

Regular Town Council Meeting

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

May 12, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Toomer.

III. INVOCATION

The Invocation was delivered Councilmember Burden.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

1. Regular Meeting Minutes of 04/07/2026

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tempore Hamilton and seconded by Councilmember Frazier to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 04/07/2026.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

2. Quarterly Workshop Meeting Minutes of 04/21/2026

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Frazier to approve the Quarterly Workshop Meeting Minutes of 04/21/2026.

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 Larry Toomer, on behalf of Town Council, honored Red Cedar Elementary School 5th-grade student, Frankie Garay, for the character trait of self-control.

2. Stay Safe, Bluffton Scholarship Presentation - Mayor Larry Toomer

Mayor Larry Toomer, on behalf of Town Council, honored students Blake Burke - Cross Schools, Archer Dewig - John Paul II, Myla Greene - May River High School, Coleman Jacobi - May River High School, and Rebbecca Wohn - Bluffton High School with the Stay Safe, Bluffton Scholarship. Each Student received a \$1,500 scholarship check and a Stay Safe car bag with jumper cables and tire kits.

3. National Mental Health Substance Use Prevention Month Proclamation - Mayor Larry Toomer

Mayor Larry Toomer, on behalf of Town Council, presented a National Mental Health Substance Use Prevention Month Proclamation to Teens for Healthy Youth members Avi Stevens and Victoria Da Armas.

4. Tuberos Sclerosis Complex Global Awareness Day Proclamation - Mayor Larry Toomer

Mayor Larry Toomer, on behalf of Town Council, presented a Tuberous Sclerosis Complex Global Awareness Day Proclamation to Amy Bredeson.

5. Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month Proclamation - Mayor Larry Toomer

Mayor Larry Toomer, on behalf of Town Council, presented a Tourette Syndrome Awareness Month Proclamation to David Roth.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Andrew Kiehl - 22 Trail Ridge Retreat - Mr. Kiehl has requested placing a restriction on the proposed new Pulte Homes development located at New Riverside near Midpoint, prohibiting the use of Midpoint's model homes and sales center for marketing of the new development. He noted the increase of traffic on Midpoint Boulevard, which is the primary access road for the neighborhood.

Melissa Tullino - 142 Horizon Trail - Ms. Tullino asked the Town to pause the proposed Pulte Homes 104-home development due to current traffic congestion and pending impacts from other approved projects and new schools. Town staff offered to provide her with updates.

Theresa Cowart - 23 Pinecrest Way - Ms. Cowart expressed concerns about the development of the Pinecrest golf course, thanking council for their ongoing support against any development.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Councilmember Frazier expressed her condolences to both Councilmember Burden and Heather Colin, Assistant Town Manager.

Councilmember Wood wished all mothers a Happy belated Mother's Day and thanked them for the care provided to loved ones.

Mayor Toomer, Mayor Pro-tempore Hamilton, Councilmember Burden expressed the same sentiments as previously mentioned and offered no additional communications.

VIII. WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS

There were no Workshop Agenda Items to report.

IX. PUBLIC HEARING & FINAL READING

There were no Public Hearing & Final Reading Items to report.

X. FORMAL AGENDA ITEMS

1. Consideration of an Ordinance Approving the Town of Bluffton Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Consolidated Budget – First Reading – Stephen Steese, Town Manager

A motion was made by Councilmember Frazier and seconded by Mayor Pro-tempore Hamilton approving the first reading of the Town of Bluffton Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Consolidated Budget.

Town Council unanimously approved and the motion passed.

2. Consideration of Approval of an Initial Master Plan for New Riverside Parcel 8A Consisting of 104 Single-Family Lots on Approximately 100.69 Acres of Land Located on the Southwest

corner of the intersection of New Riverside Road and Myrtle Ford Road and Zoned New Riverside Planned Unit Development - Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

A motion was made by Councilmember Frazer and seconded by Mayor Toomer to approve the initial master plan for New Riverside Parcel 8A, consisting of 104 single-family lots on approximately 100.69 acres of land located on the southwest corner of the intersection of New Riverside Road and Myrtle Ford Road, and zoned New Riverside Planned Unit Development.

No final vote was taken by Council.

A second motion was made by Councilmember Frazer and seconded by Mayor Pro-tempore Hamilton to amend the aforementioned motion to increase the minimum on-street parking requirement from 20% to 25%.

The motion passed in a 4-1 vote of Town Council.

Voting Yea: Mayor Toomer, Mayor Pro-tempore Hamilton, Councilmember Wood, and Councilmember Frazier

Voting Nay: Councilmember Burden

3. Consideration of an Ordinance Authorizing an Economic Development Incentive Agreement between the Town of Bluffton and The Bluff Orthodontics, LLC - Second and Final Reading – David Nelems, Director of Special Projects, Don Ryan Center for Innovation

A motion was made by Councilmember Burden and seconded by Councilmember Wood to approve the second and final reading of an ordinance authorizing an Economic Development Incentive Agreement between the Town of Bluffton and The Bluff Orthodontics, LLC.

Town Council unanimously approved the second and final reading of this ordinance.

4. Consideration of an Ordinance Authorizing an Economic Development Incentive Agreement between the Town of Bluffton and Sterling Corporation (d/b/a Sterling Helicopter) First Reading – David Nelems, Director of Special Projects, Don Ryan Center for Innovation

A motion was made by Councilmember Burden and seconded by Mayor Pro-tempore Hamilton to approve the first reading of an ordinance authorizing an Economic Development Incentive agreement between the Town of Bluffton and Sterling Corporation (d/b/a Sterling Helicopter).

Town Council unanimously approved the first reading of this ordinance.

5. Approval to Authorize a Contract with Rummel, Klepper, Kahl, LLP (RK&K) to Develop a Town of Bluffton Resilience Plan (Fiscal Impact: \$358,604.00) - Beth Lewis, Watershed Resilience Manager

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Frazier authorizing the Town Manager to enter into a contract with Rummel, Klepper, Kahl, LLP (RK&K) to Develop a Town of Bluffton Resilience Plan (Fiscal Impact: \$358,604.00).

Town Council unanimously approved and the motion passed.

6. Approval to Authorize a Contract with Beaufort Construction of SC, LLC for Construction of a Second Pavilion at Oscar Frazier Park Field of Dreams (Fiscal Impact: \$214,656.00) – Pat Rooney, Manager of Capital Improvements Program

A motion made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Hamilton and seconded by Councilmember Burden authorizing the Town Manager to enter into a contract with Beaufort Construction of SC, LLC for Construction of a Second Pavilion at Oscar Frazier Park Field of Dreams to include contingency amount reduced to 10% from 20%. (Fiscal Impact: \$196,768.00).

Town Council unanimously approved and the motion passed.

7. Authorization to Amend Contract #2025-53 for the New River Linear Trail Construction with Nix Construction to Accommodate Unforeseen Field Conditions (Fiscal Impact: \$320,000.00) - Pat Rooney, Capital Improvement Program Manager

A motion made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Hamilton and seconded by Councilmember Burden to authorize the Town Manager to amend contract #2025-53 for the New River Linear Trail Construction with Nix Construction to Accommodate Unforeseen Field Conditions (Fiscal Impact: \$320,000.00).

The motion passed in a 3-2 vote of Town Council.

Voting Yea: Mayor Toomer, Councilmember Wood, and Councilmember Frazier

Voting Nay: Mayor Pro-Tempore Hamilton and Councilmember Burden

8. Approval to Authorize a Contract with Mauldin & Jenkins for Financial Audit Services beginning on July 1, 2026 for Fiscal Years 2026 through Fiscal Year 2028 (Fiscal Impact: \$104,700) – Natalie Majorkiewicz, Director of Finance & Administration

A motion was made by Councilmember Frazier and seconded by Pro-tempore Hamilton to authorize the Town Manager to enter into a contract with Mauldin & Jenkins for Financial Audit Services beginning on July 1, 2026, for Fiscal Years 2026 through Fiscal Year 2028 (Fiscal Impact: \$104,700).

Town Council unanimously approved and the motion passed.

XI. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Frazier 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
3. Kids to Parks Day Proclamation - Mayor Larry Toomer
4. Building Safety Month Proclamation - Mayor Larry Toomer
5. Public Service Employee Recognition Week Proclamation - Mayor Larry Toomer

6. Historic Preservation Month Proclamation - Mayor Larry Toomer
7. Lupus Awareness Month Proclamation - Mayor Larry Toomer
8. Municipal Clerks Week Proclamation - Mayor Larry Toomer
9. Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of South Carolina Beaufort for Microbial Source Tracking Laboratory Services - Beth Lewis, Watershed Resilience Manager
10. Consideration of Storm Drain Art Designs Created by Local Students and Funded by the Beautification Committee (Fiscal Impact: \$600.00) - Andrea Moreno, Watershed Management Division Manager and Larry Beckler, Public Services Director
11. Consideration of a Resolution Approving the Town of Bluffton Assessment District Roll for Tax Year 2026 - Stephen Steese, Town Manager
12. Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing Approval of a Comprehensive Safety Program, Loss Control Policy, and Establishment of an Administrative Committee - Anni Evans, Director of Human Resources
13. Approval of Public Arts Committee Recommendations for Student Art for Welcome Center Display - Chris Forster, Assistant Town Manager

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Discussion Relating to Proposed Contractual Matters Regarding Lease Agreements for Town Owned Property at 97 Progressive Street (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a][2])
2. Personnel Matters Relating to Town Manager Annual Review (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70[a][1])

XIII. ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. Discussion Relating to Proposed Contractual Matters Regarding Lease Agreements for Town Owned Property at 97 Progressive Street (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a][2])

A motion was made by Councilmember Burden and seconded by Mayor Pro-tempore Hamilton to authorize the CEO of Don Ryan Center of Innovation to negotiate and enter into a lease agreement at 97 Progressive Street, Bluffton, SC, with the Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation, the Hispanic Business Association, the Greater Bluffton Chamber of Commerce, Wellmphatics2, LLC, and KWG Create, LLC provided the terms and conditions are substantively consistent with what was provided to Council for review and Consideration.

Town council unanimously agreed and the motion passed.

2. Personnel Matters Relating to Town Manager Annual Review (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70[a][1])

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Mayor Pro-tempore Hamilton to increase the Town Manager's salary, 5%, to \$201,600.00, effective the next pay period.

Town council unanimously agreed and the motion passed.

14. ADJOURNMENT

No motions were taken and the meeting was adjourned at 8:58 PM.

Marcia Hunter, Town Clerk
Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

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

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