

Regular Town Council Meeting

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

January 13, 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 led by Councilmember Frazier.

IV. SWEARING IN AND SEATING OF COUNCIL

1. Swearing In and Seating of Council Emily Burden and Fred Hamilton - Municipal Judge Clifford Bush III

Municipal Judge Clifford Bush III administered the oath of office to Councilmember Emily Burden and Councilmember Fred Hamilton.

2. Election of Mayor Pro Tempore

Councilmember Frazier made a motion to appoint Councilmember Hamilton as Mayor Pro-Tempore. No other nominations were made. Town Council unanimously approved the motion.

VI. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

1. Regular Meeting Minutes of 12/09/2025

A motion made by Councilmember Wood, seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 12/09/2025.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

VII. PRESENTATIONS, CELEBRATIONS, AND RECOGNITIONS

1. Beaufort County School District Character Student of the Month

Mayor Larry Toomer, on behalf of Town Council, honored Jeremiah Grant from May River High School, a 12th grader, recognized as the Beaufort County Character Student of the Month for the traits of respect/gratitude.

2. Martin Luther King Jr. Proclamation - Mayor Larry Toomer

Mayor Larry Toomer, on behalf of Town Council, presented the Martin Luther King Jr proclamation which honored Martin Luther King, Jr. and the activities of the Bluffton MLK Remembrance Committee.

3. Annual Palmetto Bluff Development Agreement Update - Will Howard, South Street Partners

Will Howard, of South Street Partners, gave a summary of home sales activity in Palmetto Bluff.

Topics of discussion included: Sales statistics, the completion of the Anson Point Golf course, a new cell tower, and the Crossroads Amenity Center.

4. Town of Bluffton Annual Development Agreement Update - Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

Kevin Icard provided the following highlights to the annual development agreement update:

Town is at 81% residential buildout (+3) compared to last year. This percentage compares what is allowed via development agreements and what has been built.

Town is at 32% commercial build out compared to what is allowed via development agreements.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Emmett McCracken, 58 Stock Farm Road, addressed Council regarding safety concerns related to the increased use, location, and speed of electric bicycles within the community. He requested the Town consider additional safety measures and potential regulations.

Mr. Will Howard, 65 Red Cedar Street, echoed the concerns expressed by Mr. McCracken regarding electric bicycle safety. He also addressed Council regarding the Carport Ordinance in his capacity as a member of the Planning Commission, stating there was a misunderstanding of his intent in the vote that was taken. He clarified his position and expressed that he is not in favor of the interpretation.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Councilmember Frazier – Councilmember Frazier expressed concerns regarding the use of electric bicycles within the community.

Councilmember Wood – Councilmember Wood advised that the electric bicycle issue was discussed at the SOLOCO meeting to gather input among municipalities. He noted that discussions are ongoing.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Hamilton – Mayor Pro-Tempore Hamilton thanked the community for its continued support during the election and stated that he remains accessible to residents.

Councilmember Burden – Councilmember Burden expressed agreement with the safety concerns related to electric bicycles and congratulated Mayor Pro-Tempore Hamilton on the election results.

Mayor Toomer – Mayor Toomer congratulated Councilmember Burden and Mayor Pro-Tempore Hamilton on the election results. He also recognized and praised Councilmember Wood, thanking him for his support, knowledge, and service as Mayor Pro-Tempore.

IX. WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEMS

X. PUBLIC HEARING & FINAL READING

1. Consideration of an Ordinance to Amend the Town of Bluffton's Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 23 – Unified Development Ordinance, Article 5 – Design Standards,

Section 5.15.8 Accessory Buildings (New) and Section(s) 5.15.5.A-E Maximum Lot Coverage (New). Second and Final Reading – Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

A motion was made Mayor Pro -Tempore Hamilton and seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve the second and final reading of an Ordinance to Amend the Town of Bluffton's Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 23 – Unified Development Ordinance, Article 5 – Design Standards, Section 5.15.8 Accessory Buildings (New) and Section(s) 5.15.5.A-E Maximum Lot Coverage (New).

All were in favor and the motion passed.

XI. FORMAL AGENDA ITEMS

1. Authorization to Amend Contract #2025-49 for Historic District Sewer Phases 4, 5 and 6 Construction with Jordan Construction of Hilton Head Inc. by \$205,805 to Accommodate Unforeseen Field Conditions - Pat Rooney, Manager Capital Improvement Program

A motion was made by Councilmember Wood and seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve (as amended) authorizing the Town Manager to amend Contract #2025-49 for Historic District Sewer 4, 5, and 6 Construction with Jordan Construction of Hilton Head Inc. by \$205,805.00 to accommodate unforeseen field conditions.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

XII. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

A motion made by Councilmember Frazier and seconded by Councilmember Wood to approve the Consent Agenda as submitted.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

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 Memoranda of Agreement Renewals for Various Matters Including Reimbursement of Waste Management Services at Calhoun Street Promenade Residences, Waste Management Services within Palmetto Bluff, and Joint Management Responsibilities at Eagle's Field - Chris Forster, Assistant Town Manager
4. Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing Acceptance of Easement Donations from Property Owners Necessary to Complete a portion of the Public Safety Cameras Project - Kimberly Washok-Jones, Director of Projects and Watershed Resilience and Joe Babkiewicz, Chief of Police

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Councilmember Frazier and seconded by Councilmember Burden to enter 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])

2. Personnel Matters Regarding Town Council Appointments of Boards, Committees, and Commissions (Pursuant to Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a][1])
3. Legal Advice Pertaining to an Appeal of a Decision Made by the Historic Preservation Commission (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a][2])

XIV. ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session Item #1- No action taken

Executive Session Item #2

A motion was made by Councilmember Burden and seconded by Mayor Pro-Tempore Hamilton to appoint Lisa Sulka to the Beaufort County Transportation Penny Tax Advisory Committee (TAC), which is tasked with recommending specific transportation projects for a potential penny sales tax to improve traffic infrastructure throughout the County.

The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session Item #3

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Hamilton and seconded by Councilmember Wood to approve the mediation settlement agreement in the appeal filed by Jason Alexander regarding a decision of the Historic Preservation Committee (Civil Case No. 2025-CP-07-02353).

The settlement is within the parameters authorized by Town Council during Executive Session on December 9, 2025. The Town Manager is authorized to execute the release agreement, and the lawsuit will be dismissed.

The motion passed by a 4–1 vote.

Voting Yea: Toomer, Hamilton, Wood, Frazier

Voting Nay: Burden

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Toomer adjourned the meeting at 6:30PM.

Marcia Hunter, Town Clerk

Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

Larry C. Toomer, Mayor

Town of Bluffton, South Carolina