

Town Council Quarterly Workshop

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

April 21, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

Councilmember Burden was absent.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS - Pertaining only to agenda items

No Public Comments were noted.

III. WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS

Performing Arts Center Discussion - Chris Forster, Assistant Town Manager

Mr. Forster provided context for the Town’s performing arts research, emphasizing the role of cultural investments in supporting economic development, workforce attraction, tourism, and overall quality of life. He noted that Bluffton’s growing economy, strong household incomes, and above-average spending on arts and entertainment indicate favorable conditions for such a facility.

Key takeaways from comparable facilities included the need for multifunctional design, adequate sizing for future growth, experienced operational management, and early fundraising efforts. Funding models show that most projects rely heavily on private donations, grants, and partnerships, with limited municipal contribution.

Council expressed support for continued exploration through a phased approach, emphasizing flexibility, professional management, and potential naming rights opportunities. Consensus was reached to pursue additional analysis and public input, including the formation of a steering committee to review studies and guide the process.

Next Steps:

Staff will evaluate potential sites and master planning concepts, conduct a community survey, initiate a fundraising feasibility study, and incorporate findings into the Town’s 2040 Plan, with further Council discussion planned for early 2027.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Approval to Authorize a Construction Contract with Mashburn Construction Company, Inc. for the upfit of Building 100 at 97 Progressive Street (Fiscal Impact: \$388,825) – Chris Forster, Assistant Town Manager

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and was seconded by Councilmember Frazier to authorize a Construction Contract with Mashburn Construction Company, Inc. for the upfit of Building 100 at 97 Progressive Street (Fiscal Impact: \$388,825).

Town Council unanimously approved the authorization of the contract.

V. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilmember Frazier and was seconded by Mayor Pro-tempore Hamilton to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 PM.

Marcia Hunter, Town Clerk
Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

Larry C. Toomer, Mayor
Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

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