



Town of Bluffton
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To: Town Council

From: Stephen Steese, Town Manager

Date: March 6, 2023

Town Operations / Community Meetings

- The Town hosted our 4th Annual Black History Month Luncheon at the Rotary Community Center. Our staff did a great job in putting the event on and it was well attended by all departments.
- The budget process is in full swing as Departmental Budgets were submitted, and review meetings have been held. We are reviewing transfers, revenues, and other items as we work towards finalizing the proposed budget. Budget 2x2 Meetings with Council will be held in March prior to finalizing and presenting the FY 23-24 for review and adoption.
- We issued public notices, social media posts, and informed both Chamber of Commerce that the Town will not require revenue documentation during our business license renewal process. This created some unforeseen issues and we felt it was in the Town's best interest to not begin requiring this documentation this year. Let us know if you have any other questions.

Town Council/Town Attorney Related Meetings

- Weekly Mayor / Mayor Pro Tempore / Town Manager meetings.
- Mayor and Council attended the SOLOCO meeting in Bluffton. There was an update from the Beaufort Jasper Housing Trust (new official name for the RHTF) on what they had accomplished in their first six months. They have adopted by-laws and are working on program initiatives as their next focus. We are waiting on copies of what has been approved to share and include on our website. An update on the Town's CIP projects was also provided to the group.
- Mayor, Councilman Toomer, and staff met with the HHI-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce to review their audited financials from FY 21-22. An update was provided to Council after the meeting, and we had good conversations related to the Town's priorities and Chamber programs.
- Town Council and staff attended the Hometown Legislative Action Day in Columbia. Councilman Wood completed his Advanced MEO program and was recognized. Thank you all for attending and I feel that our meeting with our legislative delegation was beneficial for our priorities. We will continue to follow-up with our delegation.

Updates and Miscellaneous Information

- The Lutzie 5K was held and had a great turnout and support. The benefits from the 5K and sponsors go to support scholarships for graduates of Bluffton schools. The scholarship application period is now open.
 - I attended the ICMA Local Government Reimagined Conference February 21-24.
 - Beaufort County is looking at 2 pieces of property for Affordable Housing projects in Bluffton. One is on Buckwalter, and the other is on May River Road. The County has been made aware of the restrictions on the properties and the process to address any restrictions in order to move forward with any residential development.
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