



Town of Beaufort, NC

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Beaufort Waterfront Operations & Finance Committee Meeting 1:00 PM Thursday, February 13, 2025 Train Depot, 614 Broad Street

Call To Order

Vice Chair Paula Gillikin called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

Roll Call

Members Present: Vice-Chair Paula Gillikin, Ted Morris, Craig Souza, Mike Bradley, Vic Fasolino, Becky Newton Bowler, Barry Slade, Dexter Matthews, Miriam Sutton, and Weymouth Tillett

Steve Bishop joined via Zoom

Members Absent: Chair Sarah Spiegler,

Staff Present: Interim Town Manager Charlie Burgess & Public Information Officer Rachel Johnson

Agenda Approval

Agenda approved by consensus.

Minutes Approval

1. Jan. 9, 2025 Minutes

Minutes approved by consensus.

Project Updates

Paula Gillikin provided an update on a letter of support the County wrote on behalf of the Town of Beaufort in support of an appropriation for the waterfront project.

Fuel Storage Design Build RFP process Update – Vic Fasolino stated 4 companies have submitted in response to the RFP. Fasolino said the companies had some questions about how many and where they should be installed. He hoped this board could make a recommendation to take to the Board of Commissioners for their approval in order to be able to provide specs to obtain a definite bid.

Marina Management RFP Update – The RFP deadline was extended from Jan. 21, 2025 to Feb. 28, 2025. Three BWOFC members were appointed to serve on a review panel. The 3 members were selected by consensus: Barry Slade, Steve Bishop and Weymouth Tillett. The goal is to meet the week of March 24th to review and interview the applicants.

Rachel Johnson, PIO, suggested the committee consider hosting a Community Conversation about the

waterfront project.

Finance Update:

Craig Souza said the Beaufort Community Foundation is moving ahead. He said there would likely be some partnerships soon. Mary Philips has been named as the foundation's chairman.

An appropriation has been requested. Dexter Matthews stated he would provide an update at the next meeting.

Bric Grant Update –The Town has been notified that the Letter of Intent has moved forward and that the Town has been asked to submit a full proposal. The grant request was revised to ask for \$500,000. Town staff and the committee worked with WK Dixon to update the Letter of Interest and the request.

Discussion revolved around how the success showed the need for the Town to contract a professional grant service writer to assist in writing grants and identifying other grant opportunities and to revisit the list created by Moffat and Nichols. Charlie Burgess stated that the Town was working on formalizing a RFP for a grant strategy consultant.

Construction Update:

BWOF Feb. 13, 2025 Underground Fuel Tanks Presentation Attachment

Vic Fasolino said the questions are what and where to install fuel tanks. Possible locations under consideration include the West parking lot, the East parking lot, Eury Park and the front lawn at the Town's property at 611 Front Street. Fasolino provided a PowerPoint presentation showing where the existing distribution lines are located. He discussed it would take the installation of an additional 360 ft of distribution line to include running it under Front Street to reach the property at 611 Front Street. He stated that it would be possible to put a dispenser in the East basin but that its proximity to the dock master may be an issue.

Fasolino said the questions are the number of tanks, the size of the tanks and are we selling gasoline. What is our timeline to install? He said there is currently a 12,000-gallon tank. Do we want a 20,000 gallon tank? There is currently a 2-inch galvanized pipe that when replaced must be replaced to meet new DEQ standards with a double wall stainless monitored fuel line. The cost is estimated at \$100 per foot making it \$80-140,000 to replace the existing 80 feet.

Fasolino discussed a complication with the pipe and its proximity to the bulkhead. Perhaps we can let the contractor install the new tank and ask DEQ to allow us to change the line once the new bulkhead cap is in place. He said running the line across the street raised some brows with DEQ and is probably not a viable option. He also said it is prohibitively expensive to get run it to a dispenser in the East basin. It could be possible to install a separate tank for gasoline with a short run of the fancy pipe.

The committee reminded everyone that not having gasoline available went against the public feedback received at the last community input session at the fire department in 2024 and that the first Harbor & Waterways committee's report didn't reveal a need. It was suggested that perhaps the question was posed in a leading manner and maybe that is not what the public really wants but rather an option they picked from a leading question.

A suggestion was made to split the 2: bury the 20,000-gallon diesel tank now and maybe there are 2 tanks. If separated, the sale of gasoline can be addressed in the future.

Fasolino said he still thinks it is possible to make a Dec. 1, 2025 deadline of installation and that the cost would be approximately \$700,000.

There are several items to consider that will be impacted by installation to include but not limited to electrical service, permitting, site restoration and impacts on existing parking.

Fasolino said Eury Park & 611 Front Street were ruled out as a possible locations because they are too far and just doesn't work with the running of the lines as there are water, sewer and electric lines at the corner of the dock by Lookout. The East and West parking lots are both adjacent to the existing dockmasters office. If the tanks are put in the west parking lot, the office would face the tanks.

Fasolino said it lines up with Recommendation #9 made by Moffat & Nichols and the Harbor & Waterways Committee. That recommendation also includes the expansion of John Newton Park with additional green space and the building of a new harbor center. This would allow the removal of the bathrooms and showers at the end of the boardwalk at Turner Street and help clean that area up to open the view of the water.

Discussion revolved around what the impact on parking would be as the west parking lot contains 26 parking spaces. Differing options were discussed to include making Orange and Queen Streets one-way and adding 41 parking spaces.

To wrap up his presentation, Fasolino asked the committee to consider the following recommendations: (page 12 of the presentation)

1. Two separate tanks- 20,000 gal diesel, 6,000 gal gasoline

2. Two separate locations- Diesel in West Parking lot now, Gasoline in East lot or Eury Park later???
3. Pull permits for both now.
4. Diesel tank just behind sidewalk in West Lot, midway east and west
5. Remainder of West lot becomes greenspace and allow space for Harbor Center Building
6. Ask DEQ to allow tie-in to existing 2" Galvanized pipe distribution system until Boardwalk replacement, then install new distribution lines.

Barry Slade said he had a few questions regarding parking and the possibility of having pervious parking over top of the tanks. He also discussed the relationship between the tank size and the truck size and confirmed that currently there are 18 wheelers coming in to service the existing lines. He said 5,000-gallon trucks are very maneuverable and offer multiple advantages. He also said he was agreeable to separating diesel from gasoline as the complexity and cost of the gasoline is tremendous. He didn't think the volume of gasoline users seems to equal the cost.

Fasolino said what we don't have is knowledge of how much gas is currently being sold. Town Manager Charlie Burgess stated that the information was not available. Miriam Sutton voiced that they needed numbers before the need for gas was discounted.

Mike Bradley said selling gasoline would put the Town in competition with local vendors and add fire related issues. He said it is very complicated and pointed out that there are 5 other options for gasoline.

Weymouth Tillett said based on his years working at the docks, he didn't feel like the volume/demand was there and that the danger and possibility of a catastrophe is present with gasoline.

It was asked and shared that having or not having gasoline didn't have a considerable impact on insurance rates.

The question of tank size was discussed: 10,000 or 20,000?

Ted Morris said that in going back to the guiding principle of becoming a premier destination that as a premier destination we cannot run out of gas.

Questions were asked about how the increase in tank size would potentially impact revenue estimates. It was decided that it would be helpful if the committee could see some numbers.

Dexter Matthews said the recommendation can be that gasoline is still on the table but delayed at this time. It was decided by consensus to set gasoline aside for now and to focus on diesel. A motion was made to still include gasoline in the quotes from the potential installers but to recommend postponing the gasoline installation discussion until more data is available.

Paula Gilikin stated that the Board of Commissioners will want to see information on gas. Becky Bowler stated that additional diligence is needed on the subject.

Returning to the recommendation slide (p. 12), discussion about the location of the tanks resumed. Recommendation number one stands to have 2 separate tanks – one for diesel and one for gasoline. Recommendation 2 discussion about location included the west parking lot near the sidewalk area or at the end of the parking lot. Town Manager Charlie Burgess reminded the committee that the Board of Commissioners will need to consider the parking spaces. The spaces generate \$2,700 each during parking season. The loss of the parking lot would equate to about a \$60,000 loss in the parking program.

National Park Service Impacts – Ted Morris has been conducting research on the impacts of the National Park Service to Beaufort. He said the conversation has to start by looking at the broader economic picture and the National recognition as a tourism destination. Beaufort is a physical gateway to the National Seashore and it is intrinsically in our brand. It is important to remember this is about placemaking and not just visitors but also for the residents.

Morris found that there are visitor numbers to the National Seashore but not numbers specific to Beaufort. He

said it is important to have good data to make good decisions. There is need for further discussion on what data we need and how to collect it. He discussed a variety of methods to collect data and said the real question is what data do you want? We need a list of priorities because we can't collect it all. The committee agreed that they would revisit the need for a priority list at the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:09 p.m.

Minutes by Deputy Clerk Rachel Johnson

