



Council

Joe DeVito  
Mayor

Jerry Ashmore  
Mayor Pro Tempore

Mary Beth Heyward  
Darryl Owens  
Kevin Phillips

Van Willis  
Town Manager

T. Alan Beach  
Chief of Police

Jeffrey S. Coppinger  
Operations

Linda Bridges  
Planning

**Minutes  
Special Meeting/Council Workshop  
Yvonne C. Butler Council Chambers, 700 Paris Avenue**

**July 1, 2020**

**Members Present:** Mayor Joe DeVito, Council Members Jerry Ashmore, Mary Beth Heyward, Darryl Owens and Kevin Phillips

**Staff Present:** Town Manager Van Willis, Town Planner Linda Bridges, and Municipal Clerk Brooke Plank-Buccola

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor DeVito called the Special Meeting/Council Workshop to order at 6:31 PM. Council Member Heyward led the pledge of allegiance, and Council Member Ashmore offered the invocation.

**II. EMERGENCY ORDINANCE:**

**A. Ordinance 2020-19. An emergency ordinance of the Town of Port Royal, South Carolina, requiring individuals to wear face coverings in certain circumstances in light of the Covid-19 pandemic; and matters related thereto; and severability**

Mr. Willis briefed Town Council on the face mask ordinance draft under consideration by Beaufort County. Mayor DeVito opened the floor to Town Council discussion. Council Member Owens wondered why convenience stores would be exempt from the face mask ordinance. Mayor DeVito questioned why not require all commercial buildings to follow this ordinance. The Town of Bluffton's ordinance applies to any building open to the public. Council Member Owens asked about identifying the age group for the children that do not need to wear a face mask. Council decided that children 8 years old and younger would not need to wear a face mask. The enforcement of this ordinance would be by codes enforcement and the police department. Business owners would need display a face mask sign at the entrance. Gyms patrons will need to wear a mask transiting within the building, but while exercising, they would not need to wear their mask. Council Member Phillips recommended reducing the fine amount from \$50 to \$25.

Council decided that \$50 was an adequate amount. This ordinance would be enacted for 30 days after initialization, with start date at 8am on Thursday, July 2, 2020. Council Member Heyward made a motion to approve ordinance 2020-19. Council Member Ashmore seconded the motion. Mayor DeVito conducted a roll call vote. Council Member Heyward Aye. Council Member Owens Aye. Council Member Ashmore Aye. Council Member Phillips Aye. Mayor DeVito Aye. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

### **III. COUNCIL BRIEFING**

The Sands Beach has finally received its permit, and the grading work has been completed. The bollard and ropes that were constructed still seem to be going well. Mr. Willis anticipates that this weekend the beach will be crowded due to the holiday, and extra patrolling by the police department will be needed.

Now that the new fiscal year has begun, the County has approved the engineering to begin for the Spanish Moss Trail crossing. The Town is working with Grey Ghost to finalize the location of the crossing. Mr. Willis has applied for a grant, but has hit a couple setbacks. Registering an account with SAMS takes a few weeks to process, and a letter is needed from the Head of the Naval Hospital installation, who is in the process transitioning in a new Commander.

The Town Hall is still operating behind closed doors. With the recent spike, it would be prudent to continue working with the building closed to the public. Court is presently being held at the Shed. Even with the AC running, the clerk of court has been reporting high temperatures in the afternoon, so changing the time to the morning is under consideration.

The Shed's closing has been delayed due to an additional environmental test needed.

Engineers will begin to design traffic tables for the Town to review. The Town could benefit from these traffic tables, in particular on 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Madrid Avenue, and Old Shell Road. Four-way stops are being considered at Old Shell Road and 16<sup>th</sup> Street as well as West Vine and Battery Creek.

Town staff has met with the contracted landscapers to discuss concerns. It was agreed that there are some issues that need to be rectified. A timeline for the improvements has been set and will be monitored by staff.

The Town is waiting until the public can attend to hold the Toole traffic study presentation.

The Town has applied for a Community Development Block Grant for a new sewer expansion project. Mr. Willis is waiting for Beaufort Jasper Water Sewer Authority's response to see if they would be willing to partner with the Town.

A meeting is tentatively scheduled for the end of July to discuss having Porter's Chapel in a reconstruction era film. The National Park Service staff and USCB are finalizing the display work and interior design of the building.

Shrimping has slowed down for the moment in the Town. During this time, the shrimp processing area is being reviewed and standards are being discussed with DHEC.

Work on the Cypress Wetlands has been delayed until mid-August. This works out well to not impede the late-nesting birds. Mr. Chris Marsh has expressed interest in collaborating with the Friends of the Cypress Wetlands group.

Municipalities are wondering if there is an allocation of money owed to them by the County, since all residents of Beaufort County are being charged a tag fee.

No update on the Naval Hospital sidewalk.

Council Member Owens asked if it is possible to get a striped crosswalk for pedestrians and signage along Robinson. Mr. Willis will discuss with SCDOT.

There are a couple of pieces of property within the Town that staff is looking to get more information on. A lot along Paris Avenue that is being used by the Rescue Squadron has been identified as Town-owned property, and adjacent to Sea Gull Villa is a 5-acre parcel owned by Beaufort County.

Council Member Phillips asked if there was any update on the shrimp boats, particularly the ones not paying rent. Mr. Willis said that the same boats are still paying rent, and the same few are not. The Town's only option is to place a lean against the non-paying boats through the magistrate court. The process to remove a boat can be expensive.

#### **IV. REVIEW AGENDA FOR THE JULY 8, 2020 COUNCIL MEETING**

Council had no questions or comments on the proposed agenda for July 8, 2020.

##### **A. Interview of Applicants**

Town Council received five volunteer applications in response to the redevelopment commission's vacant seat. Council has decided that henceforth they will interview applicants at the workshop prior to the council meeting where they will then vote. All five applicants received an invitation to join this evening's meeting via Zoom. Each applicant will be given three minutes to introduce themselves, why they feel they are the most qualified for this position and answer what boards/commissions they have served on. Only four out of the five applicants joined the meeting. The following is the order of interviews:

Roger Poulin  
Rand Ward  
Vaughn Keown  
Mare Deckard

To hear the full interview and meeting go to Facebook videos.

#### **V. IMPORTANT DATES AND INFORMATION:**

- A. Monday, July 6, 2020, 5:30PM Zoning Board of Appeals**
- B. Wednesday, July 8, 2020, 6:30PM Public Hearing**
- C. Wednesday, July 8, 2020, Immediately following the Public Hearing will be the Regular Council Meeting**

Wednesday, July 15, 2020, 12 – 5PM Red Cross Blood Drive will be held at the Beaufort County Council on Aging – 1408 Paris Avenue

**VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**A. Town Manager Evaluation**

Council Member Ashmore made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss the Town Manager Evaluation. Council Member Heyward seconded the motion. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Council entered executive session at 8:04 PM  
Council exited executive session at 8:28 PM

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Brooke Plank-Buccola  
Municipal Clerk

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