

Regular Town Council Meeting

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

February 10, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Mayor Toomer was absent from this meeting.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Pro Tempore Hamilton.

III. INVOCATION

The Invocation was led by Councilmember Wood.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

1. Regular Meeting Minutes of 01/13/2026

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Frazier to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 01/13/2026.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

2. Quarterly Workshop Minutes of 01/27/2026

A motion was made by Councilmember Burden and seconded by Councilmember Frazier to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 01/27/2026.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

V. PRESENTATIONS, CELEBRATIONS, AND RECOGNITIONS

1. Beaufort County School District Character Student of the Month - Mayor Larry Toomer

Mayor Pro Tempore Fred Hamilton, on behalf of Town Council, honored Red Cedar Elementary School 4th-grade student, Jaxson Harms, for the character trait of compassion.

2. Cross Schools Girls Basketball Team - Mayor Larry Toomer

Mayor Pro Tempore Fred Hamilton recognized the Cross Schools Girls Basketball Team, highlighting Ryan Mayer, a two-time All-Region player, All-State section as a junior, and the SCISA 2A State Player of the Year. Ms. Mayer also achieved her 1,000th career point on January 15, 2026.

3. Introduction of New Employees and Recognition of Promotions

Hannah Bakels, Growth Management – Customer Service, Customer Service Representative

Craig Bowers, Building Safety, Building Inspector I

Caroline Luke, Growth Management – Planning, Planner

Evan Welsh, DRCI, PT DRCI Innovation Manager

Colleen Hall, Public Services, Public Services Coordinator
David Masis Marin, Public Services, Public Services Worker III – Trades Specialist
Hannah Quast, Watershed, Stormwater Technician
Jeremy Bullock, Finance, Grants Administrator
Jennifer Freeman, Events and Venues, PT Events and Venues Department Coordinator
Jessica Sferlazzo, Events and Venues, Part-Time Welcome Center Assistant Coordinator
William Carter, Police Department, Police Officer (SRO)
Alejandro Sandoval, Police Department, Police Recruit
David Lopett, Police Department, School Crossing Guard
Richard Cowles, Police Department, School Crossing Guard
Keiry Ponce, Growth Management, promoted to Growth Management Operations Supervisor
Andrea Moreno, Watershed/Project Management, promoted to Watershed Management Division Manager
Beth Lewis, Watershed/Project Management, promoted to Watershed Reliance Manager
Amanda Schutz, Finance, promoted to Treasury Coordinator
Alexis Kennard, Human Resources, promoted to Senior HR Generalist
Eileen McCallum, Events and Venues, promoted to Events & Venues Department Assistant Manager
David Berver, Events and Venues, promoted to PT Welcome Center Assistant Coordinator
Christopher Cash, Police Department, promoted to Police Officer
Matthew Collins, Police Department, promoted to Police Officer
William Ferrelli, Police Department, promoted to Police Captain
Ryan Fazekas, Police Department, promoted to Police Captain
Helen Burke, Police Department, promoted to Deputy Chief
Anthony Polo, Police Department, promoted to Police Officer
Michael Smalley, Police Department, promoted to Police Officer

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Louis Brown, 37 Posey Court, addressed Council regarding drainage concerns related to the apartment development on Buck Island Road. He stated that water had been pumped from the construction site onto his property, causing flooding. Although the pumping has stopped, he requested assurance that the issue will not recur and asked that future permits involving drainage prevent impacts to neighboring properties.

Mr. Brown also inquired about the replacement of a property corner marker that was moved during nearby construction.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL

There were no comments from members of Council.

VIII. WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS

1. Discussion and Direction of Proposed Amendment to Chapter 23, Unified Development Ordinance, Article 3 Application Process, regarding criteria for the demolition of non-contributing resources to the Old Town Bluffton Historic District - Kevin Icard - Director of Growth Management

Council received a presentation regarding a proposed amendment to Chapter 23 of the Unified Development Ordinance to streamline the demolition process for non-contributing structures within the Old Town Bluffton Historic District. The amendment would shift approval from the Historic Preservation Commission to an administrative site feature permit process to improve efficiency. Council expressed support and consensus to move the amendment forward through the formal review process.

2. Discussion and Direction on Proposed Amendment to Chapter 23, Unified Development Ordinance, Article 3 Application Process, regarding additional evaluation criteria for Contributing Resources to the Old Town Bluffton Historic District - Kevin Icard - Director of Growth Management

Council discussed potential amendments to evaluation criteria for contributing resources within the Old Town Bluffton Historic District, including consideration of a tiered classification system versus a weighted point system. Council expressed concerns about added complexity and indicated preference for further analysis, including development of a matrix outlining applicable criteria for existing contributing resources. Staff will refine the approach and return with additional information for further workshop discussion.

IX. PUBLIC HEARING & FINAL READING

X. FORMAL AGENDA ITEMS

1. Consideration of an Ordinance Amending the Town of Bluffton FY 2026 Budget to Provide for the Expenditures of Certain Funds and to Allocate Sources of Revenue for the Said Funds - First Reading - Natalie Majorkiewicz, Director of Finance

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve the first reading of an ordinance amending the Town of Bluffton FY 2026 Budget to provide for the expenditures of certain funds and to allocate sources of revenue for the said funds.

Town Council unanimously approved the first reading of this ordinance.

2. Approval to Authorize a Construction Contract with Nix Construction Co., Inc. for Site and Landscape Development of the Sarah Riley Hooks Cottage Project (Fiscal Impact: \$687,874.80) - Pat Rooney, Capital Improvement Program Manager

A motion was made by Councilmember Frazier and seconded by Councilmember Wood to authorize a construction contract with Nix Construction Co., Inc. for site and landscape

development of the Sarah Riley Hooks Cottage Project (Fiscal Impact: \$687,874.80) - Pat Rooney, Capital Improvement Program Manager

Town Council unanimously approved the authorization of this construction contract.

XI. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Burden to accept the Consent Agenda as submitted.

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

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

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Discussions Relating to Proposed Land Acquisition in the Area within the Buckwalter PUD (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a] [2])

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Frazier to enter into Executive Session.

XIII. ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilmember Burden and seconded by Councilmember wood to approve a resolution authorizing the Town Manager to negotiate and sign a purchase and sales agreement for acquisition of the three adjacent lots (R610-022-000-013A-0000, R610-022-000-0035-0000, and R610-022-000-0049-0000) and all development rights associated with those lots, commonly known as the Willow Run tract, owned by Indian Hill Associates, LLC in the amount of \$11,000,000.

Town Council unanimously approved the authorization of the resolution.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Burden to adjourn the meeting at 6:37PM.

Marcia Hunter, Town Clerk
Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

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