



Town of Beaufort, NC

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Beaufort Waterfront Operations & Finance Committee Meeting 1:00 PM Thursday, March 20, 2025 Train Depot, 614 Broad Street

Call To Order

Chair Sarah Spiegler called the meeting to order at 1 p.m.

Roll Call

Members Present: Chair Sarah Spiegler, Vice-Chair Paula Gillikin, Vic Fasolino, Dexter Matthews, Miriam Sutton, Steve Bishop, Craig Souza, and Weymouth Tillet

Members Absent: Becky Newton Bowler, Barry Slade, Mike Bradley, and Ted Morris

Staff Present: Interim Town Manager Charlie Burgess and Public Information Officer/Deputy Clerk Rachel Johnson

Agenda Approval

Agenda was approved by consensus.

Minutes Approval

1. Feb. 13, 2025 Minutes were approved by consensus without any changes.

Project Updates:

Fuel Farm Update: Interim Town Manager Charlie Burgess provided an update on the progress of the Fuel Farm selection process. He said that timing of the installation will need to take into account that there will need to be a crane on Front Street in order to access the West Parking Lot. It is recommended for safety to close the entire block of Front Street. There is a possibility one lane could remain open.

Burgess asked for volunteers from the committee to help develop a line item budget for the docks for the 2025-26 budget to be included as a placeholder, as the Town has never included this in the budget before. It would be for the 6 months from January to June 2026. Burgess said in the planning process for the budget, the Town wants to make sure they don't miss anything major. This will include insurance, dockage fees, fuel etc. Weymouth Tillet volunteered. Later in the meeting, Dexter Matthews also volunteered.

Beaufort Waterfront Plan Implementation Updates

- Fuel farm presentation at BOC meeting on March 10 by Vic Fasolino (Sarah)

Recommendations to commissioners: Install diesel 24,000 gallon tank in west parking lot

- Include alternative bid of pricing out gas (east lot) for future planning, 6,000 gallons
- Include alt bid for restoring to

A. If keep parking for now, use heavy-duty modular pervious pavers instead of

repaving

B. Restoration to green space/park

- All estimates are \$700-750K
- BOC voted to install fuel farm in the west parking lot.
- BOC did not specify whether the parking lot will remain parking or be used as green space.
- DukeEngage internship this summer: intended to include research on the economic impact of “Third Spaces” and possible demonstration days turning parking spots into pop-up parks

Dexter Matthews asked Burgess for additional information on the budget. Burgess explained it is being structured like a typical department budget. He further explained that it would likely not have a lot of numbers but more a projection of the likely sources of expenditures the Town will need to make.

Craig Souza asked if the marina operator would be required to report financial numbers to the Town and what the desired length of the contract is. Burgess said that will all be a part of the new contract and that right now the proposed contract terms are 3-5 years. He continued by saying that he thinks the committee will find that is too short and that the potential operators who are interviewed will ask about the contract length right away. Souza stated he was hopeful they would consider shorter terms for the initial lease. Sarah Spiegler said that the committee has already recommended 3-5 years to the BOC. Originally, the committee was looking at a 2-year contract but after their initial research, that was revised to 3-5 years.

Vic Fasolino asked who will manage the management company. Spiegler reminded him that the committee recommended a smaller oversight committee be formed to assist in managing the management company. Souza said he feels like it should be a Town policy that anyone who leases from the Town should have a requirement to report revenues. Burgess said the committee could create a policy statement to recommend to the BOC to start on January 1, 2026. The policy should be broad enough to cover all lease situations. Souza volunteered to spearhead drafting a policy. Spiegler stated that as a commissioner, it has been challenging since there isn't a policy and everything is currently being handled one at a time. She said there are some who have concerns about how the reported data would be used and if it would be open to public records.

Marina Management RFPs Update:

The Marina Management review group is scheduled to meet April 2, 2025 to do an initial review of the submitted RFPs. The review group consists of Weymouth Tillet, Barry Slade, Steve Bishop, Sarah Spiegler, Paula Gillikin, Charlie Burgess, Christi Wood and Elizabeth Lewis.

Finance Update:

\$12 Million Appropriation Request – Dexter Matthews said that he had not yet seen the bill that Senator Sanderson planned to introduce but that he anticipated it would be ready this week.

Beaufort Community Foundation: Craig Souza said the board is meeting regularly and is talking with the community college about utilizing students to be visible this summer and to interview ferry passengers and visitors to Town to see who is coming to Beaufort and how long they are staying. Souza said the organization is planning Porch Parties for people to meet the Board and to learn more about the mission of the organization. There is an open house being planned for May 4 at Backstreet. They are trying to do things to benefit the community that are kid and family friendly.

Grant Update: The Town is pursuing the Hazard Mitigation Grant opportunity as suggested by the BRIC grant administrators. The grant is 100% with no match.

Community Conversation: 4:30-6:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 15, 2025

Spiegler said we want to make sure we have a consistent message. Rachel Johnson provided a handout compiled by Miriam Sutton, Johnson and Spiegler to make sure all of the topics have been captured. Johnson outlined the plan to host the Community Conversation on the Waterfront Project at John Newton Park, while the weather is a concern with an outdoor venue, the Town does not have a facility large enough to accommodate the crowd anticipated that offers proper acoustics and needed amenities. The park is in the exact space that will be discussed, there are restrooms adjacent to the park. Johnson explained there will not be a

formal presentation but that this will be a time for the public to come and ask questions directly to committee members and staff. A rain date has been scheduled and announced as Wednesday, April 16, 2025.

Johnson reviewed the outline stating that each section will be a "station/table." These include the following 6 topics as identified by the committee and staff:

1. Financing Options/Timelines - Dexter Matthews & possible Becky Bowler
 - a. Appropriations
 - b. Grants: BRIC, Hazard Mitigation, other opportunities
 - c. Fundraising
2. Beaufort Community Foundation – Craig Souza - separate from the Town but in close proximity
3. Marina Management – Steve Bishop and Barry Slade
 - a. Management RFQ's
 - b. Research Areas
 - i. National Park Service – Gateway to the Cape Lookout National Seashore
4. Current Project Status/Construction Options/Timeline – Vic Fasolino and Weymouth Tillet
 - a. Fuel Farm
 - b. Marina Repair/Rebuild
 - c. Option for gasoline/diesel
 - d. Why this route?
 - e. How did we get here?
 - f. Refinement of the Master Plan
5. Future/Master Plan – Miriam Sutton
 - a. Timeline
 - b. Long-term plans
 - c. Mooring Field
 - d. Harbor Center
 - e. Parks/Green Space
 - f. Turner Street entryway/vista
 - g. Master Plan
 - h. 611 Front Street
6. Current Project Status
 - a. Fuel Farm
 - b. Lease with current operator ends Dec. 31, 2025

Materials for Community Conversation:

List of the BWOFC's Master Plan recommendations

Timeline – Miriam – Talk about how to print

Miriam's Newsletter Item

Map with nearby gas opportunities

Nametags

Outlines of Topics

Question Sheets for each table (Same questions)

Pens

Comment Cards

Water

Snacks

Questions:

Diesel Only or Diesel & Gasoline?

Greenspace or no greenspace in the West lot?

What did you like that you saw today?

What do you think needs more research?
How comfortable 1-10 are you with the Master Plan?

Next Steps/Wrap Up:

Johnson will work with Miriam Sutton to prepare materials to share with the committee for review at the April 3, 2025 meeting.

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 2:26 p.m.

Minutes by Deputy Clerk Rachel Johnson

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