



Town of Bluffton
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To: Town Council

From: Stephen Steese, Town Manager

Date: December 5, 2023

Town Operations / Community Meetings

- Town elections were held on November 7th with Larry Toomer winning the Mayor's race and Bridgette Frazier and Dan Wood winning the two open Council seats. The Mayor and Councilmembers will be sworn in at the January 9, 2024, Council Meeting.
- Mayor-elect Toomer has provided his notice of resignation for his Council seat as of January 9, 2024. This has triggered the start of the special election for his Council seat. Registration opened December 1st and will close December 11th with the election being held February 13th. The winner is anticipated to be sworn in at the March 13, 2024 Council Meeting.
- Council and Staff attended the Lowcountry Affordable Housing Symposium held at the Port Royal Sound Foundation. It was well attended and had a variety of speakers talking about affordable housing from the developer and government perspectives.

Town Council/Town Attorney Related Meetings

- Weekly Mayor / Mayor Pro Tempore / Town Manager meetings.
- Mayor, Councilman Hamilton, Councilman Wood, and staff attended the SOLOCO meeting in Hardeeville. We discussed topics for agendas over the next 2-3 months. We also heard from the BJRHTF and their new Interim Executive Director. This was Mayor Sulka's last SOLOCO meeting as a Board Member and she was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation by the Board.
- The Mayor and I attended a countywide mayor/manager meeting in Hardeeville. We discussed the progress of the BJRHTF, some countywide initiatives, and continuing regional transportation items.
- Stoney Creek meetings have continued, and we have reached a finalized IGA. BJWSA and Bluffton have approved the IGA. Beaufort County has approved at the committee level and will have on their December Formal Agenda for approval.
- Worked with legal to get the Purchase and Sale Agreement finalized and signed for 140 Buck Island Road. We are awaiting our updated surveys and should have them in hand in the next 2-3 weeks. We plan to bring to the January Council Meeting for final approval to purchase.
- Mayor, Council, and Senior Staff attended the State of the Region and heard presentations from the County Chairman and Mayors of Bluffton, Hardeeville, and Hilton Head Island.

Updates and Miscellaneous Information

- Town held our Thanksgiving Feast at the Rotary Center, and it was a great event where we were able to share a meal, honor our employees, and recognize our Employee of the Year – Victoria Smalls.
 - The Town's Tree Lighting and Christmas Parade were held and well attended. They went off with no major issues and we were able to miss any bad weather. These events are always a highlight of the year. Thank you to all that helped to make these events successful and participated.
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