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ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
BEAUFORT COUNTY GOVERNMENT ROBERT SMALLS COMPLEX
100 RIBAUT ROAD

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TELEPHONE: (843) 255-2180

www.beaufortcountysc.gov

ASHLEY M. JACOBS
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

SARAH W. BROCK
CLERK TO COUNCIL

AGENDA
COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPARENCY COMMITTEE
Monday, November 18, 2019
4:00 p.m.
Council Chambers, Administration Building
Beaufort County Government Robert Smalls Complex
100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort

Committee Members:
Michael Covert, Chairman
Brian Flewelling
Chris Hervochon
Gerald Dawson
Mark Lawson
York Glover
Paul Sommerville

Staff Support:
Sarah Brock, Clerk to Council
Bill Lisbon, Records Management Division

- 1. CALL TO ORDER – 4:00 p.m.**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. INTRODUCTIONS**

[Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act]

- 4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A. October 21, 2019 (backup)**
- 6. CITIZEN COMMENTS (Comments regarding agenda items only)**
- 7. PRESENTATIONS**
 - A. Role of Executive Session - Thomas J. Keaveny, II, County Attorney**
 - B. Things the County is Currently Doing Pertaining to Communications and Transparency – Monica Spells, Civic Engagement and Outreach (backup)**



8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Draft outline for report and recommendations of the Communications and Transparency Task Force – *Chris Inglese, Deputy County Administrator* ([backup](#))**

9. ADJOURNMENT

**MINUTES
COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPARENCY COMMITTEE**

October 21, 2019

County Council Chambers, Administration Building
100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort SC

The electronic and print media duly notified in
accordance with the State Freedom of Information Act.

ATTENDANCE:

Present: Committee Chairman Michael Covert, and members, Gerald Dawson, York Glover, Chris Hervochon, Sarah Brock, and Bill Lisbon

Absent: Paul Sommerville, Brian Flewelling, Stu Rodman and Mark Lawson

Ex-officio: Lawrence McElynn, Joseph Passiment, and Alice Howard,

Staff: Christopher Inglese, Deputy County Administrator; Tom Keaveny, County Attorney; Ray McBride, Library Director; Scott Grooms, Broadcasting; Dan Morgan, GIS & Mapping; Patrick Hill, IT Director; and Ashley Jacobs, County Administrator.

Media: Joe Croley, Lowcountry Inside Track

CALL TO ORDER

The time the meeting began 1:01 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: It was moved by Councilman McElynn seconded by Councilman Glover to approve the agenda with moving Citizen Comment. The vote: YAYS - Councilman Covert, Councilman Hervochon, Councilman Glover, Councilman Dawson, Bill Lisbon and Sarah Brock.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: It was moved by Councilman McElynn seconded by Councilman Hervochon to approve the minutes of September 16, 2019 with the spelling correction to Butare. The vote: YAYS-, Councilman Covert, Councilman Hervochon, Councilman Glover, and Councilman Dawson, Bill Lisbon. ABSTENTION - Councilman Glover. The motion passed 5:0

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no Citizen Comments

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Item: FOIA Brief - Bill Lisbon, Records Management Specialist

Discussion: Bill Lisbon stated the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a state law that was last updated May 19, 2017 with the purpose of this law is transparency. This would include public access to meeting, government documents in a timely manner with minimal cost. Beaufort County supports this by advertisement of meeting online, public meetings are broadcast through county channel, post agenda and minutes online and provide access to public records. Beaufort County also has a formal FOIA process to get the information request fulfilled. The process was established in September 2016 and is administered by the Records Management Department, with assistance from legal and other departments as needed. FOIA request may be submitted in any format; using the submission format on the county website is recommended.

Councilman Covert stated who receives the FOIA request.

Bill Lisbon stated there are 2 FOIA specialist that receive the request for information. When it is received the specialist will send it out to other departments if needed. The Sheriff's department handles their own request.

Councilman Covert asked if there a way to make any FOIA issues easier for the citizens and Records management and requested Dan Morgan to speak regarding GIS and Mapping.

Dan Morgan mentioned the County Currently has a Mosquito Contrail App, Beaufort County Connect, and he is currently working with Airports and Stormwater to create apps for their employees. There is also software on the website that works with Beaufort County Connect to get information to the citizens.

Status: For Informational Purposes only.

Item: Transparency Items being brought to the Committee - Michael Covert, Committee Chairman

Discussion: Councilman Covert asked the committee, council, citizens, and the public if there was anything that needed to be brought to council.

Councilman Glover stated the previous meeting there was a lot of talk about internet access in rural part of the county and wanted to know what the follow was up. There has been communication done with Ashley Jacobs the County Administrator so that this can be looked into further. Suggest that this committee be the one that receives the reports and Intel on what is being done. Would like to get a recommendation from her to work with the committee to get internet in rural areas in the county.

Councilman Covert stated would like Chris Inglese to assimilate bullet points for committee consideration based on communications and transparency.

Councilman McElynn stated council is doing positive things that the community doesn't know about and would like this available to the public. Would like to see a social media platform that shows the progressiveness that county council and committees are working on.

Sarah Brock stated that she has sent information to communications about the good works that council is doing and has requested they put it on social media, since she does not have access to the social media platform.

Councilman Covert stated that he agrees that there should be information on a central platform.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Bob Green, on behalf of the Sea Island Coalition, believes that there is sensitive information with Beaufort County and the Open land trust of Beaufort County. There should be transparency on the money used to purchase land for Beaufort County.

Status: For Informational Purposes only.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:00

Ratified by Committee:



Scope and Purpose of **Executive Session**

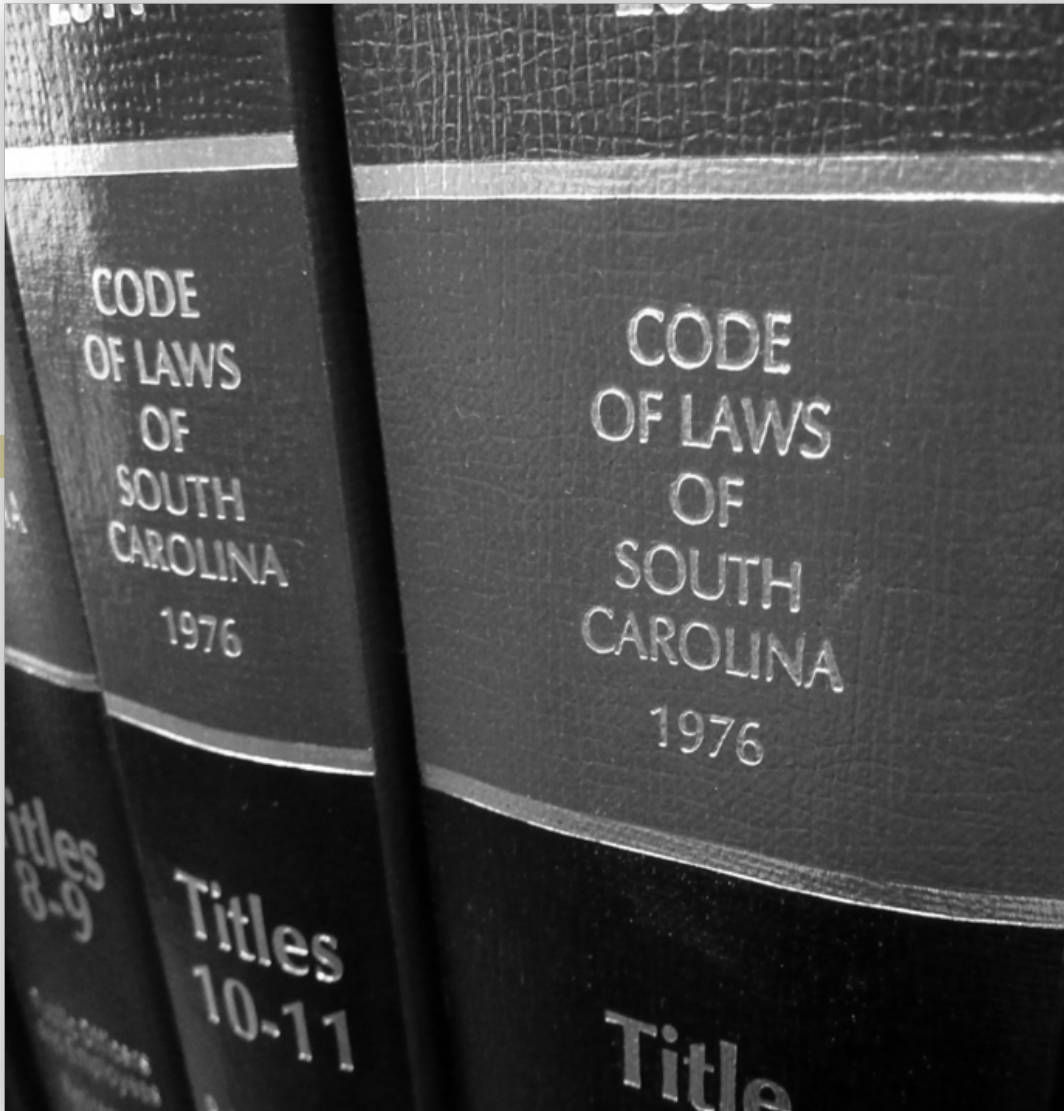
November 2019



S.C Attorney General Opinion

October 29, 2019

“The General Assembly finds that it is vital in a democratic society that public business be performed in an open and public manner so that citizens shall be advised of the performance of public officials and of the decisions that are reached in public activity and in the formulation of public policy. Toward this end, provisions of this chapter must be construed so as to make it possible for citizens, or their representatives, to learn and report fully the activities of their public officials at a minimum cost or delay to the person seeking access to public documents or meetings.”



S.C. Code Ann. §30-4-60

Every meeting of all public bodies shall be open to the public unless closed pursuant to Section 30-4-70

What reasons allow for Executive Session?

S.C. Code Ann. §30-4-70

A public body may hold a meeting closed to the public for one or more of the following reasons:

1

Employment

Discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline or release of an employee regulated by a public body

2

Contracts/Legal Advice

Contractual negotiations, sale/purchase of property; receipt of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney – client privilege including the position of agency in adversarial situations including the assertion of claims against the agency.

3

Security

Discussion regarding the development of security personnel or devices

4

Criminal Allegations

Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct

5

Proposed Expansion

Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body

How does Council properly enter into Executive Session?

S.C. Code Ann. §30-4-70(b)

A motion to enter into Executive Session must be made.

- *Before going into Executive Session the public agency shall vote in public on the question*
 - ***When the vote is favorable, the presiding officer shall announce the specific purpose of the Executive Session***

What is a specific purpose?

S.C. Code Ann. §30-4-70(b)

Specific Purpose means a description of the matter to be discussed

A specific purpose is identified as items (1) through (5) under §30-4-70(a)

- Employment
- Contract/Legal Advice
- Security
- Criminal Allegations
- Proposed Expansion

Exceptions to disclosure of a Specific Purpose

- If the Executive Session is held for purposes of Employment or a Proposed Expansion, then disclosure is not required for:
 - 1. The identity of the individual being discussed**
 - 2. The identity of the entity being discussed**

What action may be taken?

S.C. Code Ann. §30-4-70(b)

No action may be taken in executive session except to (1) adjourn or (2) return to public session (if appropriate).





No Commitment

S.C. Code Ann. §30-4-70(b)

The members of a public body may not commit the public body to a course of action by a polling of members in executive session

Conduct in Executive Session

Purpose	Topic	Action	Confidential
<i>Conversations <u>must</u> be limited to the purpose delineated on the agenda or as described by the council</i>	<i>Discussions must not exceed the scope of the topic made in the motion</i>	<i>Members may not commit the body to any course of action, action <u>must</u> be taken in public session</i>	<i>Conversations are privileged and are not to be repeated, circulated or shared with parties not privy to the executive session</i>

NO

Council may reach an item on the agenda that requires an unforeseen executive session.

However, the S.C. Attorney General continues to advise public bodies to include executive sessions on their agendas to provide the public with notice of the contents of the meeting.

Remember Executive Session still....

- 1) Requires a motion
- 2) Requires a 2/3 votes
- 3) Requires a Statement of Purpose for the Executive Session

Q&A

Must an Executive Session related to an agenda item be included on the agenda?

Q&A

Can Council vote to amend the agenda to include an Executive Session?

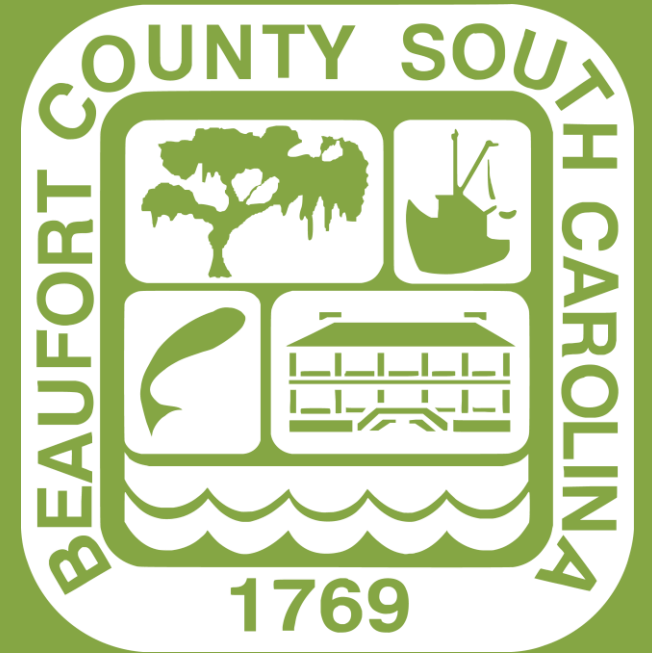
YES

After a meeting begins, an item may be added to the agenda by a 2/3 vote of the members present and voting.

S.C. Code §30-4-80(A)

Public Information and Engagement Highlights

Beaufort County Council
Communications and Transparency Committee
November 18, 2019



Key Division Departments

- **Broadcast Services**
 - Online Video and Radio; Live Television Broadcasts
- **Communications and Accountability**
 - Citizen Reception, News Releases, Social Media, and Website
- **IT Division's Applications Team**
 - Mobile Application Development
- **Records Management**
 - Electronic FOIA Processing

C&A Team

- Working with Division ACA - Communications Manager, Information Services Coordinators (2), and Web Design & Content Manager
- About 150 News Releases Annually (Issued and Posted) via GovDelivery; includes public meeting notices
- 96,000 Citizen Calls Answered Annually
- Management of main website and HHI Airport website; developing website for Beaufort/Lady's Island Airport
- Assist with TCC programming, emergency preparedness, disaster recovery, and special requests.

Popular Services

Here are a few of our most popular online services. For a more complete list of our online services, [click here](#).



Pay Taxes

Property Taxes are collected by the office of the Beaufort County Treasurer.



Property Information

Browse information about real estate and personal property in Beaufort County.



Agendas, Minutes & Video

View public meeting information for Beaufort County Council, committees, boards and commissions.



Transparency

Access to public information and expenditures is one of our top priorities.



County Jobs

Beaufort County is always seeking qualified professionals to join our team.

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Stay current on news and announcements from Beaufort County Government. To receive news and announcements through email or text message, subscribe:

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BEAUFORT COUNTY

Beaufort County government exists to serve the people of Beaufort County in a cost-effective manner, so all our citizens may enjoy and appreciate a protected quality of life, natural and developed resources in a coastal environment, a diverse heritage, and economic well-being.

TRANSPARENCY

[Freedom of Information](#)

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PUBLIC MEETINGS


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CONTACT

 100 Ribaut Rd Beaufort, SC 29902

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Sign up for News and Public Meeting Announcements

 SIGN UP!

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Sign up for News and Public Meeting Announcements

 SIGN UP!

Public Meetings

 The County Channel

Watch Public Meetings Online

Watch all Beaufort County Council and Committee meetings, as well as many board and commission meetings live and in replay, courtesy of The County Channel.

 WATCH NOW










Choose a Meeting Type 



today


Nov 10 – 16, 2019

month **list**

Monday		November 11, 2019
12:00am	 County Offices Closed	
Tuesday		November 12, 2019
2:30pm - 4:00pm	 Impact Fee Study Workshop (T)	
Wednesday		November 13, 2019
9:00am	 Impact Fee Study / Update with Municipalities	
9:30am	 Staff Review Team (Canceled)	
2:00pm	 Stormwater Management Utility Board (T)	
4:00pm	 Library Board (T)	
Thursday		November 14, 2019
1:30pm	 Airports Board (T)	
3:00pm	 Keep Beaufort County Beautiful Board	
3:00pm	 Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Board	

 Subscribe to Calendar

(T) - Televised on The County Channel

 Expanded View



@beaufortcountysc

Facebook, Instagram, Linked In and Twitter

Facebook Events

Event Insights

12 Events

Events

Calendar

Birthdays

Discover

Hosting

+ Create Event

Manage Page Events

Beaufort County Gover...

District 7 Meet & Greet
Hosted by Council Member Mike Covert & Board of Ed Member Rachel Wisniewski


Special guests:
Beaufort County Administrator Ashley Jacobs
Beaufort County School Superintendent Dr. Frank Rodriguez

Tuesday, September 10, 2019 • 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
Buckwalter Recreation Facility
905 Buckwalter Parkway, Bluffton

For more information contact Council Member Covert at mcovert@bcgov.net or 843-255-2191.

368 People Reached
+0 last 7 days

Track ticket sales on your next event by adding a ticket link

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Facebook © 2019

SEP 10

County Council Member Mike Covert To Host Joint Meet and Greet

Public · Hosted by Beaufort County Government SC

★ Interested ✓ Going

Tuesday, September 10, 2019 at 6:30 PM – 8 PM
about 2 months ago

Buckwalter Recreation Center
905 Buckwalter Parkway, Bluffton, South Carolina 29910

Show Map

Veterans Day Parade & Ceremony

Saturday, November 9, 2019

- Parade begins at 10:00 a.m. at Beaufort National Cemetery
- Ceremony begins at 11:30 a.m. at Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park


Special Guests:
The Parris Island Marine Band & the Robert Smalls International Academy Chorus

Food and beverages will be available to purchase. Please support our students' culinary programs.

- The Battery Creek High School Culinary Program
- The Beaufort-Jasper Academy for Career Excellence (BJ-ACE) Culinary Program

Please do not bring coolers or pets to the event.
In case of inclement weather the event will be canceled. There is no rain date.

Sponsored by Beaufort County Veterans Affairs Department



Beaufort County Document Shredding Event

Saturday, November 2, 2019 • 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. (or until trucks are filled)
Beaufort County Public Works South Site, 9 Benton Field Road, Bluffton





Residential quantities only
No electronics will be collected • Limit four boxes or four bags of material
For more information call 843-255-2736 or visit www.beaufortcountysc.gov/recycle

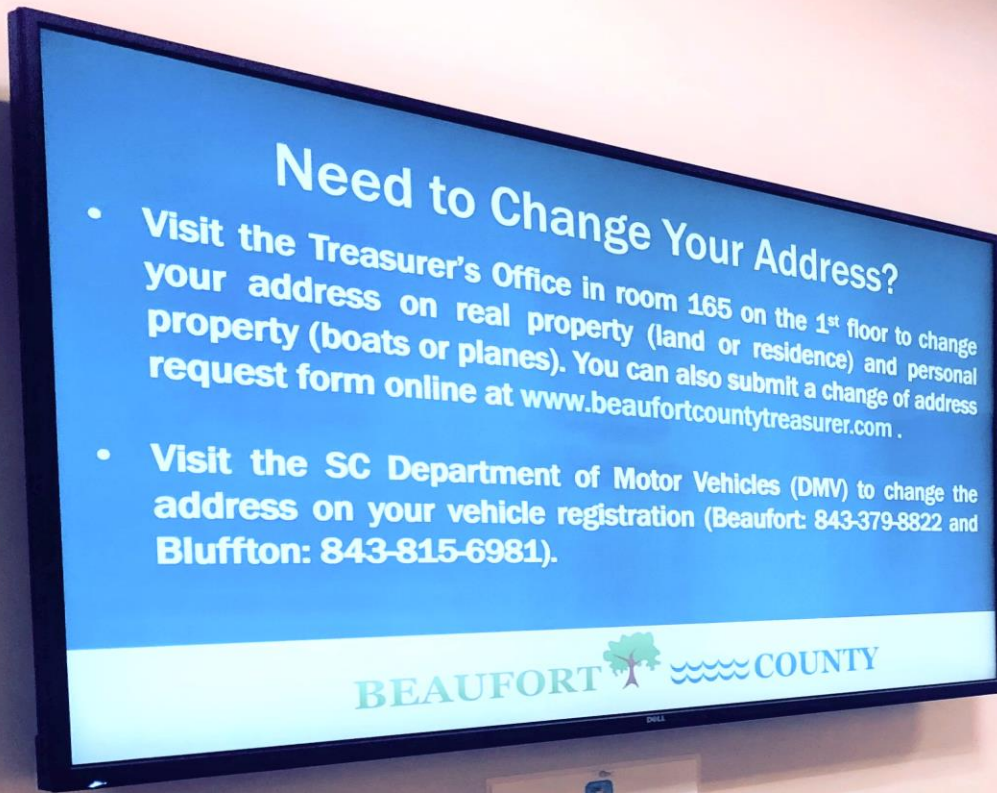
Beaufort County DSN and ABLE Fall Bazaar

Saturday, November 2 • 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

DSN Complex
100 Clear Water Way, Beaufort

There will be food vendors, music, arts and crafts for sale, and more. Proceeds will be used to help support Camp Treasure Chest. For more information, call the DSN Department at 843-255-6300.





- Visit the Treasurer's Office in room 165 on the 1st floor to change your address on real property (land or residence) and personal property (boats or planes). You can also submit a change of address request form online at www.beaufortcountytreasurer.com.
- Visit the SC Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to change the address on your vehicle registration (Beaufort: 843-379-8822 and Bluffton: 843-815-6981).

BEAUFORT  COUNTY



Information Monitors

County Administration Building | Bluffton Government Center

American Airlines to Launch Three New Routes to/from Hilton Head Island Airport Spring 2020

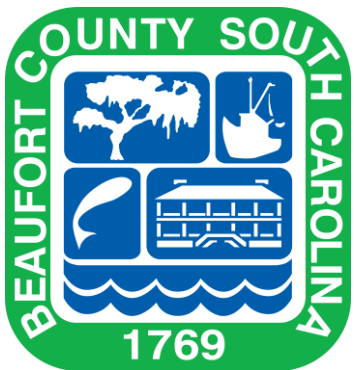
— Nonstop, Saturday flights to/from Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW), Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD) and Philadelphia International Airport (PHL) to begin March 2020



www.hiltonheadairport.com

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www.bcscrec.com

YOUTH SPORTS

Beaufort County Parks and Recreation offers ten youth athletic leagues. We create a safe, fun and competitive environment designed for anyone who is passionate about sports.

Register today or come in and check out any of our high end athletic facilities.



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www.beaufortcountylibrary.org



Beaufort County Human Services Alliance

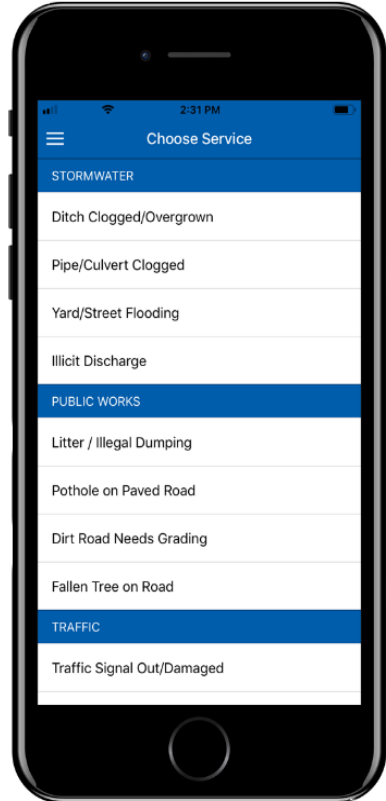
- The Alliance produces a newsletter every 2 weeks that includes information regarding community programs and services.
- The newsletter is distributed to over 700 partners and includes information about free events and training opportunities.



www.beaufortcountysc.gov/human-services

311 Mobile App

Beaufort County Connect allows users to easily submit non-emergency requests to related departments with a simple to use interface. Upload images and get precise address geolocation data when submitting request from home or on the go. The Connect app also keeps you up to date with the latest Beaufort County News and Information as well as live Traffic Camera feeds.



 PLAY STORE

 APP STORE

The Beaufort County Channel

- On air since 2007
- Comcast, Hargray and Spectrum (formerly TimeWarner)
- Current cable viewership is 169,000 residences
- County Council Meetings archived on website since 2009
- Council committee meetings, several boards and commission meetings, and BOE meetings since 2011
- Town of HHI Council meetings since 2013
- 2 “live” broadcast trucks/mobile production units
- 5 “live” broadcast meeting locations in County facilities
- 4 current staff members





**400+ governmental meetings
covered annually**

- **County Council regular, committee and special meetings**
- **County Council retreats**
- **Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation**
- **Beaufort County Legislative Delegation**
- **Municipal Strategic Planning Workshops**



Boards, Commissions, and other Local Partners Covered

**Airports Board
Design Review Board
Library Board**

Northern Regional Plan Implementation Committee

Parks and Recreation Board

Planning Commission

Solid Waste and Recycling Board

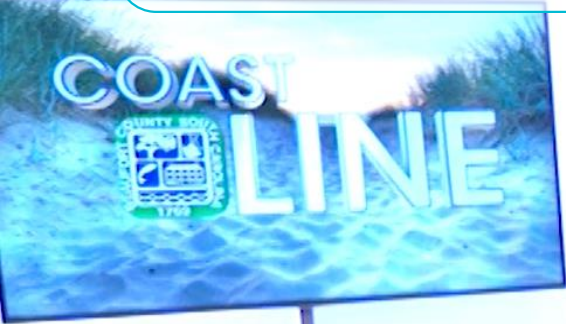
Stormwater Management Utility Board

Voter Registration and Elections Board

Zoning Board of Appeals

Town of HHI and Beaufort County School Board

Council Goals, Emergency Preparedness, Health and Safety, Reassessment, Veterans Affairs Services and More!





**The
County
Channel**

Aerial Coverage

Disaster Recovery Documentation

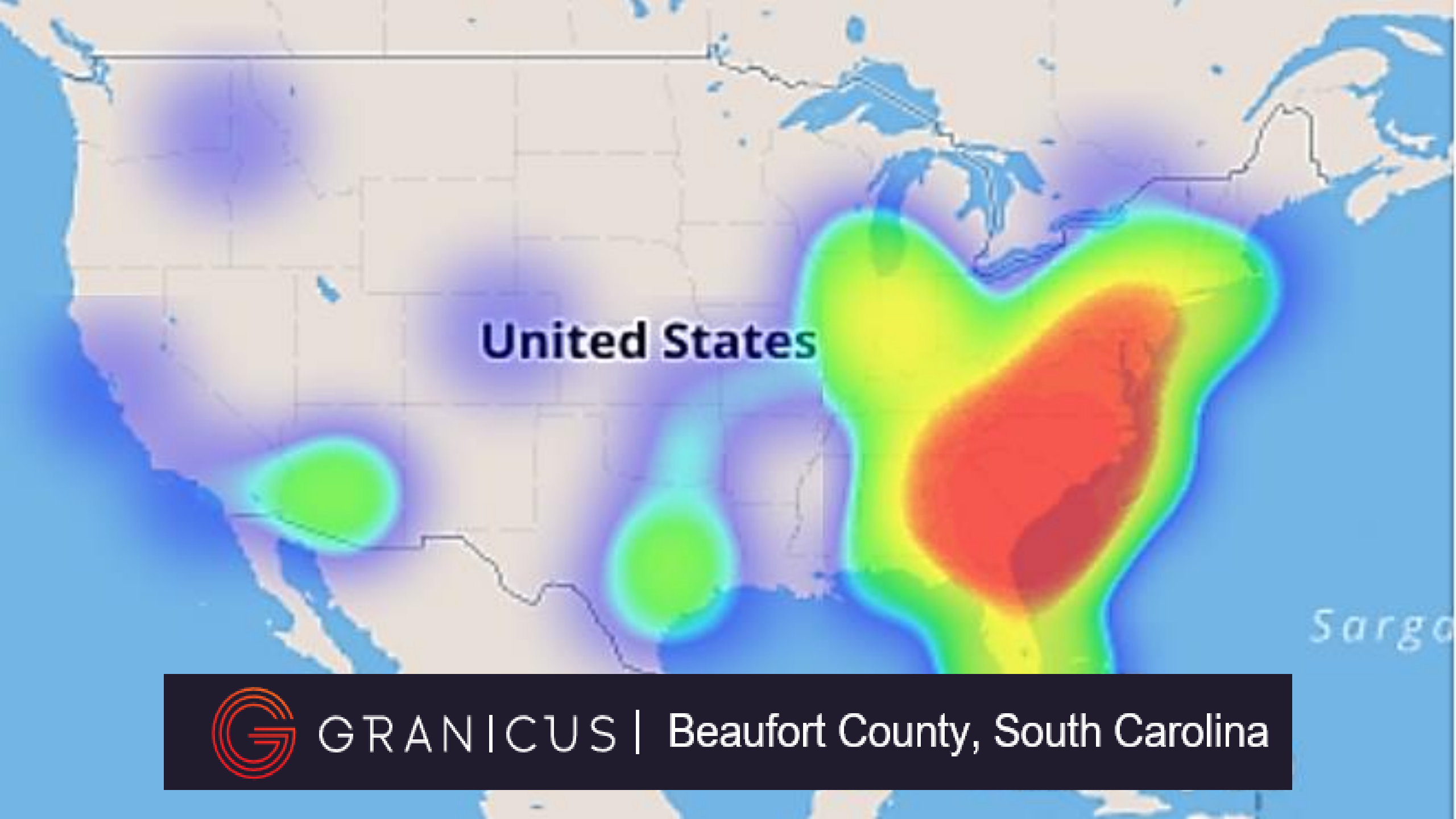
The Beaufort County Channel

Community Events

- Dedications and Groundbreaking Events
- Festivals and Parades
- Graduation Ceremonies
- Holiday Celebrations
- Political Debates
- Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies
- Other special events, e.g. Chambers of Commerce

Sports Events

- USC-Beaufort softball and baseball games
- Dixie Baseball and Softball Tournaments
- Parks and Recreation league games
- Local high school football games



United States

Sargasso



GRANICUS | Beaufort County, South Carolina

County Channel **Radio**

Music and Public Service Announcements

- **Started in June 2015**
- **Format – 60s, 70s and 80s songs**
- **PSAs run every 25 minutes**
- **Available online and on cable for traffic cameras**
- **August 2017 - playing in Beaufort and HHI Airport Terminals**
- **71,000+ average listening hours each month**



FOIA Services

bcfoia@bcgov.net
843.255.7200

www.beaufortcountysc.gov/foia



CitizenGram Contact Form

What department should your message be sent to?

Choose department



Subject

Your message

☐ Submit Anonymously

Please note: If you would like to receive a response or an update to your feedback, you must leave your contact information.

Your name

Your email

Your Phone



BEAUFORT COUNTY COUNCIL

Agenda Item Summary

Item Title:

--

Council Committee:

--

Meeting Date:

--

Committee Presenter (Name and Title):

--

Issues for Consideration:

--

Points to Consider:

--

Funding & Liability Factors:

--

Council Options:

--

Recommendation:

--

I. Communications

- a. Need to get Elevation Certificates inventoried and available online. Approximately 75% of FOIA requests are for Elevation Certificates. Otherwise, FOIA process is generally working well.
- b. How can we get more rural residents connected to the Internet? (December meeting invite internet providers to make presentations)
- c. Can we get the County Channel via Direct TV/satellite service?
- d. Hiring a PIO (in Progress) to serve the County's communications and messaging needs, including establishing policies and procedures for communications within the County organization and between the County and the public.
- e. Audit website content. Begin by Departments reviewing and updating department web pages. Consider consultant for recommendations for conveying information on the website, consistency in forms/applications formats, messaging/branding, promotion of communication tools such as County Connect and other ways of making the website informative and interactive.
- f. Review of and evaluation of County applications, including Nixel, County Connect App, GIS mapping and the soon to be introduced InterGov.
- g. Administration's Use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and "established and emerging" communications outlets (e.g. social media, public relations etc.). Expand the use of these outlets to include more platforms, more frequency, human interest stories, videos, interactive requests, highlight county projects etc.
- h. Policies governing Council's and Councilmembers' communications via "established and emerging" forms of communications including social media, emails etc.

II. Transparency

- a. Offer County Website trainings to the Public at library branches to highlight the extraordinary amount of information available on the County website, and how to find what you're looking for. Combine the training with councilmember community meetings or other library programs.
 - i. Have targeted website information training sessions for frequent users of FOIA such as realtors, insurance sector, and neighborhood associations.
- b. Is there a way to make the Rural and Critical land purchases process more open and transparent?
- c. Use of Executive Session?

- d. Public Comment opportunities
- e. Broadcasting/County Channel availability to rural areas; live feeds on internet platforms e.g. Facebook, YouTube, etc.
- f. How to find County Financial information; regular reports to Finance Comm.
- g. Consider discounted or free or capped fees for media FOIA requests. PIO to consider and establish policy.

III. Funding needs and recommendations

- a. There is a need to fund temporary positions to quickly (1-2 years) complete the Elevations Certificate project.
- b. Fund the PIO position and hire as soon as possible.
- c. Fund an additional Information Technology staff position for the purpose of providing a suite of technology trainings including public demonstrations on how to use the county website, Councilmember trainings for finding information via website, and staff trainings for the numerous software programs available to staff including but not limited to GIS, SharePoint, Outlook, Microsoft programs, financial reporting, etc.
- d. Create and implement a plan for extending availability of the County Channel and high-speed internet to rural areas. Identify partners, potential funding sources, and a timeline for encouraging more services to be available to more citizens.
- e. Provide regular financial reports to Finance Committee in easy to read user friendly format.
- f. Adopt Policies and Procedures for use of “established and emerging” formats for communications such as social media outlets, emails, talking to media etc.
- g. Make rural and critical lands purchases information available at the time Council approves a purchase by majority vote.
- h. Expand the use of social media and “established and emerging” forums with live streaming videos of meetings, videos of employees engaged in county projects, of elected officials representing Beaufort County and other positive events. Make social media posts “interactive” by requesting a response, or offering a 1-2 questions survey, or requesting comments from the public.
- i. Make County Channel high definition.
- j. Incorporate into Council’s Rules and Procedures policies for councilmembers conduct on social media.