

# Regular Town Council Meeting

Theodore D. Washington Municipal Building, Henry “Emmett” McCracken Jr. Council Chambers,  
20 Bridge Street, Bluffton, SC  
November 12, 2024

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## 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 given by Councilmember Burden.

## IV. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

1. Regular Meeting Minutes of 10/08/2024.

A motion was made by Councilmember Hamilton; Seconded by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 10/08/2024 as submitted.

## V. PRESENTATIONS, CELEBRATIONS, AND RECOGNITIONS

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

On behalf of Town Council, Mayor Toomer honored the “Student of the Month,” Christina Sanchez, a 4th grade student from Michael C. Riley Elementary School, for the character trait of acceptance.

## VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Sharon Brown 163 Buck Island Road - Ms. Brown expressed concerns regarding the authority of the Town Manager vs. SLED or BSCO in the internal investigation of a staff-related matter. Ms. Brown requested to meet with Mayor Toomer and Stephen Steese.

Paul Coe 5 Cottingham Rd - Mr. Coe spoke in the absence of his wife Joy Coe. She had an issue arise and could not attend. Mr. Coe expressed concerns related to the consideration annexation request of the property owned by Grande Oaks, LLC and University Investments LLC. He discussed his viewpoints on development and opposed the development of Bluffton Parkway Phase 5B.

Dr. Aderemi Olodun 2 Reston Place - Dr. Oldum shared his appreciation to council for the support in the opening of the Beaufort County Veterans Affairs offices located in both Bluffton and Hilton Head Island locations. He discussed the wide range of services offered at the facilities. He thanked the members of council for attending the grand opening at 9 Benton Field Road, Bluffton.

Ian Duncan - 65 4th Ave - Mr. Duncan is the owner of the Grind Coffee Roasters, LLC. He requested an amendment to the temporary sign UDO permitting process. The request is due to the Grind Coffee Roasters opening a location in May River Crossing shopping center and not being able to post temporary signage along the highway notifying the public of being open for business.

Amanta Gopalan 23 Dove Tree Ln - Mr. Gopalan moved to Bluffton approximately 10 years ago. He expressed concerns about the deteriorating quality of life, expansion of residential communities,

traffic and crime rates. Mr. Gopalan also expressed his concerns regarding the annexation request on the agenda.

Carolyn Brown 1111 May River Rd - Ms. Brown discussed her frustration with the rules not being followed by some members of the community. Her frustrations are with trailers being pulled in at night, trees being cut down without permits, and truck loads of sand being dumped on lots that add to the flooding issues of other nearby properties on Buck Island Road.

## **VII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL**

Councilmember Frazier - Ms. Frazier expressed her gratitude and enthusiasm regarding the grand opening of the Splash Pad. She also addressed concerns related to residents, referring to the DUO, and working together as a cohesive group. She stated it is critical for everyone involved to put facts at the forefront of any discussion and not partake in the rumor mill or the spreading of misinformation.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood - Mr. Wood stated over the last nine years of serving the community he has learned that people just wish to be heard. He advised he and all members of the council are available to listen and to hear any concern that may arise. He encouraged the community to reach out for assistance at any time

Councilmember Emily Burden - Ms. Burden stated she agreed with Councilmember Frazier in the collection of facts due to the obvious miscommunications that have occurred in agenda topics to be discussed.

Councilmember Fred Hamilton - Mr. Hamilton expressed the importance of the community members to hear and believe that concerns are acted upon by council and town staff. Every member of the council represents Bluffton and are the ears to any concerns that may arise. He encouraged the community to reach out. We are a community that helps one another.

Mayor Larry Toomer - Mayor Toomer stated the importance of three items that he heard from the community when running for his position. The concerns are to have less residential development, better road conditions and the need for additional medical facilities. These items are a priority for all members of council. He also stated the importance of council shares to preserve as much land/green space as possible to stop further development.

## **VIII. PUBLIC HEARING & FINAL READING**

1. Consideration of Ordinances for that Certain Property Owned by Bryant Holding, LLC, Consisting of 2.14 Acres, More or Less, Located at 30 Davis Road located to the east of the Intersection of Davis Road and Okatie Highway (SC Highway 170) and identified by Beaufort County Tax Map No. R600-029-000-0028-0000. Second and Final Reading - Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

For the Following Applications:

A. Consideration of an Amendment to the Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan "Blueprint Bluffton" to Amend the Said Property's Future Land Use Designation from Suburban Living to Lifestyle Housing;

A motion made by Councilmember Hamilton; Seconded by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood to approve the second and final reading of the ordinance to amend the Town of Bluffton

Comprehensive Plan "Blueprint Bluffton" to Change Beaufort County Tax Map No. R600-029-000-0028-0000 Future Land Use Designation from Suburban Living to Lifestyle Housing.

Town Council unanimously approved the ordinance.

B. Consideration of 100% Annexation Request to Annex the Subject Property into the Town of Bluffton Corporate Limits; and

A motion made by Councilmember Burden; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to approve the second and final reading of the ordinance for the annexation of the Bryant Holdings, LLC Consisting of 2.14 Acres, More or Less, Located at 30 Davis Road Located to the East of the Intersection of Davis Road and Okatie Highway (SC Highway 170) and identified by Beaufort County Tax Map No. R600-029-000-0028-0000, into the Town of Bluffton Corporate Limits.

Town Council unanimously approved the ordinance for the annexation.

C. Consideration of a Zoning Map Amendment to Rezone the Subject Property to the Residential General (RG) District.

A motion made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood; Seconded by Councilmember Frazier to approve the second and final reading of the ordinance for the Zoning Map Amendment for approximately consisting of 2.14 Acres, more or less, located at 30 Davis Road located to the east of the Intersection of Davis Road and Okatie Highway (SC Highway 170) and identified by Beaufort County Tax Map No. R600-029-000-0028-0000, to rezone said property to the Residential General (RG) District pursuant to the Unified Development Ordinance.

Town Council unanimously approved the ordinance for the zoning map amendment.

2. Consideration of Ordinances Related to Property Owned by Grande Oaks, LLC and University Investments, LLC Consisting of 65.592 Acres, More or Less, Located at Southwest Corner of the Buckwalter Parkway and Lake Point Drive Intersection and to the West of the Retreat at Grande Oaks, and Bearing Beaufort County Tax Map Nos. R600-029-000-0014-0000 (Portion) and R600-029-000-2410-0000. Public Hearing and Final Reading - Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

For the Following Applications:

A. Consideration of an Amendment to the Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan "Blueprint Bluffton" to Amend the Said Property's Future Land Use Designation from Suburban Living to Neighborhood Center;

A motion made by Councilmember Frazier; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to approve the second and final reading of the ordinance for the amendment of the Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan "Blueprint Bluffton" to change Beaufort County Tax Map Nos. R600-029-000-2484-0000, R600-029-000-2486-0000, R600-029-000-0014-0000, and R600-029-000-2410-0000 Future Land Use Designation from Suburban Living to Neighborhood Center.

Town Council unanimously approved the ordinance.

B. Amendment to the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development Text to Incorporate Provisions for a New Land Use Tract to be Known as the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract.

A motion made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood; Seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve the second and final reading of the ordinance for the amendment of the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development Text to incorporate provisions for a New Land Use Tract to be known as the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract.

Town Council unanimously approved the ordinance.

C. Annexation of the Grande Oaks Consisting of 65.592 Acres, More or Less, Located at Southwest Corner of the Buckwalter Parkway and Lake Point Drive and Bearing Beaufort County Tax Map Nos. R600-029-000-2484-0000, R600-029-000-2486-0000, R600-029-000-0014-0000, and R600-029-000-2410-0000, into the Town of Bluffton Corporate Limits.

A motion made by Councilmember Hamilton; Seconded by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood to approve the second and final reading of the ordinance for the annexation of the Grande Oaks property consisting of 65.592 Acres, more or less, located at Southwest Corner of the Buckwalter Parkway and Lake Point Drive intersection and to the West of the Retreat at Grande Oaks, and bearing Beaufort County Tax Map Nos. R600-029-000-2484-0000, R600-029-000-2486-0000, R600-029-000-0014-0000, and R600-029-000-2410-0000 into the Town of Bluffton Corporate Limits.

Town Council unanimously approved the ordinance.

D. Consideration of a Zoning Map Amendment to Rezone the Subject Properties to the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development District and Designate as the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract;

A motion made by Councilmember Burden; Seconded by Councilmember Frazier second and final reading of the ordinance for the amendment of the Zoning Map Amendment for approximately 65.592 Acres, more or less, located at Southwest Corner of the Buckwalter Parkway and Lake Point Drive intersection and to the West of the Retreat at Grande Oaks, and Bearing Beaufort County Tax Map Nos. R600-029-000-2484-0000, R600-029-000-2486-0000, R600-029-000-0014-0000, and R600-029-000-2410-0000, as Buckwalter Planned Unit Development.

Town Council unanimously approved the ordinance.

E. Consideration of an Amendment to the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development Concept Plan for the Subject Properties to Add Provisions Including but not Limited to their Incorporation into the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development District, Designation as the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract, and Add 28 Acres of General Commercial Development Rights; and

A motion made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to approve the second and final reading of the ordinance for the amendment to the Buckwalter Development Agreement to add the following provisions:

Add language to the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment document for the following:

Require the frontage road, Lake Point Drive Connector, and three connectors to the Bluffton Parkway shall provide unrestricted access and consist of a minimum of two 12' lanes.

Town Council unanimously approved the ordinance with the stated condition.

F. Consideration of an Amendment to the Buckwalter Development Agreement for the Subject Properties to Add Provisions Including but not Limited to their Incorporation into the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development District, Designation as the Grande Oaks Commons Land Use Tract, and Add 28 Acres of General Commercial Development Rights.

A motion made by Councilmember Hamilton; Seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve the second and final reading of the ordinance for the amendment to the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development Concept Plan to add the following provisions:

Add language to the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment document for the following:

Require the frontage road, Lake Point Drive Connector, and three connectors to the Bluffton Parkway shall provide unrestricted access and consist of a minimum of two 12' lanes.

Town Council unanimously approved the ordinance with the stated condition.

## **IX. FORMAL AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Consideration of an Ordinance Authorizing a Lease Agreement with Bright Beginnings Academy, LLC to Provide a Childcare Facility within a Town Owned Property. Second and Final Reading - Chris Forster, Assistant Town Manager

A motion made by Councilmember Frazier; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to approve second and final reading of an ordinance authorizing the Town Manager to enter into a commercial lease agreement with an owner-operator of a curriculum-based childcare facility at a reduced rental rate so long as the commercial lease agreement does not materially differ from what was presented herein.

Town Council unanimously approved the ordinance.

2. Approval of Public Art Committee Recommendation to Award a Public Art Commission at Squire Pope Welcome Center to Brandy Scholl with a Fiscal Impact of \$30,800. - Chris Forster, Assistant Town Manager

A motion made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood; Seconded by Councilmember Frazier to approve of Public Art Committee recommendation to award a Public Art Commission at Squire Pope Welcome Center to Brandy Scholl with a fiscal impact of \$30,800.

Town Council approved the public art commission with a vote of 4-1.

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

Voting Nay: Councilmember Burden

3. Consideration of Ordinances Related to Certain Property Owned by Rose Kitty and Ferrellgas Inc., Consisting of a Total of 1.38 Acres, More or Less, Located at 328, 330 and 332 Buck Island Road and identified by Beaufort County Tax Map Numbers R610 03 000 0016 0000 (328 and 330 Buck Island Road) and R610 039 000 018C 0000 (332 Buck Island Road). First Reading - Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

For the Following Applications:

1. Consideration of an Amendment to the Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan "Blueprint Bluffton" to Amend the Said Properties from the Future Land Use Designation of Suburban Living to Neighborhood Center;

A motion made by Councilmember Frazier; Seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve the amendment to the Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan "Blueprint Bluffton" to amend the said properties from the Future Land Use Designation of Suburban Living to Neighborhood Center.

Town Council unanimously approved the first reading of the ordinance

2. Consideration of a Zoning Map Amendment to Rezone the Subject Properties from the Residential General (RG) to the Light Industrial (LI) District.

A motion made by Councilmember Hamilton; Seconded by Councilmember Frazier to approve the amendment to the Town of Bluffton Official Zoning Map to rezone the subject properties from the Residential General (RG) District to the Light Industrial (LI) District.

Town Council unanimously approved the ordinance.

4. Consideration and Approval of Amendments to the Town of Bluffton Code of Ordinances. Chapter 6 Businesses and Business Regulations Article III – Soliciting and Mobile Vending, Section 6-78, Approvals, fees and taxes, Section 6-83 Fire Safety, Section 6-84 Violations and Penalties. First Reading - Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

A motion made by Councilmember Burden; Seconded by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood to approve the first reading of an ordinance amending the Town of Bluffton Code of Ordinances, Chapter 6, Businesses and Business Regulations, Article III, Soliciting and Mobile Vending as presented.

Town Council unanimously approved the first reading of the ordinance.

5. Consideration and Approval of Amendments to the Town of Bluffton Code of Ordinances. Chapter 6 Businesses and Business Regulations Article V – Short-Term Rental Units, Section 6-114 Application, Section 6-120 Violations and Penalties. First Reading - Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

A motion made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to approve the first reading of the ordinance amending the Town of Bluffton Code of Ordinances, Chapter 6, Businesses and Business Regulations, Article V, Short-Term Rental Units as presented.

Town Council unanimously approved the first reading of the ordinance.

#### **X. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

A motion made by Councilmember Hamilton; Seconded by Councilmember Frazier to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted.

Town Council unanimously approved the consent agenda as presented.



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. Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing Acceptance of Easement Donations from Property Owners Necessary to Complete a portion of the Bridge Street Streetscape Phase 2 Project - Kimberly Washok-Jones, Director of Projects & Watershed Resilience

#### **XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion by Councilmember Hamilton, Seconded by Councilmember Frazier to enter into Executive Session for the item listed below.

1. Personnel Matters Regarding Town Council Appointments of Boards, Committees, and Commissions (Pursuant to Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a][1])
2. Discussions Relating to Arrangements for Proposed Land Acquisition in the Area of the Goethe Road and Buckwalter PUD (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a] [2])
3. Legal and Personnel Matters Relating to the Receipt of Legal Advice Regarding Police Department Personnel (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70[a] [1],[2])

#### **XII. ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion made by Councilmember Burden; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to appoint the following to the Town's Boards, Commissions and Committees with all terms starting November 13, 2024 and expiring June 30, 2027.

Town Council unanimously approved the appointment of members and terms to the Town's Boards, Commissions and Committees.

- Michael Garibaldi to the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee;
- Amy Aldana to the Board of Zoning Appeals;
- Theodosia Major to the Public Arts Committee;
- Ray Pringle to the Wall of Honor Committee.

#### **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion made by Councilmember Burden; Seconded by Councilmember Frazier to adjourn the meeting at 10:07 PM.