

Regular Town Council Meeting

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

August 12, 2025

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 Hamilton.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

1. Regular Meeting Minutes of 07/08/2025

A motion made by Councilmember Burden; Seconded by Councilmember Frazier to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 07/08/2025 as submitted.

Town Council unanimously approved the minutes as submitted.

2. Special Meeting Minutes 07/15/2025

A motion made by Councilmember Hamilton; Seconded by Mayor Pro-tempore Wood to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 07/15/2025 as submitted.

Town Council unanimously approved the minutes as submitted.

V. PRESENTATIONS, CELEBRATIONS, AND RECOGNITIONS

1. USCB Sand Shark Welcome Week Proclamation - Mayor Larry Toomer

Mayor Larry Toomer, on behalf of Town Council presented USCB with the Welcome Week Proclamation celebrating the week of (August 18-22, 2025) students returned to campus. Student representatives Daniela Lopez and Tayla Wilson were present to receive the proclamation.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Marie Kowalchuk 161 Pinecrest Circle - Ms. Kowalchuk addressed council with concerns regarding potential development of the Pinecrest.

Sharon Brown 163 Buck Island Road - Ms. Brown addressed council regarding the Neighborhood Assistance Program and the Resident Resource Guide.

Garfield Moss 4 Garfield Way - Mr. Moss addressed council regarding an incident that occurred several years ago during the time frame of the covid pandemic.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Councilmember Frazier - Ms. Frazer had requested Town staff reach out to Mr. Moss to further discuss the incident that occurred. Town Manager Steese responded to the request advising the

incident occurred three years ago, the trespass order was lifted within a few days. The reason he was directed to the attorney was due to Mr. Moss threatening to sue the Town, therefore it was recommended that Mr. Moss speak directly to legal counsel.

Mayor Pro-tempore Wood - Mr. Wood expressed his gratitude for a job well done to Beaufort County for repaving a portion of the Bluffton Parkway, removing the speed bump on Goethe Road and the Live Well Project would not have been possible without the partnership of Beaufort County, Beaufort Memorial Hospital and the Town.

Councilmember Hamilton - Mr. Hamilton expressed his praise to Councilmember Frazier for her efforts to feed Bluffton. He expressed his appreciation and wishes of success to her business venture. Mr. Hamilton also addressed the members of the Pinecrest regarding community concerns of development, expressing his support for the community members.

Councilmember Burden - Mrs. Burden shared the positive feedback in the town working with Kim Conte with Non-Toxic Neighborhoods and the Town of Bluffton Public Works Department to test non-toxic spray in our parks. There has been great success in the testing. Any spraying that may be seen is a non-toxic chemical. This is a huge win for our entire community, our children, pets and the runoff into the river. She expressed the desire to make this usage a policy for the town.

Mayor Toomer - Mayor Toomer has requested the community keep the Reeves family in prayer in the passing of Ms. Mary Reeves at the age of 95. She and her late husband were very instrumental in the Bluffton community.

VIII. WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS

1. Update on the South Carolina Law H3292 Related to Golf Carts and the Allowance of Local Municipalities to Adopt Similar Regulations - Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

Town Council requested to schedule an additional workshop to further discuss its legal options to restrict golf cart use to promote public and personal safety.

Background: The new state law allows municipalities to adopt additional golf cart laws to either allow or restrict nighttime driving and also adopt additional safety restrictions. The state law restricts golf carts on any road which is above 35 mph, it requires seat belts for any riders 12 years old or younger, the driver must have a license, and the golf cart insurance is required.

2. Consideration and Direction on Potential Amendments to the Town of Bluffton Code of Ordinances, Chapter 23, Unified Development Ordinance, Article 5 – Design Standards - Accessory Buildings - Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

Town staff presented changes to the proposed ordinance which relates to the use of car ports. Town Council agreed to bringing the proposed ordinance to Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and Planning Commission (PC) for review and comments. After review by both committees, Town staff will present the proposed ordinance to Town Council.

IX. PUBLIC HEARING & FINAL READING

1. A Request by Livewell Terrace L.P. (Woda Cooper Group), with Authorization from the Property Owner Beaufort Memorial Hospital, for the 100% Affordable/Workforce Housing Project to be known as Livewell Terrace Located at 335 Buckwalter Parkway and Identified as

Beaufort County Tax Map No. R610 030 000 0712 0000. Public Hearing and Final Reading – Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

For the Following:

A. Ordinance Approving the Acquisition of Residential Development Rights in the Amount of Sixty (60) Residential Dwelling Units (“RDUs”) Owned by the Town of Bluffton and Held in the Town’s Development Rights Bank Pursuant to the Transfer of Development Rights Ordinance;

A motion made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to approve the second reading of the Ordinance authorizing the conveyance of sixty (60) Residential Development Rights within the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development owned by the Town of Bluffton and held in the Town’s Development Rights Bank to Beaufort Memorial Hospital for the Affordable Housing Project to be developed on that certain property located at 335 Buckwalter Parkway and consisting of 10.09 acres, more or less, and identified as Beaufort County Tax Map No. R610 030 000 0712 0000; and, authorizing the execution and recording of associated documents.

Town Council unanimously approved this amendment.

B. Ordinance Approving an Amendment to the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development (“PUD”) Development Agreement to Increase the Number of Residential Dwelling Units (“RDUs”) by Sixty (60) Residential Dwelling Units (“RDUs”) Associated with the 100% Density Bonus; and

A motion made by Councilmember Frazier; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to approve the second reading of the Ordinance providing for an amendment of the Buckwalter Development Agreement to incorporate certain properties owned by Beaufort Memorial Hospital, consisting of 10.9 Acres, more or less, located at 333 and 335 Buckwalter Parkway, and bearing Beaufort County Tax Map No. R610 030 000 0712 0000, to provide for an Affordable Housing Density Bonus increasing the total permitted Development Rights by sixty (60) Residential Dwelling Units and incorporate certain terms to the Buckwalter Development Agreement.

Town Council unanimously approved this amendment.

C. Ordinance to Approve an Amendment to the Buckwalter Planned Unit Development (“PUD”) Concept Plan to Increase the Number of Residential Development Rights by Sixty (60) Residential Dwelling Units (“RDUs”) Associated with the 100% Density Bonus.

A motion made by Councilmember Burden; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to approve second reading of the Ordinance providing for an Amendment of the Buckwalter Concept Plan to incorporate certain properties owned by Beaufort Memorial Hospital, consisting of 10.9 Acres, more or less, located at 333 and 335 Buckwalter Parkway, and bearing Beaufort County Tax Map No. R610 030 000 0712 0000, to provide for an Affordable Housing Density Bonus increasing the total permitted Development Rights by sixty (60) Residential Dwelling Units and incorporate certain terms to the Buckwalter Concept Plan.

Town Council unanimously approved this amendment.

X. FORMAL AGENDA ITEMS

1. Ordinance Amending Section 21 – Emergency Management to Define a Local Civil Emergency, its Declaration and Termination, Authority and Powers, and Additional Amendments to the Town’s Emergency Management Policies and Procedures – First Reading – Stephen Steese, Town Manager

A motion made by Councilmember Hamilton; Seconded by Councilmember Frazier to amend Ordinance Section 21 – Emergency Management to define a Local Civil Emergency, its Declaration and Termination, Authority and Powers, and Additional Amendments to the Town’s Emergency Management Policies and Procedures.

Town Council unanimously approved the first reading of the ordinance amendment.

2. Resolution to Approve Three Party Agreement Between Buckwalter Association Inc., Beaufort County, and Town of Bluffton to Construct the Connection Road Between Buckwalter Place and Washington Square – Heather Colin, Assistant Town Manager

A motion made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood; Seconded by Councilmember Burden to table the resolution to approve Three Party Agreement between Buckwalter Association Inc., Beaufort County, and Town of Bluffton to construct the connection road between Buckwalter Place and Washington Square.

Town Council unanimously agreed to table this motion.

XI. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

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

Town Council unanimously approved the consent agenda items 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. Consideration of an Ordinance for a Non-Exclusive Easement over Certain Real Property Owned by the Town of Bluffton Consisting of Parcel R610-028-000-0018-0000 in Favor of K. Hovnanian’s Four Seasons at Carolina Oaks to connect the Four Seasons' Boardwalk to the New River Trail, Second & Final Reading - Kimberly Washok-Jones, Director of Projects and Watershed Resilience

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion made by Mayor Pro-tempore Wood; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to enter Executive Session.

1. Personnel Matters Regarding Town Council Appointments of Boards, Committees, and Commissions (Pursuant to Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a][1])
2. Discussion of Land Purchase Agreement Located in the Buckwalter Tract (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a][2])

XIII. ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion made by Councilmember Burden; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to appoint Ashley Feaster, Jerry Reeves, Houssam Aboukhater and Kerri Murphy to the seats of Directors to the Don Ryan Center of Innovation Board of Directors with terms expiring June 30, 2028.

Town Council unanimously approved the motion.

A motion made Mayor Pro-tempore Wood; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to authorize the Town Manager to execute a Purchase and Sale Agreement with Inland Bluffton, LLC for the 55.18 acre parcel, more or less, shown on the plat recorded in the Beaufort County Register of Deeds at Book 140, Page 11, noted as Parcel 5C, for the purchase price of \$3,860,000.

Town Council unanimously approved the motion.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion made by Councilmember Frazier; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to adjourn at 7:05 PM.

Marcia Hunter, Town Clerk
Town of Bluffton, SC

Larry C. Toomer, Mayor
Town of Bluffton, SC