



Town of Beaufort, NC

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Beaufort Waterfront Operations & Finance Committee Meeting

1:00 PM Friday, November 08, 2024

Train Depot, 614 Broad Street

DRAFT

Call to Order

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

Roll Call

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

Members Joining Virtually: Chair Sarah Spiegler joined via Zoom

Members Absent: Miriam Sutton

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

Commissioner Bucky Oliver was in attendance in the audience. Oliver did not participate in the meeting.

Agenda Approval

Agenda was approved as presented by consensus.

Minutes Approval

1. Minutes Approval - Beaufort Waterfront Finance & Operations Committee Minutes 10.30.2024
Approved by consensus.

Items for Discussion and Consideration

1. Project Updates

Members of the committee are continuing to gather research and work on an implementation plan.

2. Beaufort Waterfront Plan Implementation

Marina Management: Work is continuing on the development of a marina management timeline. Members are gathering examples of RFPs and Marina Management contracts. The goal is to issue an RFP by the end of the year with 45 days for distribution. The goal is to have someone on board by the fall so they can begin the transition in September or October and be ready to operate by January 1.

Interim Town Manager Charlie Burgess indicated the procurement timeline is good and easily attainable. The committee was instructed to work through the Mayor and Town staff when reaching out to the current operator. Burgess was asked to start the conversation with the dock master that the committee would like to reach out to them.

Fuel Farm RFQ: Vic Fasolino urged that it is important to get started now as the goal is to have the town issue a contract by January with installation done by Memorial Day so that everything is ready on Jan. 1, 2025. He recapped that in 2023 the Town issued an RFQ for design and installation and received one applicant. He suggested the Town restructure the 2023 RFQ and re-issue it so it can be issued in a week or two. He also recommended that a selection committee be formed in order to move towards a contract.

The topic of offering diesel only or a combination of diesel and gas was discussed. Committee members discussed that at the Town's charrette, the public indicated that they wanted gas to be available at the town docks. It was discussed that by selling gas there would be an increased liability and that additional research into insurance premiums will need to be done and it would require hiring an additional full-time employee. Discussion ensued about the existing locations to obtain gas, the lack of demand for gas at the docks and the gas consumption habits of day boaters. Becky Bowler said she felt there was a lack of information provided by the town at the charrette concerning the sale of gas which may have swayed the outcome on the question as to whether or not to provide gas for day boaters.

Gillikin mentioned that existing commercial entities like the ferries fuel up at Finz and while there is gas at the Boathouse, it takes 25-35 minutes in a no wake zone to get there. Gillikin also mentioned that having gas may provide a much needed service during natural disasters and emergency responses. Currently there is only one gas station in Town and the Town has to rely on other sources for fuel during an emergency. She said there may be a possibility that if the Town Docks offer gas that it may become a part of the Coast Guard's contingency plan as an asset provider.

It was discussed that there is still additional information that should be gathered regarding fuel and deciding between diesel or diesel and gas. A consensus was reached to ask the Board of Commissioners for permission to move forward with an RFQ for the Fuel Storage Design Build. The wording would be for fuel not just for diesel.

Gillikin advised the committee that if the committee reaches a recommendation that goes against the public recommendations that the committee would need to go back out to the public.

It was decided that committee members would gather additional information and come back at the next meeting ready to have a discussion on making a recommendation for just diesel or a combination of diesel and gas.

3. Research Topics Updates

Finance: Craig Souza provided an update on the creation of a non-profit. He stated they are in the final stages with the paperwork and finalizing a board. He said the following week, the paperwork would be submitted to the State.

Name: Weymouth Tillett brought forth a discussion on the name of the docks. He said it has been called the "Beaufort Docks" and "Beaufort Town Docks" interchangeably for years and asked if we should keep the same name or officially use "Beaufort Town Docks." Discussion revolved around how giving it an official name would help with branding and that technically it is not a renaming of the docks but rather selecting one name to brand and move forward with. A consensus was reached to recommend to the BOC to move forward with using the name "Beaufort Town Docks."

Grants: Becky Bowler discussed the BRIC grant stating the Town was moving forward with submitting an LOI and that the deadline had been changed to Dec. 20. A draft of the LOI written by the Town's contract grant writer is being reviewed by several committee members. Bowler said she would like to see a grant services firm be hired and quarterback the LOI. She said BRIC will likely go away after 2025 and that she doesn't want

the Town to miss out as there are millions available. Committee members have multiple questions about the BRIC grant process.

Bowler again suggested the Town hire a grant services firm. It was suggested that this professional service should be separate from the general RFP for professional services (engineering, grants etc).

Burgess said it needed to be decided what professional disciplines to pursue. Currently the RFP list includes an RFP for a Fuel Storage Design Build, Professional Services and Operations.

Next Steps/Wrap Up

Discussion revolved around public outreach and the question was raised as to whether or not the committee is reaching the public. It was suggested that the Town could issue a survey and that the committee could submit information for the monthly newsletter. It was suggested the committee prepare a write up for the January newsletter.

Craig Souza provided an update on his outreach to Carteret Community College. He said he met with Traci Mancini and Perry Harker and that they were excited to work together. He said there would be a tour with students and faculty the next week. It was suggested that the committee should also reach out to the Duke Marine Lab, the Big Rock Foundation, the Beaufort Business Association and that the Friends of the Museum had expressed an interest. It was expressed that the committee's need is for economic impact data related to the waterfront.

Committee members also discussed the need to ensure ADA compliancy is met as well as involving the Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee. Staff Rachel Johnson said the Town's ADA Plan and the Beaufort Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan are available on the town website.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

Chair

Deputy Town Clerk

Minutes prepared by Deputy Clerk Rachel Johnson.