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

June 9, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER — 6:00 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. MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

IV. PROCLAMATIONS/COMMENDATIONS/RECOGNITIONS

A. Character Education Proclamation, Kareena Desai, 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 honoring Dr. Stephen R. Wise upon his retirement.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

C. Proclamation observing and commemorating Carolina Day.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

D. Proclamation recognizing the 75th Anniversary of the Disabled American Veterans, Chapter 12.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Grant McClure, Coastal Conservation League spoke about the Plastics Ordinance passed by Beaufort County Council.

Joe Macdermant spoke about Parks and Recreation.

Felice LaMarca spoke about the Strategic Partners list in the proposed budget.

Mare Deckard spoke about payments made by the Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation for a third party.

Graham Trask spoke about the consideration of an adjustment for the City Manager, and the proposed budget.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

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

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.

VII. MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting – May 12, 2026.

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

Minutes approved as presented.

B. Capital Projects Quarterly Workshop – May 19, 2026.

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

Minutes approved as presented.

C. Worksession – May 26, 2026.

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

Minutes approved as presented.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. An ordinance to provide for the levy of taxes for the City of Beaufort for Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2027; to provide for execution of and to put into effect the consolidated budget; to provide budgetary control of the City's fiscal affairs – Second Reading.

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

Scott Marshall, City Manager, started off by saying the Fiscal Year 27 Consolidated Budget totals $70.17 million, including $24.4 million in capital projects. The budget maintains the City's overall millage rate at 73.9 mills while continuing to fund core municipal services, strategic capital investments, and community partnerships that directly benefit our residents. The value of a mill has increased by $21,389.00 over Fiscal Year 26, bringing the total value of a mill to $153,274.00. This growth in the City's tax base has allowed Beaufort to maintain service levels and continue investing in priorities without increasing the overall millage rate.

City Council reaffirmed its support for partners such as the Beaufort Digital Corridor and the Military Enhancement Committee, among others, recognizing the value these organizations provide to the community. Also budgeted is $150,000.00 for the Housing Repair Assistance Program, representing a 50-percent increase over the City's Fiscal Year 26 funding commitment.

He stated this budget reflects a deliberate balance between addressing today's needs and preparing for tomorrow's opportunities. It invests in employees, strengthens public safety, maintains essential services, advances major infrastructure projects, supports community partners, and preserves the financial stability necessary to meet future challenges.

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, went over projected revenues and expenses. Also included was a list of unfunded personnel positions, capital equipment and capital projects.

Councilman Scallate inquired about some of the costs in the Master Fee Schedule and stated he was intending to make motions to amend a few of them. After some discussion, Mr. Marshall asked if he could be given time to research his inquiries, and at a later date the Master Fee Schedule could be amended. He also spoke about the 2 mil reserve for aging infrastructure, and inquired if a detailed line item expenditure budget can be placed and accessed online.

All were in favor, motion carried.

B. Ordinance to approve the sale of City-Owned Property at 2153 Boundary Street - Second Reading.

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

Scott Marshall, City Manager, provided an overview.

All were in favor, motion carried.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution Recognizing National Trails Month and Celebrating the Spanish Moss Trail.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

B. Request to host a 4th of July Celebration in the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park on Saturday, July 4, 2026, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm, Kids Parade, City and SCDOT road closures, and partial use of the 500 Carteret Street Parking Lot.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

C. Request from Historic Beaufort Foundation for use of the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park on Wednesday, July 1, 2026, from 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm for Putting Down the Roots of Liberty Event.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

D. An ordinance to amend the City of Beaufort Zoning Map to rezone real property located at 1556 Salem Road, Beaufort County Tax Map R120 029 000 103E 0000 from T4-Neighborhood (T4-N) to Regional Mixed-Use (RMX) - First Reading.

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

Curt Freese, Community Development Director, provided an overview.

Councilman Scallate provided his concerns and spoke about his reasoning for not supporting the rezoning request at this time.

The motion passed by a vote of 4 - 1. Councilman Scallate voted against.

E. An ordinance to amend the City of Beaufort Zoning District Map to rezone real property identified as 909 Church Street, Beaufort County Tax Map Number R120 004 000 0275 from T4-Neighborhood (T4-N) to T4-Historic Neighborhood District (T4-HN) – First Reading.

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

Curt Freese, Community Development Director, provided an overview.

All were in favor, motion carried.

F. Resolution recognizing the Waterfront Advisory Committee recommendation and expressing support for advancing Option 2 for the Henry C. Chambers Preserving the Promenade Project.

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

Eric Claussen, Assistant City Manager, provided an overview and stated Option 2 was to replace the existing relieving platform with a new elevated platform supported by piles. This option is intended to preserve as much of the attributes of the existing platform by occupying the same footprint.

All were in favor, motion carried.

G. Authorization to allow the City Manager to enter into a Contractual Agreement for the Duke Street Streetscape Project.

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

Eric Claussen, Assistant City Manager, provided an overview. The committee recommended J.H. Hiers Construction.

All were in favor, motion carried.

H. Authorization to allow the City Manager to enter into a Contractual Agreement for Real Estate Brokerage Services.

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

Alan Eisenman, Finance Director, provided an overview. The committee recommended Robert T. Jones, Jr.

Article 4 of the contract will be cleaned up to make sure there are no duplicated items.

All were in favor, motion carried.

I. Appointments/Reappointments to Boards, Commissions and Committees - Cultural District Advisory Board, Downtown Advisory Board, Historic District Review Board, Military Enhancement Committee, Planning Commission, Tourism, Development Advisory Board, Zoning Board of Appeals.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to reappoint Mitzi McClure and appoint Mary Lurry to the Cultural District Advisory Board for three year terms to expire on June 30, 2029. The motion was seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to reappoint Eric Berman and appoint Richard Drake to the Historic District Advisory Board for three year terms to expire on June 30, 2029. The motion was seconded by Councilman Scallate.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to reappoint Terri Maude to the Military Enhancement Committee for a three year term to expire on June 30, 2029. The motion was seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to reappoint Bill Bardenwerper to the Planning Commission for a three year term to expire on June 30, 2029. The motion was seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to reappoint Randy Novick and appoint Lily Moss and Suzanne Ramm to the Tourism Development Advisory Board for three year terms to expire on June 30, 2029. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to appoint Zach Graber to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a three year term to expire on June 30, 2029. The motion was seconded by Councilman Scallate.

All were in favor, motion carried.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to appoint Reese Fazekas, Charlotte Lawrence and Brenda Litchfield to the Downtown Advisory Board. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mitchell.

All were in favor, motion carried.

J. Consideration of Adjustment to City Manager Compensation.

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

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to give the City Manager a 5 percent salary increase. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem, McFee.

All were in favor, motion carried.

X. REPORTS

City Manager's Report

Stated the King Street drainage project is nearing completion.

Mentioned the Charles-Craven drainage project continues to make steady progress thanks to great cooperation from our partners at the SC Office of Resilience and the Beaufort Jasper Water Sewer Authority.

Reminded everyone there will be a Council Worksession on Tuesday, June 23, 2026, at 5:00 pm.

Mayor's Report

Reported on meetings and events he had attended which included the Parris Island Change of Command Ceremony.

Councilman Mitchell

Spoke about meetings and events he had attended which included the Memorial Day Celebration events.

Spoke about the 3rd annual Unity in the Community Event at the Charles Lind Brown Center on Saturday, June 13, 2026.

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee

Reported on items discussed at the last Lowcountry Area Transportation Study meeting which included items like the Long Range Plan.

Councilman Scallate

Provided his thoughts and perspectives about who the Council, the City Manager and Staff are as representatives. Would not be opposed to having a Worksession that is dedicated to public assessment.

Reported on his participation in Washington, DC at the Flood Coalition Conference.

Councilman Lipsitz

Thanked Linda Roper, Downtown Operations Director and staff for a wonderful First Friday event.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 70 (a) (1) of the South Carolina Code of Law: Discussion regarding citizens appointed by City Council - Boards, Commissions and Committees - BJWSA Board of Directors.
B. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 70 (a) (2) of the South Carolina Code of Laws. "Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property, the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim" - Lady's Island Fire District Contract.

Councilman Lipsitz made a motion to go into Executive Session and seconded by Councilman Scallate.

All were in favor, motion carried.

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

Actions taken:

Mayor Pro Tem, McFee made a motion to terminate the 2017 Lady's Island/St. Helena Fire District Contract in accordance with the terms of the contract. The motion was seconded by Councilman Lipsitz.

All were in favor, motion carried.

XII. ADJOURN 9:46 PM

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

All were in favor, motion carried.

Disclaimer: This document captures all actions taken by Council and may summarize 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: July 7, 2026
Traci Guldner

CITY OF BEAUFORT SOUTH CAROLINA FOUNDED 1711