



COOL. COASTAL. FAR FROM ORDINARY.

**Council**

Joe DeVito  
*Mayor*

Darryl Owens  
*Mayor Pro Tempore*

Jerry Ashmore  
Mary Beth Heyward  
Kevin Phillips

Van Willis  
*Town Manager*

T. Alan Beach  
*Chief of Police*

Jeffrey S. Coppinger  
*Operations*

Noah Krepps  
*Planning*

**Minutes**

**Council Meeting**

**Port Royal Town Hall, Yvonne C. Butler Council Chambers, 700 Paris Avenue**

**September 13, 2023**

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

**Staff Present:** Fire Chief Tim Ogden, Police Colonel Ron Wekenmann, Police Captain Andre Massey, Director of Administrative Services Brooke Plank-Buccola, Planning Director Noah Krepps

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor DeVito called the Council Meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Council Member Heyward led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**III. INVOCATION**

Council Member Ashmore led the Invocation.

**IV. OATH OF OFFICE FOR TOWN JUDGE**

Mayor DeVito swore in James A. Grimsley III as Town Judge.

**V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. Minutes from the Council Workshop of August 2, 2023**
- B. Minutes from the Council Meeting of August 9, 2023**

Council Member Owens made a motion to approve the minutes from the Council Workshop of August 2<sup>nd</sup> and the Council Meeting of August 9<sup>th</sup>. Council Member Heyward seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

**VI. PRESENTATION**

- A. OktoPRfest – Nancy Plank**
- B. Introduction from the Police Department – Lois Mulligan & Karina Fraire-Galindo**

Nancy Plank, Chairperson of Greater Beaufort Port Royal Convention Visitors Bureau gave an update on two recent events, “Off the Eaten Path” and the Southern Redfish Cup which were so well received that they will do it again next year. OktoPRfest will be held on September 30<sup>th</sup>. There will be crafters, food vendors and entertainment.

Police Colonel Ron Wekenmann and Captain Andre Massey introduced and swore in new hire Karina Fraire-Galindo.

**VII. PROCLAMATION**

- A. National Estuaries Week**

Mayor DeVito read the proclamation into record. Council Member Phillip accepted the proclamation. He added that the County had passed a similar declaration on Monday. The Pritchard Island Research Living Shores is a new non-profit organization. In addition to having a goal to preserve the living shores and estuaries they would like to work with the USCB marine biology program to attract students and businesses.

**VIII. INTERVIEW FOR REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

Gregg Brunson was interviewed for the Redevelopment Commission.

**IX. COUNCIL BRIEFING**

Director Plank-Buccola stated there was nothing new to brief Council.

**X. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**At this time, the Mayor will recognize members of the audience who have submitted speaker forms to address the Council on agenda items. Each speaker will be limited to three minutes.**

There were no comments from the public.

**XI. FIRST READING**

- A. 2023-14. An ordinance annexing to the Town of Port Royal approximately 37.8 acres of real estate located in Beaufort County described as Beaufort County Tax District 100, Map 28, Parcels 121A and 146 (located at 61 Brookins Path, Bridges Preparatory School).**

Council Member Ashmore made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2023-14. Council Member Heyward seconded the motion. The motion was carried by four votes. Council Member Owens abstained from voting.

- B. 2023-15. An ordinance to zone approximately 37.8 acres of real estate located in Beaufort County described as Beaufort County Tax District 100, Map 28, Parcels 121A and 146 in Beaufort County South Carolina to be zoned as T3 Neighborhood.**

Council Member Ashmore made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2023-15. Council Member Heyward seconded the motion.

Mayor DeVito explained that both ordinances are for the same property. Two separate motions are required. Zoning cannot be put on a property that is not in the Town.

The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Council Member Phillips added that the property will be an athletic facility for Bridges Preparatory.

- C. 2023-16. An ordinance to authorize the Town Manager to convey excess real property to facilitate development within the Town described as Beaufort County Tax District 110, Map 11, Parcel 0095 (1310 London Avenue).**

Director Krepps furthered that the sidewalks will be two feet wider than a normal sidewalk conveyance. This is due to the wetland and the host of large trees which are predominately specimen or landmark trees. They are proposing to build small cottages, and hoping to save every tree, clean up the wetland, and create a pedestrian path from their driveway on 13<sup>th</sup> Street to connect to Richmond Avenue. Some improvements for the public, so it seemed fitting to widen the conveyance.

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Council Member Heyward asked how many cottages are proposed. Director Krepps stated that there were 17. Some of them will front the wetland, kind of mirroring the duck blind and the rest will front either the green space in the center, London Avenue, or 14<sup>th</sup> Street.

Council Member Owens made a motion to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2023-16. Council Member Ashmore seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Council Member Owens noted that he would like the record to reflect that he abstained from Ordinance 2023-15.

## **XII. SECOND READING**

- A. 2023-12. An ordinance amending the business license ordinance of the Town of Port Royal to update the class schedule as required by act 176 of 2020.**

Council Member Heyward made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 2023-12. Council Member Owens seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

- B. 2023-13. An ordinance to repeal Chapter 19 Traffic and Motor Vehicles, Article II Stopping, Standing and Parking, Section 19-31 Control of parking in public parking areas or private parking areas under the jurisdiction of the police department, and replace with Sections 19-31 – 19-41.**

Council Member Owens questioned the specifics or clarity of the ordinance. If it is approved, will it be posted with a clear explanation. Director Plank-Buccola responded that it will be in the weekly newsletter and on the website.

Council Member Heyward made a motion to approve the second reading of Ordinance 2023-13. Council Member Ashmore seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

## **XIII. RESOLUTION**

- A. 8-2023. A resolution of a commitment of funds for Paris Avenue thoroughfare improvements.**

Council Member Owens made a motion to approve Resolution 8-2023. Council Member Ashmore seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

## **XIV. COUNCIL ACTION**

- A. Appointments**

**i. Redevelopment Commission**

Council Member Phillips made a motion to table the Redevelopment Commission appointment until the next Council Meeting. Mayor DeVito corrected him stating it would have to be a motion to postpone. Council Member Phillips made a motion to postpone the Redevelopment Commission appointee until the next Council Meeting. Council Member Ashmore seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

**ii. Penny Sales Tax**

Council Member Owens made a motion to appoint Dean Moss to serve as an appointment to the Penny Sales Tax Committee. Council Member Heyward seconded the motion. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

**B. Intergovernmental Service Agreement for the purchase of transportation equipment.**

Kim Fleming, the Deputy Director of Operations, Plans, and External Affairs with MCAS Beaufort met with Staff to go through the ISA. She explained that they use 4 different entities that leverage their buying power to competitively bid on contracts. With that provision in the contract, if Council or Staff find a cheaper price than the estimate in the document Town will receive 50% of any of those savings. Additionally, they added a \$5,000 processing fee for Staff's time.

Director Plank-Buccola said she felt that the last page of the contract was clear, and the website was user friendly.

There was discussion about working together in the future. Perhaps develop an ISA that is more comprehensive and pays for Staff time to support MCAS with their procurement needs.

Council Member Ashmore made a motion to enter into the Intergovernmental Service Agreement for the purchase of transportation equipment. Council Member Owens seconded the motion.

Council Member Phillips asked if liability transfers to the Town if somebody hurts themselves on the motorcycle. Deputy Director Fleming confirmed that Town would not be liable, the motorcycles are titled to the Marine Corps and delivered directly to the Marine Corps as part of the provision.

The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

**XV. IMPORTANT DATES**

Director Plank-Buccola read the following important dates:

- A. Thursday, September 14, 2023 - Reimagine Ribaut “Open House” at TCL 6:00-8:00 PM**
- B. Tuesday, September 26, 2023 – Redevelopment Commission Meeting 4:30-5:30 PM**
- C. Saturday, September 23, 2023 – Fall Street Concert Series – JP Soars at 6 PM**
- D. Saturday, September 30, 2023 – OktoPRfest – 11:00-5:00 PM**

Council Member Ashmore inquired as to the difference between the previous “Open House” and the upcoming one. Director Krepps replied that the previous meeting was getting ideas from the public as they walk through. There was a certain level of preconception from the consultants based on their traffic studies and their expertise in design. Resulting in a master plan that they will be taking final comment. It will be a similar format where the public walks through, see different sections of the road, ask questions of the consultants and local planners, and there will be one final round of staff advisory and consultants synthesizing the data before the master plan is presented to the jurisdictions for adoption. Council Member Ashmore furthered that he had attended the last one and felt there was borderline misinformation. Director Krepps stated that there was a certain level of generalizing. That consultant is nationally renowned for the job he does. There is something to be said for three days of 10-12 hours of work and then presenting at the end of it. He suggested going to the “Open House” with an open mind. County Staff will eventually come to present the final plan as they are the project managers.

Director Krepps mentioned that there will be a Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting on Monday, October 2, 2023 at 5:30 PM.

Council Member Phillips asked how the Fall Street Concert Series dates were selected. Director Plank-Buccola replied that they were determined by the hurricane season.

Council Member Owens added that Port Royal will be represented at the Yemassee Shrimp Festival this Saturday, with a parade kicking off at 10 AM.

Council Member Phillips also added “Walk for Water” this Saturday. Not just a walk, it actually brings awareness to water scarcity across the world and how far people have to travel and work for it. The walk starts at 9 AM at Live Oak Park.

#### **XVI. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**At this time, the Mayor will recognize members of the audience who have submitted speaker forms to address the Council on non-agenda items. Each speaker will be limited to three minutes.**

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Alice Howard, Port Royal Representative for County Council invited all to the "Open House," the last County Council Meeting can be found on the County Website, and the County voted to protect the Cherry Hill Oak tree.

Tricia Fidrych requested Council to consider a debate for the upcoming election. She expressed concern regarding the Safe Harbor and Beach Company presentations.

Rose Bennett asked Council to rezone the Casablanca neighborhood and restrict trailers and mobile homes. She is concerned with the flooding on Casablanca Circle and Robinson Street.

Director Plank-Buccola mentioned that letters were sent out earlier in the week to residents of the Casablanca neighborhood regarding the upcoming survey work. The Town Engineer will create a design plan for the stormwater based on the survey.

Dudley Holmes, Tim Ball, Spencer Reyes, and David Stilwell voiced concern regarding the upcoming Pride Festival.

Samuel Smalls advocated for Casablanca/John Parker Park.

Director Plank-Buccola added that the Town Engineer has designed the speed tables and are in the process of contacting DOT for approval with Casablanca as the top priority.

#### **XVII. COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Council Member Heyward stated that Council has heard the public and stressed that Council is for the community. She addressed Mr. Smalls, assuring him that the speed bumps will be installed because it is important to Council to protect every citizen of the community. She told Ms. Fidrych that she too questions the proposed development of the Bluff neighborhood.

Mayor DeVito also agreed that Council has made vast improvements but have a long way to go. If the speed bumps are not approved through DOT, the Town may be assuming the road, and citizens need to be aware that would be an expense that the Town would have to absorb. Reminding everyone that it is a long process going through DOT, but during his term, mayors across the state fought DOT for pedestrian safety. The new administrator of DOT put something in place that allows them to petition for speed tables. He added not to be surprised to see Safe Harbor with an update at the October Council Meeting.

Council Member Ashmore concurred that the proposed development of the Bluff neighborhood does not fit the fabric of Port Royal.

#### **XVIII. ADJOURNMENT**

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Mayor DeVito made a motion to adjourn, no second required. The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lisa Graham', written in a cursive style.

Lisa Graham  
Town Clerk

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (a)(d)(e), as amended, notification of regular meetings was given at the beginning of the calendar year. A copy of the agenda was posted on the Town Hall's bulletin board and website [www.portroyal.org](http://www.portroyal.org) twenty-four hours prior to the meeting. A copy of the agenda was given to the local news media and requested public on file.

The Town of Port Royal does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission to, access to, or operations of programs, services, or activities. Qualified individuals who need accessible communication aids and services or other accommodations to participate in programs and activities are invited to make your needs and preferences known to the Civil Rights Coordinator. If at all possible, please give us at least a three to five day advance notice so we can adequately meet your needs. Civil Rights Coordinator at 843-986-2211.