



Town of Bluffton
20 Bridge St.
PO Box 386
Bluffton, SC 29910
843.706.4500

To: Town Council
From: Stephen Steese, Town Manager
Date: January 5, 2025

Town Operations / Community Meetings

- The town held our Christmas Tree Lighting on December 5th and Christmas Parade on December 6th. The weather was rainy for both events, but town staff did an excellent job in making the events work and go off without any major issues.
- Councilman Hamilton and Councilwoman Burden will be sworn in at the January 2026 Council Meeting, and we will hold elections for Mayor Pro-Tempore following the seating of Council.
- Executive met with the Society of Bluffton Artists (SOBA) to discuss space needs and potential partnerships. Their current space has been put on the market and they may need to relocate some or all of their operations.
- We kicked off the FY 26-27 budget process with initial meetings with all departments. We reviewed the schedule for staffing, capital, and other requests.
- Mobile Town Halls:
 - We have a Mobile Town Hall for Palmetto Bluff on February 23rd. We are working to finalize the location.
 - We have received a request for a Mobile Town Hall in The Haven and are working to schedule in March.

Town Council/Town Attorney Related Meetings

- Weekly Mayor / Mayor Pro-Tempore / Manager meetings.
- Mayor Toomer and Executive met with Dr. Panu from USCB to hear updates on their proposed projects at the 278 Campus. The discussion was mostly focused on the Convocation Center and other related improvements.
- Council and Staff attended the beam signing event for the new BMH Hospital.
- Councilman Wood and Executive met with our legislative delegation to discuss the 2026 Legislative Session and potential project funding requests. We also discussed transportation issues and asked for their help in pushing some initiatives related to transportation in the region.
- Councilwoman Burden, staff, and I presented at the Junior Leadership Program session on Local Government.

Updates and Miscellaneous Information

- We have Hometown Legislative Action Day on January 20th in Columbia. We will have a couple opportunities that day to meet with our legislatures to discuss any priorities and concerns.
 - We completed the purchase of the two Foothills properties located below Willow Run. We continue to work on the Covenant language with the County as part of our Green Penny approval.
 - Town offices were closed December 24th and 25th in observance of Christmas.
 - Town offices were closed January 1st in observance of New Year's Day.
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