

# TOWN COUNCIL



## STAFF REPORT Executive Department

<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	March 10, 2026
<b>PROJECT:</b>	Resolution Expressing Support of the University of South Carolina Beaufort Sand Shark 20/20 Project Creating a Multi-Purpose Arena and Sports Complex
<b>PROJECT MANAGER:</b>	Paul Arvantides, CEO Don Ryan Center for Innovation

### **REQUEST**

Adoption of a resolution expressing formal support for the Sand Shark 20/20 Project at the University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) Bluffton Campus.

### **BACKGROUND**

The University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) became a four-year university in 2004 and has since grown into a significant educational, cultural, and economic institution serving the Lowcountry region. As part of its long-term campus and community development strategy, USCB has advanced the Sand Shark 20/20 Project, a comprehensive, multi-phase initiative focused on expanding campus infrastructure and enhancing regional amenities.

Phase 1 of the Sand Shark 20/20 Project includes development of a multi-purpose arena and sports park facilities. This phase is supported by approximately \$47 million in state-allocated funding and represents a substantial public investment in higher education, athletics, community events, and emergency preparedness for the region.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Phase 1 of the Sand Shark 20/20 Project includes:

- A multi-purpose arena with seating for more than 4,000 spectators, designed to accommodate collegiate athletics, commencements, concerts, conferences, trade shows, and emergency management operations.
- A sports park featuring baseball, softball, and track and field facilities, addressing current limitations that require student-athletes to utilize off-campus venues.

The project is planned to integrate with surrounding parks, transportation infrastructure, and future pedestrian connections, reinforcing coordinated regional planning efforts.

### **ANALYSIS**

The Sand Shark 20/20 Project is anticipated to provide significant benefits to the Town of Bluffton and the surrounding region, including:

- Enhanced educational and athletic opportunities at USCB;

- Increased tourism and visitor activity;
- Expanded economic activity and local tax base growth;
- Opportunities for private investment such as hotels and supporting commercial development;
- Professional talent retention;
- Improved emergency preparedness.

The resolution does not commit the Town to financial participation and serves as a formal statement of support.

The project aligns with the Town's Comprehensive Plan goals related to regional cooperation, economic development, cultural and recreational amenities, and long-term resiliency.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends adoption of the Resolution of Support for the Sand Shark 20/20 Project.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution
2. Proposed Motion

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF BLUFFTON, SOUTH CAROLINA,  
EXPRESSING FORMAL SUPPORT FOR THE SAND SHARK 20/20 PROJECT AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA BEAUFORT BLUFFTON CAMPUS**

WHEREAS, the University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) has demonstrated significant growth since becoming a four-year university in 2004 and serves as an important educational, cultural, and economic anchor for the Lowcountry region; and

WHEREAS, the Sand Shark 20/20 Project is a comprehensive, multi-phase initiative designed to enhance USCB's Bluffton campus infrastructure while strengthening regional economic development, quality of life, and community engagement; and

WHEREAS, Phase 1 of the Sand Shark 20/20 Project includes a multi-purpose arena and sports park facilities supported by approximately \$47 million in state-allocated funding, representing a substantial public investment in the region's future; and

WHEREAS, the proposed multi-purpose arena will provide seating for more than 4,000 spectators and is designed to accommodate a wide range of uses including collegiate athletics, graduations, concerts, conferences, trade shows, and emergency management operations; and

WHEREAS, the sports park component of the project will include baseball, softball, and track and field facilities, addressing current limitations that require student-athletes to practice and compete off-campus and improving the ability of USCB to host collegiate and regional athletic events; and

WHEREAS, the Sand Shark 20/20 Project is expected to generate significant regional benefits, including increased tourism, expanded economic activity, enhanced tax base growth, and new opportunities for private investment such as hotels and supporting commercial development; and

WHEREAS, the project is planned to integrate with surrounding parks, transportation infrastructure, and future pedestrian connections, reinforcing coordinated regional planning and long-term growth objectives; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Bluffton recognizes the importance of strong partnerships among counties, municipalities, educational institutions, and the State of South Carolina in advancing projects that promote economic vitality, public safety, recreation, and community well-being; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council of the Town of Bluffton finds that the Sand Shark 20/20 Project aligns with the Town's strategic goals related to economic development, regional collaboration, and enhancement of cultural and recreational amenities for residents and visitors alike.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF BLUFFTON, SOUTH CAROLINA, THAT:

1. The Town Council hereby expresses its formal support for the Sand Shark 20/20 Project at the University of South Carolina Beaufort Bluffton Campus, including Phase 1 development of the multi-purpose arena and associated sports facilities.
2. The Town Council acknowledges the anticipated positive impacts of the project on education, economic development, tourism, emergency preparedness, and overall quality of life within the Town of Bluffton and the greater Beaufort and Jasper County region.
3. The Town Council encourages continued collaboration among USCB, state agencies, local governments, and private partners to ensure the successful implementation of the Sand Shark 20/20 Project.
4. The Town Manager is hereby authorized to transmit a copy of this resolution to the University of South Carolina Beaufort, Beaufort County, appropriate state agencies, and other relevant stakeholders as an expression of the Town's support.

ADOPTED this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

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Larry Toomer, Mayor  
Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

ATTEST:

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Marcia Hunter, Town Clerk  
Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

**Attachment 2  
Proposed Motion**

**Resolution Expressing Support of the University of South Carolina Beaufort Sand Shark 20/20 Project  
Creating a Multi-Purpose Arena and Sports Complex.**

Proposed Motion

*"I move to approve the resolution of support for the USCB Bluffton campus Sand Shark 20/20 Project, creating a multi-purpose arena and sports complex."*