

Regular Town Council Meeting

Theodore D. Washington Municipal Building, Henry "Emmett" McCracken Jr. Council Chambers,
20 Bridge Street, Bluffton, SC
September 08, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Toomer called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Councilmember Frazier was absent from this meeting.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Toomer.

III. INVOCATION

The Invocation was delivered by Councilmember Wood.

IV. PRESENTATIONS, CELEBRATIONS, AND RECOGNITIONS

1. South Carolina State Championships - Bluffton 8U All-Stars Baseball and Softball - Mayor Larry Toomer

Mayor Larry Toomer, on behalf of Town Council, honored the South Carolina State Championships - Bluffton 8U All-Stars Softball Team.

2. Introduction of New Employees, Promotions, and Interns - Anni Evans, Director of Human Resources

Introduction of New Employees and Recognition of Promotions

BUILDING SAFETY:

New Employee – Craig Bowers, Building Safety, Building Inspector I

Promotions – Stephen Williamson was promoted from Building Inspector I to Building Inspector II effective 03.05.2026.

Chris Sim was promoted from Building Inspector I to Building Inspector II effective 07.09.2026

WATERSHED/PROJECT MANAGEMENT:

New Employee – Marrisa D'Angola, Watershed, Stormwater Technician

Promotions – Konnor Harrell was promoted from Stormwater Inspector to MS4 Program Manager effective 07.09.2026

HUMAN RESOURCES:

2026 Summer Interns -

Brittany Romero, Human Resources

Ella Boorum, Finance

Peyton Chrjapin, Public Services

Roman Orlando, Police Department

Samuel Leininger, Finance

Samuel Thompson, Finance

Sofia Giordani, Don Ryan Center of Innovation
Zoe Stevenson, Events and Venues

INFOMATION TECHNOLOGY:

New Employee – Ethan Greeley, GIS Analyst I

EVENTS AND VENUES:

New Employee – Melissa Beaver, Part-Time Garvin Garvey House Docent

Lydia Davis, Events and Venues / Bluffton 101 Coordinator

POLICE DEPARTMENT:

New Employee – Gordon Henke, Police Department, School Crossing Guard

Promotions – Alejandro Sandoval was promoted from Police Recruit to Police Officer
02/19/2026

William Carter was promoted from Police Recruit to Police Officer 02/19/2026

Kate Cooler was promoted from Police Officer/Victims Advocate to Police Corporal/Victims
Advocate effective 04.16.2026

Sarah Partridge was promoted from Police Corporal to Police Sergeant effective 06/25/2026

3. Town of Bluffton Tax Increment Financing District Update - Frannie Heizer, Senior Partner, Burr & Forman

Frannie Heizer, Senior Partner with Burr & Forman, and Law Partner, Michael Seezen, provided a brief history and update on the Town's Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District, highlighting its growth, successful financing of public infrastructure, and ability to support projects without increasing the Town's millage rate. Michael Season, legal counsel, reviewed the process for any future amendments to the TIF redevelopment plan or issuance of additional TIF debt.

V. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

1. Regular Meeting Minutes of 08/11/2026

A motion was made by Pro Tempore Hamilton and seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 08/11/2026.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

2. Amendment - Regular Town Council Meeting Minutes of 02/11/2025

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve the Amendment of the Regular Meeting Minutes of 02/11/2025.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ricky Frazier, 112 Pinecrest Drive - Mr. Frazier, a Pinecrest homeowner, restated the community's opposition to any development on the Pinecrest Golf Club property, citing concerns about aesthetics, safety, traffic, and declining property values. He reported that the property owner

intends to pursue development while performing minimal maintenance. He requested continued council support for preventing any development and acknowledged the mayor's previous assurance that the property's original intended use would be upheld.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL

No communications were reported by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton, Councilmembers Wood and Burden.

Mayor Toomer expressed gratitude for the cooler weather.

VIII. WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS

1. Discussion of Potential Unified Development Ordinance Amendments Related to Certain Standards and Building Types in Old Town Bluffton Historic District (Sec. 5.15) and Residential Uses in the Light Industrial District (Table 4.3) – Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

Potential Unified Development Ordinance Amendments Related to Certain Standards and Building Types in Old Town Bluffton Historic District (Sec. 5.15) and Residential Uses in the Light Industrial District (Table 4.3). The following items were reviewed for discussion and further direction from Council.

Sec. 5.15.6.I., Windows

To require rather than encourage true and simulated divided lites.

Sec. 5.15.6.K., Fences

Clarify the minimum transparency requirement.

Sec. 5.15.8.F., Carriage Houses

Provide additional requirements to ensure that attached carriage houses are more distinct from the main structure to avoid the appearance of a suburban bonus room over a garage.

Section 5.15.5 Additional Building Types

This building type has become the default for most applicants but lacks sufficient standards to prevent building styles and sizes that are out of context.

Table 4.3, Residential Uses in Light Industrial Zoning District

Consider removing or restricting multifamily uses in the light industrial zoning district.

IX. PUBLIC HEARING & FINAL READING

X. FORMAL AGENDA ITEMS

1. Consideration of an Ordinance to Amend the Town of Bluffton's Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 13 - Public Property, Article II. Public Park, Dock and Boat Landing Rules to include Dock Rules for the New River Linear Trail - Second and Final Reading - Heather Colin - Assistant Town Manager

A motion was made by Councilmember Burden and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton to approve the second and final reading of an Ordinance to Amend the Town of Bluffton's Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 13 - Public Property, Article II. Public Park, Dock and Boat Landing Rules to include Dock Rules for the New River Linear Trail.

Town Council unanimously approved the second and final reading of this ordinance.

2. Consideration of an Ordinance Amending the Town of Bluffton Fiscal Year 2027 Budget to Provide for the Expenditures of Certain Funds; and to Allocate Sources of Revenue for the Said Funds to Carryover Unspent Expenditures and Encumbrances from the FY2026 Budget to the FY2027 Budget - First Reading - Natalie Majorkiewicz, Director of Finance

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton to approve the first reading of an Ordinance Amending the Town of Bluffton Fiscal Year 2027 Budget to Provide for the Expenditures of Certain Funds; and to Allocate Sources of Revenue for the Said Funds to Carryover Unspent Expenditures and Encumbrances from the FY2026 Budget to the FY2027 Budget.

Town Council unanimously approved the first reading of this ordinance.

3. Consideration of Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee Funding Recommendations for Quarter Ending June 30, 2026 - Shannon Milroy, Budget & Procurement Manager
 - Coastal Conservation Association for Conservation Weekend in Bluffton: \$10,000
 - Historic Bluffton Arts and Seafood Festival: \$80,000
 - Society of Bluffton Artists: \$35,000
 - Old Town Bluffton Merchants Society: \$15,000
 - Congregation Beth Yam: \$7,710
 - BlacQuity SC for the 2026 Roots & Rivers Festival: \$25,000

Coastal Conservation Association for Conservation Weekend in Bluffton: \$10,000

A motion was made by Councilmember Burden and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton to approve a \$10,000 grant to the Coastal Conservation Association for Conservation Weekend in Bluffton.

Town Council unanimously approved the grant.

Historic Bluffton Arts and Seafood Festival: \$80,000

Mayor Toomer recused himself from this item.

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve an \$80,000 grant to the Historic Bluffton Arts and Seafood Festival.

Town Council approved the grant.

Society of Bluffton Artists: \$35,000

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton to approve a \$35,000 grant to the Society of Bluffton Artists.

Town Council unanimously approved the grant.

Old Town Bluffton Merchants Society: \$15,000

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton and seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve a \$15,000 grant to the Old Town Bluffton Merchants Society.

Town Council unanimously approved the grant.

Congregation Beth Yam: \$7,710

A motion was made by Councilmember Burden and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton to approve a \$7,710 grant to the Congregation Beth Yam.

Town Council unanimously approved the grant.

BlacQuity SC for the 2026 Roots & Rivers Festival: \$25,000

A motion was made by Councilmember Burden and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton to approve a \$25,000 grant to BlacQuity SC for the 2026 Roots & Rivers Festival.

Town Council unanimously approved the grant.

4. Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing the Acceptance of a Donation and Conveyance of Approximately 0.11 Acres of Real Property in Bluffton, South Carolina, located at 34 Thomas Heyward Street, TMS No. R610 039 00A 0426 0000 from Southern Coastal Homes, LLC to the Town of Bluffton, South Carolina; and Authorizing the Execution and Recordation of Certain Documents in Connection Therewith – Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

A motion was made by Councilmember Burden and seconded by Councilmember Wood to approve a Resolution authorizing the acceptance of a Donation and Conveyance of Approximately 0.11 Acres of Real Property in Bluffton, South Carolina, located at 34 Thomas Heyward Street, TMS No. R610 039 00A 0426 0000 from Southern Coastal Homes, LLC to the Town of Bluffton, South Carolina; and Authorizing the Execution and Recordation of Certain Documents in Connection Therewith.

Town Council unanimously approved the motion.

5. Consideration of Public Arts Committee Recommendation to Purchase a Sculpture Created by Walter Palmer (Fiscal Impact: \$23,000) – Chris Forster, Assistant Town Manager

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve the Public Arts Committee Recommendation to Purchase a Sculpture Created by Walter Palmer (Fiscal Impact: \$23,000).

Town council unanimously approved the motion.

XI. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Burden to accept the Consent Agenda as submitted.

Town Council unanimously agreed to the motion to accept as submitted.

1. Monthly Department Reports: Police, Finance and Administration, Human Resources, Municipal Court, Projects & Watershed Resilience, Public Services, Don Ryan Center for Innovation, and Growth Management
2. Town Manager Monthly Report

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton and seconded by Councilmember Wood to enter executive session.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

1. Discussions Relating to Authorizing the Town Manager to Negotiate a Contractual Agreement Between the Town and Affordable Housing Developer (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a] [2])
2. Discussions Relating to the Potential Lease of Property by The Town of Bluffton (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a] [2])
3. Discussion Relating to Legal Advice and Proposed Contractual Matters (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a][2])
 - Willow Run Covenants
 - Expiration of the Village at Verdier Development Agreement

XIII. ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilmember Burden and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton to authorize the Town Manager in consultation with the Town Attorney, to negotiate a contract with Woda Cooper Communities, Inc. for a public private partnership to develop affordable housing and associated infrastructure at property located at 115 Bluffton Road in substantially the form of the attached Letter of Intent.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton to adjourn the meeting at 8:20PM.

Town Council unanimously approved and the motion passed.