



**Town of Beaufort, NC**

701 Front St. - P.O. Box 390 - Beaufort, N.C. 28516  
252-728-2141 - 252-728-3982 fax - [www.beaufortnc.org](http://www.beaufortnc.org)

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

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**Call To Order**

**Roll Call**

**Agenda Approval**

**Minutes Approval**

1. March 6 & 20, 2025 Minutes

**Project Updates**

1. Community Conversations: Waterfront Project 4:30-6:30 p.m. April 15, 2025

**Beaufort Waterfront Plan Implementation**

**Research Topics**

**Next Steps/Wrap Up**

**Adjourn**



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**Beaufort Waterfront Operations & Finance Committee Meeting**  
**1:00 PM Thursday, March 6, 2025**  
**Train Depot, 614 Broad Street**

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**Call To Order**

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

**Roll Call**

**Members Present:** Chair Sarah Spiegler, Ted Morris, Mike Bradley, Vic Fasolino, Barry Slade, Dexter Matthews, Miriam Sutton, Steve Bishop and Weymouth Tillett

Vice-Chair Paula Gillikin and Craig Souza joined via Zoom

Becky Newton Bowler joined the meeting as it was in progress.

**Staff Present:** Interim Town Manager Charlie Burgess, Public Information Officer Rachel Johnson, Town Engineer Sam Bell and Finance Director Christi Wood.

**Mayor & BOC Present:** Mayor Sharon Harker

**Agenda Approval**

Agenda approved by consensus.

**Minutes Approval**

1. No minutes were submitted for approval. Staff member Rachel Johnson stated both the Feb. 13 and the March 6 meeting minutes would be available by the March 20, 2025 meeting.

**Project Updates**

**Fuel Farm Update:** Interim Town Manager Charlie Burgess said they are currently working on the design aspect and that there have been a few hiccups with the size of the distribution line. The current line is 2-inches and goes on the bulkhead. A 3-inch one must go under the boardwalk. The 2-inch line is a low-flow line. He said the Town is doing its due diligence to see if they can reuse the existing 2-inch line or if it must be replaced and upgraded at this time to include a double wall.

**Marina Management RFPs Update:** Burgess said the RFPs were due Feb. 28 and that he had received 4 submissions from Explore US, F3 Marina, Kristen & Lee Sykes, Latitude Marinas.

Sarah Spiegler asked the committee to select 3 members for the mayor to appoint to serve on the review team along with Town staff members Finance Director Christi Wood, Assistant Town Manager Elizabeth Lewis and commissioners Sarah Spiegler and Paula Gillikin. Barry Slade, Steve Bishop and Weymouth Tillett were selected by consensus.

This is a big and really important choice said M 2 Harker.

Mike Bradley asked permission to conduct research 2 for the review team. Vic Fasolino said it might be

useful to do research on the companies before the review meeting. Burgess said that is fine and that the review team would likely meet the first week of April. The plan is for the review team to interview all 4 companies. 1.

**Community Conversation** – Discussion about when to host a public meeting to share the work that has been done so far and to garner additional input. The committee said they'd like to have the community meeting in April and suggested April 15. Rachel Johnson and Miriam Sutton are working together before the next meeting to finalize a date, location, and format. An update will be provided at the March 20 meeting.

## Research Topics

**Finance Update:** \$12 Million Appropriation Request – Dexter Matthews said that he has met in Raleigh and that Sanderson is drafting a local bill to introduce to the Senate about the appropriation request. Cairns will introduce it in some form in the House. Matthews said to remember that it is not guaranteed and that the Western part of the state is a big priority as they continue to recover from Hurricane Helene. Matthews recommends the Town continue going after grants.

**BRIC Grant Update:** Town Engineer Sam Bell updated that the Town as invited to submit a full application but that in follow-up talks with WK Dickson that there appears to be an opportunity that is more fitting. The BRIC application is due in 2 weeks and is for \$500,000 for design work. The other grant is the Hazard Mitigation Program through the state.

After much discussion, Sam was instructed by the committee to proceed in applying for both while continuing to work with WK Dickson.

Charlie Burgess said the Town is positioning itself to procure professional grant services for grants.

**Construction Update:** Sarah Spiegler said that Vic Fasolino will give an update to the Board of Commissioners at their upcoming meeting on Monday regarding the Fuel Tanks.

**Operations Update:** Ted Morris said he had given a summary of economic and community impacts of the NPS at the last meeting. He said we do not have enough data sources to make decisions. There are creative ways to capture the data but we need to make decisions on what we seek to inform by the data collected in order to get a data plan. Data collection is needed in order to help make the best and most informed decisions for all commercial operators.

There was some discussion about the current request to the BOC to execute a 10-year lease with the concessionaire for the NPS. Interim Town Manager Charlie Burgess said that the contract was being negotiated by the Town's legal team and wording is being finessed to include Beaufort waterfront in order to provide for opportunities downtown or at Gallant's Channel. There was concern expressed about the price and the length of the lease. It was also brought up that there is more to consider than just the lease price as there is value to being the gateway to the Cape Lookout National Seashore. It was asked if the contract could include the requirement that the concessionaire report data to the Town.

Mike Bradley said there is an assumption that people going on the ferries and are not using the Town merchants. It was discussed that let's get the data to tell us what is going on. Burgess explained that the National Park Service requires a 10-year lease. There was more concern expressed about the 10 year length of the contract.

Weymouth Tillet said that according to the numbers provided, 54,000 people rode the vessels last year. That is bringing people to your sidewalk, they paid parking meters from which the money goes into the downtown. There is a lot of ferry business that occurs from foot traffic which tells me that there are a lot of people already in Town spending money.

Ted Morris said these are systems questions not either/or questions: Is this a positive? Where do the benefits accrue? As a community, this number of visitors is a systems question. Right now, we have no idea what the impact is.

Mayor Harker said the Board of Commissioners has heard the topic of the lease, they had concerns and wanted to see if the price was competitive. There will be additional information provided to the BOC during their next meeting on Monday.

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 3:03 p.m.





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**1:00 PM Thursday, March 20, 2025**  
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**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 Tillett

**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

**Mayor & BOC Present:** Mayor Sharon Harker

**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 Tillett 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 5 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

1.

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 operator would be required to report financial numbers to the Town and what the proposed length of the contract is. Burgess said that will all be a part of the contract and that right now the proposed contract is 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 3-6 years.

Vic Fasolino asked who is managing 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 concerns about how the 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, 6 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?

1.

**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

**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)

**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?

# ***Beaufort Community Conversations***

## **Waterfront Project**

**4:30-6:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 15, 2025**  
**John Newton Park on the Beaufort Waterfront**



**Join the Beaufort Waterfront Operations & Finance Committee for a conversation about the Beaufort Waterfront Project.**

**Learn about the project elements, ask questions and share what is most important to you. Speak directly to committee members & staff.**



**Can't make it? Email your questions and comments to [r.johnson@beaufortnc.org](mailto:r.johnson@beaufortnc.org)**

**(Rain Date: 4:30-6:30 p.m. April 16, 2025)**