

TOWN COUNCIL

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	September 8, 2026
PROJECT:	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
PROJECT MANAGER:	Heather Colin, AICP, Assistant Town Manager

REQUEST: Request Town Council's approval of second and final reading of an Ordinance amending the Town's Code of Ordinances to include the dock at the New River Linear Trail and to amend general dock and park rules.

ACTION FROM FIRST READING: First Reading was pulled from the consent agenda at the August 11th meeting for discussion and a separate vote. The vote was 5-0 for approval at First Reading. Council wanted additional discussion as a formal item for second reading to outline the amendments.

There were no changes on the proposed amendments.

BACKGROUND: Improvements to the New River Linear Trail have been supported in the Town's Comprehensive Plan in 2014 and later in Blueprint Bluffton 2020. The trail is a multipurpose 3 mile pathway that originates on the banks of the New River, extends northward along an abandoned railway and powerlines to Sun City.

The project was initially included as a new action agenda item in FY2022 which included improvements to the parking lot, the addition of a restroom, dock, and paving the trail to improve accessibility to all citizens.

In addition to the adoption of dock rules, clarifications are proposed with no substantive changes. Due to changes in technology and trends, the Town has experienced damage to public property with the use of E-bikes and other motorized mobility vehicles in bathrooms, floating docks and on grounds. Potential damage and injury is being addressed with general amendments from people using the dock and structures not as intended, which can either damage public property or endanger the users. The proposed ordinance changes are intended to both educate users and allow clear enforcement.

SUMMARY: The proposed amendments are intended to educate the users and the public for structures located in our parks as well as docks and dock structures. It will also allow law enforcement to educate and enforce the rules to protect the community.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Approve Second and Final Reading of the Proposed Ordinance
- Approve Second and Final Reading with Modifications of the Proposed Ordinance (substantial modifications may result in a subsequent reading)
- Deny Second and Final Reading of the Proposed Ordinance

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Ordinance
2. Proposed Motion