



**Town of Bluffton**  
20 Bridge St.  
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Bluffton, SC 29910  
843.706.4500

**To:** Town Council

**From:** Stephen Steese, Town Manager

**Date:** February 5, 2024

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#### **Town Operations / Community Meetings**

- Registration for Councilman Toomer's seat opened December 1<sup>st</sup> and closed December 11<sup>th</sup>. We received three candidates, but one withdrew shortly after the filling period closed. Early voting is on-going, and Election Day is February 13<sup>th</sup>. The results will be finalized on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the winner will be sworn in at the March 13, 2024, Council Meeting.
- The Bluffton Police Department held the first Night of Unity January 10<sup>th</sup> at Buckwalter Regional Park. It was well attended by the public and all Councilmembers. Thank you for your support and for the PD to organizing the event.
- The Town Budget process is underway, and departments have submitted requests. These will be reviewed soon, and we will work on scheduling the 2x2 budget meetings with Council.
- I have continued to work on a potential partnership for the Willow Run property and had follow-up meetings on moving this forward.
- We received all our final due diligence items related to the purchase of 140 Buck Island and are working with a tentative closing date of February 16<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Town Council/Town Attorney Related Meetings**

- Weekly Mayor / Mayor Pro Tempore / Manager meetings.
- The January Council Meeting and Swearing in was delayed due to weather and held on January 16<sup>th</sup>. Mayor Toomer, Councilwoman Frazier, and Councilman Wood were all sworn in. Councilman Wood was elected Mayor Pro-Temp. Thank you for adjusting for the weather and handling the long agenda due to combining the workshop and Regular Council Meeting.
- Councilman Hamilton and Councilman Wood along with staff attended the SOLOCO Meeting at the Rotary Center. Mayor Williams was elected Chair and Mayor Perry was elected Vice-Chair. We discussed agenda topics for the next couple of meetings.
- Mayor, Council, and managers will attend the MASC Hometown Legislative Action Day the first week in February.
- Continued our monthly meetings with BJWSA and Beaufort County related to the Stoney Creek Project. The project is progressing in design, and we worked through some questions from the Rural Infrastructure Authority.

#### **Updates and Miscellaneous Information**

- The Town was closed in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday and there were events over the weekend presiding put on by the MLK Observance Committee.
  - We submitted our MASC Achievement Award application.
  - BJWSA sent a letter out related to testing limit that were exceeded in 2023 and have sent a subsequent note on actions taken and improved results in the most recent sampling.
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