

Town Council Quarterly Workshop

Theodore D. Washington Municipal Building, Henry “Emmett” McCracken Jr. Council Chambers,
20 Bridge Street, Bluffton, SC

July 21, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

Absent from the meeting: Councilmembers Frazier and Burden

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Toomer.

III. INVOCATION

The Invocation was delivered by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

Regular Meeting Minutes of 06/09/2026

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and was seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 06/09/2026.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

V. PRESENTATIONS, CELEBRATIONS, AND RECOGNITIONS

There were no Presentations, Celebrations and Recognition items to report.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bob Crimian, 17 Norris Ave - Representing the South Carolina Coastal Conservation League urged the Town of Bluffton to adopt Beaufort County’s updated plastics ordinance, which bans plastic bags and polystyrene products and limits distribution of plastic straws and cutlery. He noted strong public and business support and encouraged Bluffton to align with the county’s policy.

Jack Shearer, 8 Crossings Blvd - Mr. Shearer, a Pinecrest resident, voiced strong opposition to any development of the Pinecrest golf course. He noted that multiple resident surveys show more than 93% oppose development and expressed concerns about potential construction impacts, loss of existing amenities, increased traffic, security costs, and large-scale projects such as apartments or institutional facilities. He asked the Town Council to continue opposing development of the golf course.

Brently Barnhill, 1071 S. Innovation Drive - Mr. Barnhill expressed concerns about the Town’s use of Flock surveillance cameras. He cited instances in other cities where the company allegedly shared data with federal agencies without authorization, misrepresented facts to local officials, and included contract language allowing broad data disclosure. He urged the Council to review the technology’s accountability and data-sharing practices.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL

No were no communications noted by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton or Councilmember Wood.

Mayor Toomer stated he is back from vacation and glad to be back to work.

VIII. WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS

1. Wayfinding Master Planning Study to the July Workshop Agenda - CJ Wilson, Sky Design

Sky Design (CJ Wilson and team) presented three schematic design options for updating the Town of Bluffton's wayfinding system. The design team conducted site visits and a visioning session with staff, identifying key priorities: improved color schemes, alignment with current branding, and incorporation of local materials such as tabby concrete.

Three concepts were presented.

Council discussion indicated limited interest in Option 3, preference to refine Options 1 and 2, and the importance of reflecting Bluffton's historic character.

2. Update and Discussion Related to Proposed Uses at the Buck Island Road Park - Pat Rooney, Capital Improvement Program Manager

Staff reported on public engagement for the planned Buck Island Road Park. Across youth surveys, adult input, and neighborhood mail-in surveys, the strongest support was for multipurpose trails, playgrounds, flexible open field space, and wetland boardwalk/observation areas. Moderate interest appeared in sports courts, picnic shelters, and a small community building. Little support was shown for pump track or high-maintenance amenities.

Council emphasized focusing on youth needs, ensuring safety, prioritizing Buck Island/Centerville residents, and including picnic shelters with restrooms. The pump track received minimal support. Council agreed to proceed toward conceptual design and prefers completing the project in a single phase if financially feasible. Staff will refine options and return with concepts.

IX. PUBLIC HEARING & FINAL READING

There were no Public Hearing & Final Reading items to report.

X. FORMAL AGENDA ITEMS

Consideration of an Ordinance for Certain Amendments to the Town of Bluffton's Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 23, Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), Article 3 – Application Process, Sec. 3.18, Certificate of Appropriateness-Historic District and Sec. 3.19, Site Feature-Historic District Permit, Related to Relocation and Demolition of Non-contributing Resources in Old Town Bluffton Historic District – First Reading – Dan Frazier, Planning and Community and Development Manager

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton and was seconded by Councilmember Wood to accept the first reading of an Ordinance for Certain Amendments to the Town of Bluffton's Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 23, Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), Article 3 – Application Process, Sec. 3.18, Certificate of Appropriateness-Historic District and Sec. 3.19, Site Feature-Historic District Permit, Related to Relocation and Demolition of Non-contributing Resources in Old Town Bluffton Historic District.

Town Council unanimously approved the first reading of this ordinance.

XI. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and was seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton to accept the Consent Agenda as submitted.

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

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

Town Manager Monthly Report

Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing the Renewal of a Stormwater Management and Utility Intergovernmental Agreement between Beaufort County and the Town of Bluffton - Andrea Moreno, Watershed Division Manager

Reappointment of William Ricketts to Serve as a Member of the Beaufort County Bluffton Township Fire District Board for a Full-Term with the Expiration Date of June 30, 2030 - Marcia Hunter, Town Clerk

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

1. Discussion of Negotiations Regarding the Contractual Agreements and Proposed Sale, Lease or Purchase of Property (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70[a][2])
 - Related to Property Usage in Ghost Road Right-of-Way
 - Related to Contractual Matters of Proposed Land Acquisition in the Area within the Buckwalter PUD
2. Legal Advice Related to Potential Resolution (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70[a][2])

Town council unanimously agreed and the motion passed.

XIII. ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton and was seconded by Councilmember Wood requesting the Town Attorney to draft and deliver written correspondence reflecting Town Council's desire to require compliance with the UDO as it relates to the use of a ghost road.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and was seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton to adjourn the meeting at 7:04 PM.

Marcia Hunter, Town Clerk

Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

Larry C. Toomer, Mayor

Town of Bluffton, South Carolina