>\$ 1,901,931</u>	<u>\$ 7,225,269</u>	<u>\$ 679,282</u>	<u>\$ 1,149,134</u>	<u>\$ 2,147,858</u>	<u>\$ 34,062,487</u>

General Fund Revenue Highlights

General fund revenues increased \$1,464,264 or 5% from the prior year. The significant changes are primarily attributed to the following:

- Property taxes reported a 7.4% increase totaling \$713,924. This increase is primarily related to a growing tax base as the housing market reached unprecedented levels.
- A decrease of \$1,637,620 or 29.6% is reported in intergovernmental revenue as the City received a one-time \$2,000,000 state grant for cybersecurity and workforce initiatives during the previous fiscal year and a \$321,267 increase from Town of Port Royal for shared costs related to fire services.
- Interest earnings revenue increased \$118,211 or 16.8% as a result of a slightly higher interest rate market on the City's investments.
- Miscellaneous revenues decreased \$827,092 or 87.2% due to one-time revenues from property sales of \$433,602 for land at Beaufort Commerce Park and \$390,907 from insurance proceeds for a fire truck repair recognized in the prior fiscal year.

General Fund Expenditure Highlights

The General Fund expenditures decreased \$413,114 or 1.5% over fiscal year ended June 30, 2025.

- General government decreased \$1,398,458 or 21.5% as a one-time land purchase and expenditures associated with a cybersecurity and workforce state grant were recognized in the prior fiscal year.
- Law enforcement saw a \$663,609 or 10.5% increase over the prior year. Net increases in personnel and benefits attributed to \$285,662 of the overall increase and the police department added fourteen leased vehicles upfitted with equipment to replace older vehicles for an additional \$126,385.
- Public Works increased \$116,374 or 4.9% as mostly due to an increase from an adjustment in the contract for residential garbage collection.



Other Major Funds Highlights

Tax Increment Financing District II Fund (TIF II)

The TIF II Fund expended \$46,814 or \$25,252 more than fiscal year 2024. This increase is associated with traffic signal improvements on Boundary Street. Revenues of \$171,067 were \$14,821 lower than prior year due to a slightly lower interest rate environment in investment earnings.

Capital Projects Fund

The Capital Project Fund expended \$7,341,782 or \$3,082,027 more than fiscal year 2024. The increase is attributable to more capital projects in construction phase, rather than in the design and engineering stage. Most of the current year activity is a result of three projects: engineering and construction for Washington Street Park Phase I project for \$639,768, construction for Southside Park Phase I improvements for \$2,334,339, and costs associated with large stormwater drainage projects in The Point and surrounding areas of the City totaling \$3,075,412. During fiscal year 2025, the City had thirteen (13) active capital projects that were underway and at various stages of completion.

Parks and Tourism Fund

The Parks & Tourism fund expended \$5,342,573 in the current year which is \$895,270 more than the prior year and revenues of \$5,719,730 were \$231,630 more than FY 2024. The increase in revenues is mostly due to insurance proceeds received for damages occurring during Hurricane Helene. The increase in expenditures is predominately a result of \$660,503 for budgeted initial principal and interest debt payments associated with the 2024 hospitality and accommodations fee revenue bonds and \$98,935 in repairs to the marina from Hurricane Helene.

Other Major Funds Highlights

American Rescue Plan Act Fund

The American Rescue Plan Act fund expended \$751,877 in the current year mostly related to purchase for playground equipment at Pigeon Point Park and support to our local partners for affordable housing initiatives. Revenues were \$2,696,473 from federal grant along with interest and unearned revenues of \$1,942,133 are shown as a liability on the balance sheet as grant revenues are not considered earned until they have been expended. The other financing uses comprises of \$1,749,285 transfers out to the capital projects fund for road paving, boat landing and drainage projects

Stormwater Fund

Stormwater operating revenue of \$1,395,715 which is \$12,122 less than fiscal year 2024 as revenues remain stable in stormwater fees. Stormwater operating expenditures were \$1,249,426 and included \$515,755 for debt service payments. The other financing uses comprises of \$728,271 transfers out to the capital projects fund for drainage projects throughout the City.



Annual Comprehensive Financial Report Overview

Questions/Comments





City of Beaufort
Department Request for City Council Agenda Item

To: City Council **Date:** 01/22/2026
From: Linda Roper, Downtown Operations Director
Item Name: Discussion of establishing a Pilot Social District in Downtown Beaufort
Meeting Date: January 27, 2026
Department: Downtown Operations

Background Information:

Introduction:

City Council previously appointed the *Tiger Team* to identify strategies to strengthen downtown vitality, support local businesses, and increase economic activity. Through research, stakeholder input, and review of best practices from peer communities, the Tiger Team evaluated opportunities to enhance the downtown experience and encourage longer dwell times.

As part of this work, the Tiger Team recommended exploring the establishment of a downtown social district as one potential tool to increase foot traffic, support existing businesses, and create a more active and connected downtown environment during designated days and times.

Background:

Many communities across South Carolina and the Southeast have implemented Social Districts as a tool to enhance downtown vibrancy, encourage foot traffic, and support local businesses. Social Districts create a defined public space where visitors can enjoy food, beverages, activities, and programming in a safe, community-focused environment. Participating establishments may also offer beer and wine for consumption within the district in accordance with local and state regulations.

City Staff along with our community partners, Beaufort Area Hospitality Association, Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce and Greater Beaufort-Port Royal CVB, are exploring the possibility of establishing a pilot Social District in Downtown Beaufort. A pilot approach would allow the City to define district boundaries, operating hours, participation requirements, and safety measures while assessing community response and potential economic impact.

Legal Authority:

SC Code 5-7-10 Home Rule and General Powers

Staff Recommendation:

Placed on Agenda For:

Attachments:

1. Social District Map semi final



SOCIAL DISTRICT



City of Beaufort
Department Request for City Council Agenda Item

To: City Council **Date:** 01/22/2026
From: Linda Roper, Downtown Operations Director
Item Name: Discussion on creating a Downtown Advisory Board
Meeting Date: January 27, 2026
Department: Downtown Operations

Background Information:

Introduction:

Beaufort City Council has recommended the formation of a Downtown Advisory Board to provide advisory input on downtown-related policies, programs, and initiatives in support of the City's Strategic Plan. This discussion will determine the Board makeup and focus.

Background:

The Downtown Advisory Board will serve as a structured forum for engagement with downtown businesses, property owners, residents, and key partners. The committee will provide recommendations to City Council and staff on matters such as downtown infrastructure improvements, tourism management, parking management, construction impacts, business recruitment and retention, special events, and long-range planning initiatives. This advisory role will strengthen coordination, improve transparency, and support proactive problem-solving.

Legal Authority:

SC Code Ann 5-7-10 Home Rule and General Powers

Staff Recommendation:

Placed on Agenda For:

Attachments:

1. Downtown Advisory Board - Suggested Board Make Up (2)

Downtown Advisory Board Suggested Board Makeup

The Board should be a good representation of the district with a variety of professions and sectors. The Board should consist of 9-15 members to provide diversity but small enough to remain effective.

Suggested members:

Downtown Business Owners & Operators – 3 seats

- Retail Store – 1
- Accommodations – 1
- Tour Operator -1

Downtown Property Owners/Developer – 2

Neighborhood Representatives – 3

- The Point – 1
- Old Commons – 1
- NWQ – 1

Historic Beaufort Foundation – 1

Beaufort-Port Royal Convention and Visitors Bureau – 1

Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce – 1

Beaufort County Black Chamber of Commerce – 1

Beaufort Area Hospitality Association – 1

Ex-Officio Members (non-voting)

Main Street Director

Tour and Event Coordinator

Planning Department Staff Liaison

Police Department Liaison

Fire Department Liaison



City of Beaufort
Department Request for City Council Agenda Item

To: City Council **Date:** 01/09/2026
From: Stephenie Price, Police Chief
Item Name: Noise Ordinance
Meeting Date: January 27, 2026
Department: Police Department

Background Information:

Introduction:

The purpose of this agenda item is to request City Council’s consideration, review, and potential revision of Beaufort’s noise ordinance to improve clarity, consistency, and alignment with current community expectations. This review will also consider emerging noise sources, quality-of-life concerns for residents, and the need to balance neighborhood impacts with business and event activity.

Background:

Over the past years, the noise ordinance has served as guidance for addressing loud and unseemly noise within the city. After discussion during the recent work session, City Council requested that staff work collaboratively with the City Attorney to review the ordinance and suggest potential revisions. The resulting review is intended to ensure the ordinance remains effective, legally sound, and reflective of community expectations.

Legal Authority:

The City of Beaufort is authorized to adopt, amend, and enforce noise regulations pursuant to the Home Rule powers granted to municipalities under South Carolina law. Section 5-7-30 of the South Carolina Code of Laws authorizes municipalities to enact ordinances necessary for the protection of public health, safety, and welfare, including the regulation of activities that may constitute a public nuisance. Noise control ordinances fall within this general police power.

The City of Beaufort has the legal authority to review, revise, and enforce its noise ordinance to address quality-of-life concerns and community standards within the city.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that City Council adopt the draft noise ordinance as presented and reviewed by the City Attorney. The proposed ordinance reflects direction provided by City Council, incorporates legal review to ensure consistency with applicable state law, and is intended to improve clarity, fairness, and enforceability. Adoption of the draft ordinance will provide clear standards for residents, businesses, and enforcement personnel, while supporting quality of life objectives and community expectations within the City of Beaufort.

Placed on Agenda For:

Attachments:

- 1. 1412.0209 Draft Noise Ordinance
- 2. Current Loud and Unseemly Noise Ordinance
- 3. 20260107153810876

Sec. 9-1008. - Noise.

- (a) **Noises Prohibited.** Any loud, obnoxious, unnecessary, or excessive noise which disturbs or interferes with the comfortable enjoyment of persons of ordinary sensibilities occupying, owning or controlling nearby properties, or persons making use of commercial or public properties for their intended purposes, is prohibited. Prohibited noises include, without limitation, the following:
- (1) Any sound made between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. which exceeds 60 decibels, measured using a digital sound meter;
 - (2) Any sound made between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. which exceeds 80 decibels, measured using a digital sound meter;
 - (3) The use of obscene language at a volume that is louder than that necessary for normal conversation;
 - (4) The use of words which threaten or tend to threaten or incite physical violence, or which endanger or tend to endanger the health and safety of others, which are stated for the purpose of willfully disturbing any person or business;
 - (5) The use of a motor vehicle in a manner which emits loud and unseemly noise which disturbs any residence, neighborhood, or business.
- (b) **Exceptions.** This section shall not apply to the following:
- (1) The use of a vehicular horn for the purpose of notifying those nearby of the presence of another vehicle or a potential hazard;
 - (2) The sound produced by the use of equipment owned or operated by federal, state, or local governments including, but not limited to emergency response vehicles, law enforcement vehicles, EMS vehicles and fire district response vehicles;
 - (3) The sound produced by construction machinery, heavy duty equipment, and machines and equipment used for construction, repair, cleaning, and maintenance of buildings, streets, or public or private premises when operated between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.;
 - (4) The sound produced by bells or chimes or other carillon instruments when used to signify the passage of hour, half-hour or quarter-hour components, or to commemorate a wedding, funeral or similar event, including regular religious services, provided the sounds do not exceed five continuous minutes in duration in any one-hour period;
 - (5) Aircraft in flight or in operation at an airport;
 - (6) Railroad equipment in operation on railroad rights-of-way;
 - (7) The sound emanating from a ballpark, playing field, stadium, or comparable outdoor facility designed and intended for recreational or sports activity when used for organized exhibitions or participatory sports or recreational activities;
 - (8) Sounds produced by properly permitted parades, special events, or fireworks displays;
 - (9) Amplified music played at any bar, restaurant, theatre, or similar commercial establishment located in an entertainment district (as designated by Sec. _____) between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 1:00 a.m. that does not exceed 85 decibels when measured at the property line of the establishment from which the music is being generated;
 - (10) The sound produced by an electrical generator when that generator is being used to provide electricity to a dwelling unit or business to which electricity is temporarily not being provided by a public utility as a result of inclement weather, natural disaster, or other emergency situation beyond the control of the owner or occupant of the dwelling unit or business.
- (c) **Enforcement.** Any person convicted of a violation of this section shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, shall be subject to a fine not exceeding the maximum allowed within the jurisdiction of the Municipal Court for the City of Beaufort, or imprisonment not exceeding 30 days, or both.

- **Sec. 9-1008. - Loud and unseemly noise.**

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to willfully disturb any neighborhood or business in the City by making or continuing loud and unseemly noises, or by profanely cursing and swearing, or using obscene language. It shall further be unlawful for any person to willfully disturb any neighborhood or business within the city by the use of words which threaten or tend to threaten or incite physical violence, or which endanger or tend to endanger the health and safety of others within the city.

(b) On Bay Street and its sidewalks, bounded by Carteret and Charles Streets, noise generated by the unamplified human voice at a decibel level in excess of seventy (70) [decibels], measured by a Realistic® sound level decimeter, or its equivalent, (adjusted to "A" for weighing voice recordings and response selector on "slow") located fifty (50) feet from the source, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and between the hours of 12:00 noon and 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, shall be prima facie loud and unseemly noise (momentary peaks shall not exceed seventy-five (75) decibels). Upon determination that the volume of such unamplified human voice exceeds this decibel level, a police official shall first warn the offending individual(s) of the violation of his/her conduct. Continued measurement of the level of noise by the offending individual(s) exceeding this decibel level after such warning shall constitute prima facie evidence of willful violation of subsection (a).

(c) Except as within the Nighttime Music District as defined in subsection (d) below and on any lot zoned Industrial Park District, the use of horns, radios, phonographs, loud speakers, whistles, exhausts, pile drivers, blowers, or other devices not numerated here, but which cause loud or irritating noises, between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m., which are plainly audible from a distance of fifty (50) feet from its source, shall be considered prima facie evidence of a violation of subsection (a), unless such device was used as a danger warning or in some similar emergency or a permit has been granted by the city manager or city council for same. As to properties located within the Nighttime Music District, as defined in subsection (d) below, the following shall apply:(1) the use of horns, radios, phonographs, amplifiers, loudspeakers, whistles, exhausts, pile drivers, blowers, or other devices not numerated here, but which cause loud or irritating noises, between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 1:00 a.m. on Sunday through Thursday nights only, which are plainly audible from a distance of fifty (50) feet from its source, shall be considered prima facie evidence of violation of subsection (a); and (2) the use of horns, radios, phonographs, amplifiers, loudspeakers, whistles, exhausts, pile drivers, blowers, or other devices not numerated here, but which cause loud or irritating noises, between the hours of 1:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m., which are plainly audible outside the exterior walls of the building containing its source, shall be considered prima facie evidence of a violation of subsection (a). Notwithstanding any time periods or other provisions of this section, sound (from any of the sources specified herein) which exceeds eighty-five (85) decibels (dB(C)) measured *at any time* at the property line of the establishment from

which the music is being generated shall be considered prima facie evidence of a violation of subsection (a).

(d) *Nighttime Music District.* A Nighttime Music District is hereby established and shall include those parcels and properties and portions of those parcels and properties contained within the following boundaries: all those parcels of land encompassed by the tract bounded on the north by the southern right of way of Bay Street, on the west and the south by the highwater mark of the Beaufort River, and on the east by the western right-of-way of Carteret Street.

The Nighttime Music District is also delineated on the map which is incorporated in this chapter and shown on the next page.

(e) The loud playing of radios, phonographs, tape decks, amplifiers, and loudspeakers, and other sound devices in any public park, outdoor public place, or privately owned or controlled courtyards or outdoor areas, including from vehicles, the sound and/or noise which is substantially audible to the distance of fifty (50) feet or more, shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of subsection (a). Notwithstanding any time periods or other provisions of this section, sound (from any of the sources specified herein) which exceeds eighty-five (85) decibels (dB(C)) measured *at any time* at the property line of the establishment from which the music is being generated shall be considered prima facie evidence of a violation of subsection (a).

(f) There shall be no violation under subsections (c) or (e) of this section for special events provided a permit is first obtained from the city.

(g) It shall be unlawful for any person to drive, propel or otherwise operate a motorized vehicle in a manner which emits loud and unseemly noise, which willfully disturbs any residence, neighborhood or business in the city. The prohibition of this subsection shall include operating a motorized vehicle by rapid throttle advancing (revving) of an internal combustion engine resulting in increased noise from the engine.

(1962 Code, § 22-1; Ord. No. O-12-81, 7-28-81; Ord. No. O-15-91, 4-23-91; Ord. No. O-30-91, 10-22-91; Ord. No. O-23-94, 11-22-94; Ord. No. O-01-00, 1-11-00; Ord. No. O-06-00, 2-8-00; Ord. No. O-09-09, § 1, 3-24-09; Ord. No. O-14-12, §§ 1, 2, 7-10-12; Ord. No. O-5-19, § 6, 6-11-19)

Cross reference— Noise by sidewalk vendors, [§ 7-9008](#)(13).

(Created in 2002, Last update Jan 2016)

Loud and unseemly noise	9-1008	465.00
Mechanical code adopted	5-1091	1087.50
No Business license	7-1001	465.00
Notice of abatement	6-2003	465.00
Open container (City)	7-7004	257.50
Order to repair or demolish	5-1024	465.00
Overnight docking at day dock	3-2002	1087.50
Parked vehicle to be licensed	8-2006	257.50
Parking and storage of certain vehicles	5-6124	257.50
Penalties (Sign Ordinance)	5-6084	465.00
Permission of property owner required	2-2036	257.50
Permit does not lessen liability of permittee	2-2037	257.50
Permits	5-1044	257.50
Posted notice	5-1025	465.00
Posting on private property	7-2004	257.50
Posting on public property	7-2002	257.50
Posting signs on utility poles	9-1016	257.50
Public drunkenness (City)	7-7001	257.50
Rate meters required	7-4034	257.50
Refusal to pay taxi	7-4029	465.00
Resisting arrest	2-1002	1087.50
Seizure and impoundment of dangerous dogs	6-4024	1087.50
Spanish moss trail violation	3-2003	1087.50
Solicitation	7-1010	1087.50
Stopping of carriage on tour	7-11010	1087.50
Tampering with alarm system	2-2005	1087.50
Trespassing (City)	9-1005	465.00
Unlawful to remove or deface public notices	5-1035	257.50
Unlawful to use skateboards	8-5002	257.50
Unlicensed Dog	6-4021	1087.50
Unprovoked Attack by Dangerous Dog	6-4026	1087.50
Violation Operating of Horse Drawn Carriage	7-10013	1087.50
Violation of Animal Restraint	6-4022	465.00



City of Beaufort
Department Request for City Council Agenda Item

To: City Council **Date:** 01/18/2026
From: Scott Marshall, City Manager
Item Name: Discussion of the Merits of Adopting a "No Comments" Policy on the City's Facebook Page
Meeting Date: January 27, 2026
Department: City Managers Office

Background Information:

Introduction:

The purpose of this discussion is to provide City Council with an overview of the considerations associated with disabling public commenting on the City of Beaufort’s official Facebook page. The discussion is intended to assist Council in determining whether they would be in support of formal adoption of such a policy.

Background:

The City uses its official Facebook page primarily as a means of distributing timely information to residents, businesses, and visitors. When a municipality allows comments on an official social media page, the interactive portion of that page is generally considered a *limited public forum*, which requires viewpoint-neutral moderation and consistent enforcement of content rules.

In recent months, the volume, tone, and complexity of comment activity has increased, requiring greater staff monitoring, higher potential for allegations of selective moderation, and an elevated risk that misinformation or personal attacks will appear directly beneath official City posts. Several municipalities have addressed these concerns by adopting a “no comments” policy that preserves the informational function of the platform while reducing legal and operational burdens.

Legal Authority:

Municipal social media activity is governed by First Amendment principles regarding public forums. Allowing comments typically creates a limited public forum that obligates the City to apply content-neutral moderation standards and exposes the City to potential claims of viewpoint

discrimination if comments are removed inconsistently.

Disabling comments entirely is considered a content-neutral restriction when applied uniformly. While it does not eliminate all legal considerations, it significantly reduces exposure associated with selective comment removal, the need for detailed moderation protocols, and disputes arising from inconsistent enforcement. Adoption of a written social media policy by Council would provide clear authority and guidance for staff implementation.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff presents this report for Council discussion and direction. Should Council decide to support a “no comments” policy for the City’s official Facebook page, staff recommends the following:

Formal Adoption by Resolution: Approve a written social media policy specifying that the official Facebook page is used for informational purposes only and that commenting is disabled across all posts.

Public Communication: Issue a clear announcement explaining the purpose of the change and directing residents to alternative ways to provide feedback.

Strengthen Engagement Channels: Promote existing communication pathways—including website forms, departmental email contacts, public meetings, and community listening sessions—to ensure continued accessibility for all residents.

Next Steps:

If policy is supported, then staff will bring a Resolution for consideration to memorialize the decision.

If policy is not supported, staff will include an additional FTE in the proposed FY27 consolidated budget to establish a Social Media Manager position to manage the City's social media presence, to include monitoring social media platform comments to ensure compliance with local policies and public law.

Placed on Agenda For:

Attachments:

1. Background Paper

BACKGROUND PAPER ON ADOPTING A “NO COMMENTS” POLICY FOR THE CITY’S OFFICIAL FACEBOOK PAGE

Policy Concept:

The city’s *official* Facebook page remains visible and active for one-way communication (posts, photos, videos, links), but **all public commenting is turned off** (either on all posts, or on most posts as a default). Residents can still react (“likes,” etc.) and may still message the page, email, call, or attend meetings, but they cannot publicly reply under posts.

This is different from **moderating** comments (removing a subset under a policy) and different from an **elected official’s personal page**—courts now treat those differently after the U.S. Supreme Court’s 2024 decision in *Lindke v. Freed*, which clarified when a public official’s social media activity counts as state action subject to the First Amendment.

Potential merits (reasons a city might adopt “no comments”)

1. Reduced legal risk and simpler First Amendment posture

If you allow comments, you are very likely creating at least a **limited public forum** in the “interactive” portion of the page, which triggers First Amendment constraints on how you moderate. That principle was at the core of *Davison v. Randall* in the Fourth Circuit (which includes South Carolina). The court held that the interactive portion of an official page was a public forum and that blocking a critic there for his views violated the First Amendment.

Once you open that door, you must:

- Develop and apply **viewpoint-neutral moderation rules**
- Train staff to moderate consistently
- Risk litigation or complaints if someone believes they were blocked or deleted because they were critical

By contrast, **never enabling comments** arguably avoids creating that forum in the first place. That can:

- Reduce risk of viewpoint discrimination claims about **selective deletion** of comments
- Reduce the need for detailed moderation logs and documentation
- Simplify the city’s legal posture: the page is informational, not a discussion forum

Important caveat: there's no absolute guarantee a court would bless any particular setup, but the risk profile is materially different from an open-comment page you curate case-by-case.

2. Staff capacity, workload, and mental health

Where comments are open, someone has to:

- Monitor for **defamation, threats, harassment, obscenity, spam, scams**, etc.
- Respond (or at least triage) genuine service requests and complaints
- Capture and retain comments as public records, depending on state/local practice

That can consume a lot of time and emotional bandwidth, especially in periods of controversy (development disputes, police incidents, tax increases, etc.). Municipal best-practice guidance increasingly notes that comment moderation can be a “second job” for communications staff and that unmanaged spaces can quickly devolve into “toxic” forums.

Turning off comments:

- Makes workload **predictable and bounded**
- Reduces after-hours monitoring pressure (nights, weekends, holidays)
- Limits staff exposure to abusive, personal attacks that can lead to burnout

3. Limiting misinformation and harassment in city-branded spaces

Open comment threads can easily host:

- **Misinformation** about projects, safety, or policies
- Personal attacks on staff, elected officials, and residents
- Discriminatory or hateful speech that, while potentially protected, is reputationally damaging if it appears on an official page

A no-comments policy:

- Prevents the city's **official channels** from becoming a platform for harmful or misleading content directly attached to the city's own posts
- Keeps the **visual experience** cleaner for residents who are just looking for information (e.g., “Is King Street closed today?”)

People will still talk—on neighborhood groups, local pages, etc.—but the city isn't *hosting* or curating that discourse under its own masthead.

4. Clarity and consistency vs. case-by-case censorship accusations

Courts and advocacy groups warn that deleting negative comments while leaving positive ones is classic viewpoint discrimination.

A blanket policy of “**we don’t host comments on this page at all**” can be seen as:

- **Content-neutral** (no one gets to comment, pro or con)
- More defensible than a pattern of deleting only certain viewpoints
- Easier to explain than explaining why some critical comments stay and others go

5. Channeling engagement into more manageable, formal pathways

Some municipalities and officials who disable comments emphasize that they’re not refusing feedback; they’re **redirecting** it. For example, a mayor in Australia justified turning off comments on her own account by pointing residents to moderated council channels and traditional contact methods instead.

A city might do the same:

- Use Facebook as a **notice board** (agenda links, alerts, press releases)
- Direct questions to:
 - 311 or customer service systems
 - Web forms
 - Email addresses by department
 - Public meetings and hearings

This can:

- Move conversations into channels where staff can track, route, and close the loop
- Reduce the risk of important service issues getting buried in comment threads

Potential drawbacks (costs and risks of “no comments”)

1. Perception of reduced transparency and accessibility

Residents increasingly assume that if the city posts on Facebook, they can respond right there. Turning off comments risks:

- **Perception** that the city is “afraid of criticism,” is “silencing dissent,” or doesn’t want to listen

- Frustration from people who primarily use Facebook and may not seek out email or other channels

Even if listening is happening through other means, the optics of “comments off” can be politically and reputationally challenging.

2. Lost opportunity for real-time engagement and rumor control

Comment threads, when managed well, can give staff:

- Early visibility into **confusion, rumors, or anxiety** in the community
- Opportunities to correct misinformation (“No, this does not affect your tax bill this year”) in front of many readers at once
- A chance to show responsiveness and empathy in public

Without comments:

- Many of those conversations move to **third-party groups** where the city is absent or less visible
- It’s harder to see what’s circulating and respond at scale

3. Equity and digital inclusion concerns

For some residents, especially:

- People with limited time or flexibility to attend meetings
- Residents who are more comfortable communicating in writing
- Younger or more online populations

Facebook comments may feel like the **most accessible** way to engage. Turning them off can:

- Skew participation toward people with the time and capacity to use more formal channels
- Undercut efforts around inclusive engagement and “meeting people where they are”

4. Potential public records and FOIA perception issues

If residents are used to commenting substantive concerns (e.g., drainage complaints, traffic safety hazards) on posts, and the city then disables comments:

- Some may worry their input is now **less documented** or less likely to be preserved
- It can raise questions about whether the change is driven by **avoidance of FOIA exposure**, even if that’s not the intent

In reality, other channels (e.g., email, online forms) generally create **more structured and searchable records**. But the optics can still be touchy if the policy rollout isn't carefully explained.

5. Relationship with elected officials' own pages

The law now draws finer lines between **official** and **personal/ campaign** pages after *Lindke v. Freed* and related commentary. If the city page disables comments, but:

- Individual elected officials keep comments open on their own pages, or
- Officials are perceived as **discussing city business** on personal channels

You can end up with:

- Confusion over where the “real” forum is
- Legal and practical risk shifting away from the municipal page and onto individual officials who may be less equipped to manage it

Middle-ground approaches (if you don't want a complete shutdown)

If the question is “should we ever allow comments?” rather than “do we allow comments right now?” there are several compromise models:

1. Limited public forum with strict, viewpoint-neutral rules

Keep comments on, but adopt a **clear written policy** that:

- States the *purpose* of the page (e.g., to discuss city services and programs)
- Prohibits specific categories of content (true threats, incitement, obscenity, doxxing, spam, commercial solicitations, discriminatory slurs, off-topic posts, etc.)
- Is applied **equally** to supportive and critical comments

This requires more work but preserves the interactive benefits while reducing some risks.

2. Comments on only some content types

For example:

- **Comments on:** general engagement posts (community events, “question of the day,” etc.)
- **Comments off:** quasi-adjudicatory posts (hearings, quasi-judicial land-use items), highly polarizing topics, emergency alerts where clarity is paramount

This lets you maintain a dialogue in lower-risk spaces while keeping especially sensitive posts as one-way communication.

3. Time-limited comment windows

Enable comments for a defined period (e.g., 48–72 hours after posting), then close them. That can:

- Capture initial feedback and allow for some dialogue
- Limit the long-tail of unmonitored comments weeks or months later

4. Separate “engagement channel”

Some governments treat:

- Website + email + meetings as **official record channels**
- Facebook as a **supplementary outreach channel**, with comments limited to specific, structured engagement efforts (e.g., a time-bound survey or Q&A)

Practical considerations if adopting a no-comments policy

If a municipality decides to go with “no comments,” a more defensible and community-friendly approach usually includes:

1. **Written policy & legal review**
 - Adopt a formal **social media policy** approved by the governing body and vetted by counsel.
 - Clearly state that the city’s Facebook page is for **information dissemination only** and list alternative participation channels.
2. **Consistent application**
 - Turn off comments **across the board**, not selectively per viewpoint.
 - Apply the same rule to all departments operating under the city’s umbrella, absent a clear rationale for differences.
3. **Communication with the public**
 - Announce the change with a pinned post and website note explaining:
 - Why the change is being made (capacity, consistency, safety, legal clarity)
 - Where and how residents can now comment or raise concerns
 - Emphasize that **feedback is still wanted**, just through other mechanisms.
4. **Strengthening alternative engagement**

- Ensure other channels are easy to find and responsive:
 - Online forms, 311, dedicated email, town halls, listening sessions, etc.
 - Consider periodic **virtual Q&As** or other formats that allow dialogue but on clearer terms.
-

Bottom line

- **Merits:** Lower First Amendment risk around selective moderation, reduced staff and mental-health burden, less misinformation and harassment hosted on official channels, and clearer, more neutral rules (“nobody comments here”) rather than case-by-case censorship accusations.
- **Drawbacks:** Real and perceived loss of transparency and accessibility, missed opportunities for public dialogue and rumor control, equity concerns, and potential political fallout from residents who see it as “closing the comments.”