

U.S. Department of Justice  
Civil Rights Division – Chief Voting Section  
950 Pennsylvania Ave. NW – Room 7524-NWB  
Washington, D.C. 20530  
Attn: Ms. Ricky Dopson

VIA: Federal Express  
Chief, Voting Section – Civil Rights Division  
Room 7254 – NWB - Department of Justice  
1800 G St., N.W. – Washington, D.C. 20006

Beaufort County, South Carolina  
Proposed One Percent Transportation Sales and Use Tax  
Pre-clearance Submission

Exhibits 1 - 10

<b>1</b>	Code of Laws § 4-37-30 Title 4, Chapter 37
<b>2</b>	Article X Finance, Taxation and Bonded Debt
<b>3</b>	Code of Laws § 11-27-40 Title 11, Chapter 27
<b>4</b>	Beaufort County Council Minutes of June 13, 2006
<b>5</b>	Beaufort County Council Minutes of June 12, 2006
<b>6</b>	Ordinance 2006/15
<b>7</b>	Letter Dated Aug. 15, 2006 From Agnes Garvin
<b>8</b>	Misc. Letters
<b>9</b>	Misc. Newspaper Articles
<b>10</b>	List of County Council Members

WILLIAM WESTON J. NEWTON  
CHAIRMAN

W. R. "SKEET" VON HARTEN  
VICE CHAIRMAN

COUNCIL MEMBERS

FANK BRAFMAN  
GERALD DAWSON  
MARK D. GENERALES  
HERBERT N. GLAZE  
MARGARET E. GRIFFIN  
STARLETTA HAIRSTON  
PETER LAMB  
WILLIAM L. McBRIDE  
RICHARD H. STEWART

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY  
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
100 RIBAUT ROAD  
SUITE 270  
POST OFFICE DRAWER 1228  
BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA 29901-1228  
TELEPHONE: (843) 470-5380 FAX: (843) 470-5383  
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GARY T. KUBIC  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

KELLY J. GOLDEN  
STAFF ATTORNEY

SUZANNE M. RAINEY  
CLERK TO COUNCIL

September 5, 2006

Chief, Voting Section  
Civil Rights Division  
Room 7254 - NWB  
Department of Justice  
1800 G St., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
Attn.: Ms. Ricky Dopson

VIA: Federal Express

RE: Submission Under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act

In Re: Beaufort County, South Carolina: Beaufort County Ordinance No. 2006/15: An Ordinance Enacted Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §4-37-30 *et seq.* to conduct a county-wide referendum to authorize a one percent (1%) Transportation Sales and Use Tax for not more than 6 year and, if approved, to authorize the issue of General Obligation Bonds not to Exceed 152 Million Dollars

Dear Ms. Dopson:

The purpose of this submission is to obtain pre-clearance, pursuant to Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, of the local referenda questions set forth in Beaufort County Ordinance No. 2006/15. The referenda questions are proposed to appear on the November 7, 2006, election ballot.

Beaufort County Ordinance No. 2006/15 was adopted pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §4-37-30(A)(3) and includes, verbatim, the referenda questions set forth in the state-wide enabling legislation at S.C. Code Ann. §4-37-30(A)(3). The referenda questions authorize the imposition of a one percent (1%) special transportation sales and use tax and the issue of general obligation bonds not to exceed 152 Million Dollars, if approved by the referenda.

I. SUBMITTED DOCUMENTS

In support of this pre-clearance request, Beaufort County submits the following documents:

1. Enabling Legislation: A copy of the state-wide enabling legislation at S.C. Code Ann. §4-37-30. **Exhibit 1.**

2. S.C. Constitution: A copy of Article X, Section 14 of the Constitution of the State of South Carolina, 1895, as amended, providing the County the power to incur bonded indebtedness. **Exhibit 2.**
3. Referendum Authorization: A copy of S.C. Code Ann. §11-27-40 authorizing the County of Beaufort to order a referendum pursuant to S.C. Constitution, Article X, Section 14. **Exhibit 3.**
4. Public Services Committee Minutes: A copy of the Beaufort County Council's Public Services Committee minutes (the "Public Services Committee Minutes") of June 13, 2006 and July 18, 2006, which includes, *inter alia*, recommendations to the Beaufort County Council to approve placing the subject referenda questions on the November general election ballot. **Exhibit 4.**
5. Beaufort County Council Minutes: Copies of the Beaufort County Council's minutes of the public meetings held on June 12, 2006, June 26, 2006, July 24, 2006 and August 14, 2006, at which Beaufort County Ordinance No. 2006/15 was adopted subject to pre-clearance. **Exhibit 5.**
6. Ordinance: A certified copy of Beaufort County Ordinance 2006/15 dated August 14, 2006, authorizing the referenda questions to appear on the November 7, 2006, general election ballot. The referenda questions would, if approved, authorize the imposition of a one percent (1%) transportation sales and use tax and authorize the issue of general obligation bonds not to exceed 152 Million Dollars. The referenda questions appear in Appendix A and Appendix B of **Exhibit 6.**

The referenda questions are verbatim recitals of the referenda questions set forth at S.C. Code Ann. §4-37-30 (A)(3) previously pre-cleared and, or, approved by the Justice Department.

7. Notice to the Local Board of Elections and Voter Registration: A copy of the notice provided to the Beaufort County Board of Elections and Voter Registration received on August 15, 2006 as required by S.C. Code §7-13-355. **Exhibit 7.**
8. Statements of Municipal Support: Statements of municipal support for Beaufort County Ordinance No. 2006/15 from the City of Beaufort, The Town of Bluffton, the Town of Hilton Head Island and the Town of Port Royal. **Exhibit 8.**
9. Other Publicity: Copies of various newspaper articles that appeared in *The Beaufort Gazette*, *The Island Packet* and *Carolina Morning News*, newspapers of general circulation in Beaufort County, South Carolina are attached. **Exhibit 9.**
10. Minority Contacts: The following persons have agreed to serve as "minority contacts."

Mr. James E. Moore  
P.O. Box 357  
Seabrook, SC 29940  
843-846-0881

Mr. Scott Davis  
116 Robert E. Lee Lane  
Bluffton, SC 29909  
843-705-5115

Mr. Harold J. Wesley  
77 Seabrook Road  
Seabrook, SC 29940  
843-846-4856

Mrs. Mae Frances Scott  
215 Honey Hill Drive  
Bluffton, SC 29909  
843-705-7828

Mrs. Laura Bush  
5 Bush Lane  
Bluffton, SC 29910  
843-470-4656

Mrs. Vera Rogers  
36 Fernlakes Drive  
Bluffton, SC 29910  
843-757-5392

Mr. Thomas Barnwell  
P.O. Box 21057  
Hilton Head Island, SC 29925  
843-681-3575

Mrs. Regina Ragland  
2 Bryant Road  
Hilton Head Island, SC 29928  
843-681-3620

Ms. Thelma Lewis  
1012 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Port Royal, SC 29935  
843-524-5225

Mr. Will Rogers  
1903 Royal Pines  
Port Royal, SC 29935  
843-470-1238

Mr. Frederick Drake  
2410 Sargeants Drive  
Port Royal, SC 29935  
843-524-1099

Mr. LeRoy Gilliard  
21 Shorts Landing Road  
Lady's Island, SC 29907  
843-470-4508

Mr. Thomas Mack  
P.O. Box 313  
St. Helena, SC 29920  
843-838-3063

Mrs. Margie Miller  
221 Scott Hill Road  
St. Helena, SC 29920  
843-838-2794

Mrs. Lynn Nelson  
219 Dulamo Road  
St. Helena, SC 29920  
843-838-5108

Mr. Michael F. Rivers  
734 Seaside Road  
St. Helena, SC 29920  
843-838-2277

Mr. Dwayne V. Gaston  
2201 National Street  
Beaufort, SC 29902  
843-812-5403

Mrs. Alice Wright  
1309 Church Street  
Beaufort, SC 29902  
843-524-6388

In addition to the foregoing, any member of the Beaufort County Council may be contacted regarding this matter. A list of Beaufort County Council members, their daytime telephone numbers and the racial composition of the Beaufort County Council appears in **Exhibit 10**.

## II. SUBMITTED STATEMENTS

In support of this pre-clearance request, Beaufort County affirmatively states and submits the following: (1) the referendum has not yet been held, enforced or administered; (2) there is no past or pending litigation regarding the referendum; and (3) the referenda questions are authorized by S.C. Code Ann. §4-37-30 and Beaufort County Ordinance 2006/15.

### III. SUBMITTED EXPLANATORY INFORMATION

In support of this pre-clearance request, Beaufort County submits the following explanatory information.

Beaufort County Ordinance No. 2006/15 was adopted pursuant to State's enabling act, S.C. Code Ann. § 4-37-30. The State's enabling act authorizing the County to impose by ordinance a sales and use tax and authorization of the issue of general obligation bonds if approved by referendum. Beaufort County Ordinance No. 2006/15 was duly introduced, read three times with public hearing at second reading, and passed by the Council so to authorize the imposition of a transportation sales and use tax and authorize the issue of general obligation bonds not to exceed 152 Million Dollars if approved upon referendum.

### IV. CONCLUSION

I believe this submission includes all necessary and required information and documentation needed to support the County of Beaufort's request for pre-clearance of Beaufort County Ordinance No. 2006/15.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to call upon me.

With kindest regards,



Kelly J. Golden

KJG/sdb

Enc.: as stated

cc: The Honorable Henry McMaster, South Carolina Attorney General  
Members: Beaufort County Council  
Members: Beaufort County Board of Elections and Voter Registration  
Mr. Gary Kubic, Beaufort County Administrator  
Ms. Agnes M. Garvin, Executive Director,  
Beaufort County Board of Elections and Voter Registration

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Title 4. Counties

Chapter 37. Optional Methods for Financing Transportation Facilities

§ 4-37-30. Sales and use taxes or tolls as revenue for transportation facilities.

To accomplish the purposes of this chapter, counties are empowered to impose one but not both of the following sources of revenue: a sales and use tax as provided in item (A) or to authorize an authority established by the county governing body as provided in Section 4-37-10 to use and impose tolls in accordance with the provisions of item (B):

A) Subject to the requirements of this section, the governing body of a county may impose by ordinance a sales and use tax in an amount not to exceed one percent within its jurisdiction for a single project or for multiple projects and for a specific period of time to collect a limited amount of money.

(1) The governing body of a county may vote to impose the tax authorized by this section, subject to a referendum, by enacting an ordinance. The ordinance must specify:

(a) the project or projects and a description of the project or projects for which the proceeds of the tax are to be used, which may include projects located within or without, or both within and without, the boundaries of the county imposing the tax and which may include:

- (i) highways, roads, streets, bridges, mass transit systems, greenbelts, and other transportation-related projects and facilities including, but not limited to, drainage facilities relating to the highways, roads, streets, bridges, and other transportation-related projects;
- (ii) jointly-operated projects, of the type specified in sub-subitem (i), of the county and South Carolina Department of Transportation; or
- (iii) projects, of the type specified in sub-subitem (i), operated by the county or jointly-operated projects of the county and other governmental entities;

(b) the maximum time, stated in calendar years or calendar quarters, or a combination of them, not to exceed twenty-five years or the length of payment for each project whichever is shorter in length, for which the tax may be imposed;

(c) the estimated capital cost of the project or projects to be funded in whole or in part from proceeds of the tax and the principal amount of bonds to be supported by the tax; and

(d) the anticipated year the tax will end.

2) Upon receipt of the ordinance, the county election commission shall conduct a referendum on the question of imposing the optional special sales and use tax in the jurisdiction. A referendum for this purpose must be held at the time of the general election. The commission shall publish the date and purpose of the referendum once a week for four consecutive weeks immediately preceding the date of the referendum in a newspaper of general circulation in the jurisdiction. A public hearing must be conducted at least fourteen days before the referendum after publication of a notice setting forth the date, time, and location of the public hearing. The notice must be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the county at least fourteen days before the date fixed for the public hearing.

3) A separate question must be included on the referendum ballot for each purpose which purpose may, as determined by the governing body of a county, be set forth as a single question relating to several of the projects, and the question must read substantially as follows:

"I approve a special sales and use tax in the amount of (fractional amount of one percent) (one percent) to be imposed in (county) for not more than (time) to fund the following project or projects:

Project (1) for \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Yes \_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_

Project (2), etc."

In addition, the referendum, as determined by the governing body of a county, may contain a question on the authorization of general obligation bonds under the exemption provided in Section 14(6), Article X of the Constitution of South Carolina, 1895, so that revenues derived from the imposition of the optional sales and use tax may be pledged to the repayment of the bonds. The additional question must read substantially as follows:

"I approve the issuance of not exceeding \$\_\_\_\_\_ of general obligation bonds of \_\_\_\_\_ County, maturing over a period not to exceed \_\_\_\_ years to fund the \_\_\_\_\_ project or projects.

Yes \_\_\_\_



If the referendum on the question relating to the issuance of general obligation bonds is approved, the county may issue bonds in an amount sufficient to fund the expenses of the project or projects.

(4) All qualified electors desiring to vote in favor of imposing the tax for a particular purpose shall vote "yes" and all qualified electors opposed to levying the tax for a particular purpose shall vote "no". If a majority of the votes cast are in favor of imposing the tax for one or more of the specified purposes, then the tax is imposed as provided in this section; otherwise, the tax is not imposed. The election commission shall conduct the referendum pursuant to the election laws of this State, mutatis mutandis, and shall certify the result no later than November thirtieth after the date of the referendum to the appropriate governing body and to the Department of Revenue. Included in the certification must be the maximum cost of the project or projects or facilities to be funded in whole or in part from proceeds of the tax, the maximum time specified for the imposition of the tax, and the principal amount of bonds to be supported by the tax receiving a favorable vote. Expenses of the referendum must be paid by the jurisdiction conducting the referendum. If the tax is approved in the referendum, the tax is imposed effective the first day of May following the date of the referendum. If the certification is not made timely to the Department of Revenue, the imposition is postponed for twelve months.

(5) The tax terminates on the earlier of:

(a) the final day of the maximum time specified for the imposition; or

(b) the end of the calendar month during which the Department of Revenue determines that the tax has raised revenues sufficient to provide the greater of either the cost of the project or projects as approved in the referendum or the cost to amortize all debts related to the approved projects.

(6) When the optional sales and use tax is imposed, the governing body of the jurisdiction authorizing the referendum for the tax shall include by definition more than one item as defined in (a)(i) and (a)(ii) to describe the single project or multiple projects for which the proceeds of the tax are to be used.

(7) Amounts collected in excess of the required proceeds first must be applied, if necessary, to complete each project for which the tax was imposed. Any additional revenue collected above the specified amount must be applied to the reduction of debt principal of the imposing political subdivision on transportation infrastructure debts only.

(8) The tax levied pursuant to this section must be administered and collected by the Department of Revenue in the same manner that other sales and use taxes are collected. The department may prescribe the amounts which may be added to the sales price because of the tax.

(9) The tax authorized by this section is in addition to all other local sales and use taxes and applies to the gross proceeds of sales in the applicable jurisdiction which are subject to the tax imposed by Chapter 36 of Title 12 and the enforcement provisions of Chapter 54 of Title 12. The gross proceeds of the sale of items subject to a maximum tax in Chapter 36 of Title 12 are exempt from the tax imposed by this section. The gross proceeds of the sale of food lawfully purchased with United States Department of Agriculture food stamps are exempt from the tax imposed by this section. The tax imposed by this section also applies to tangible personal property subject to the use tax in Article 13, Chapter 36 of Title 12.

(10) Taxpayers required to remit taxes pursuant to Article 13, Chapter 36 of Title 12 must identify the county in which the tangible personal property purchase at retail is stored, used, or consumed in this State.

(11) Utilities are required to report sales in the county in which consumption of the tangible personal property occurs.

(12) A taxpayer subject to the tax imposed by Section 12-36-920, who owns or manages rental units in more than one county shall report separately in his sales tax return the total gross proceeds from business done in each county.

(13) The gross proceeds of sales of tangible personal property delivered after the imposition date of the tax levied pursuant to this section in a county, either pursuant to the terms of a construction contract executed before the imposition date, or a written bid submitted before the imposition date, culminating in a construction contract entered into before or after the imposition date, are exempt from the special local sales and use tax provided in this section if a verified copy of the contract is filed with the Department of Revenue within six months after the imposition of the special local sales and use tax.

(14) Notwithstanding the imposition date of the special local sales and use tax authorized pursuant to this section, with respect to services that are billed regularly on a monthly basis, the special local sales and use tax is imposed beginning on the first day of the billing period beginning on or after the imposition date.

(15) The revenues of the tax collected in each county pursuant to this section must be remitted to the State Treasurer and credited to a fund separate and distinct from the general fund of the State. After deducting the amount of refunds made and costs to the Department of Revenue of administering the tax, not to exceed one percent of the revenues, the State Treasurer shall distribute the revenues and all interest earned on the revenues while on deposit with him quarterly to the county in which the tax is imposed, and these revenues and interest earnings must be used only for the purpose stated in the imposition ordinance. The State Treasurer may correct misallocations by adjusting later distributions, but these adjustments must be made in the same fiscal year as the misallocations. However, allocations made as a result of city or county code errors must be corrected prospectively.

(16) The Department of Revenue shall furnish data to the State Treasurer and to the counties receiving revenues for the purpose of calculating distributions and estimating revenues. The information which must be supplied to counties upon request includes, but is not limited to, gross receipts, net taxable sales, and tax liability by taxpayers.

Information about a specific taxpayer is considered confidential and is governed by the provisions of Section 12-54-240. A person violating this section is subject to the penalties provided in Section 12-54-240.

(17) The Department of Revenue may promulgate regulations necessary to implement this section.

(1)(a) This item (B) is intended to provide an additional and alternative method, subject to a referendum, for the provision of and financing for highways, roads, streets, and bridges, and other transportation-related projects, either alone or in partnership with other governmental entities to the end that these transportation-related projects may be undertaken in such manner as may best be calculated to expedite relief of hazardous and congested traffic conditions on the highways in the State, including the authorization for turnpike projects undertaken by the Department of Transportation in Article 9 of Chapter 5 of Title 57. The Department of Transportation is prohibited from removing lands previously dedicated to the project or designated county area under its allocation formula based upon the fact that a county has passed a referendum to impose the tax provided in this chapter.

(b) Subject to the requirements of this item (B), the governing body of a county may by ordinance authorize, subject to a referendum, an authority to use tolls to finance projects authorized by this section.

(c) The ordinance enacted by the governing body of the county to authorize an authority to use tolls must specify:

- (i) the purpose for which the toll revenues are to be used which may include jointly-operated projects between the authority and the South Carolina Department of Transportation;
- (ii) the maximum time, stated in calendar years or calendar quarters, or a combination of them, not to exceed twenty-five years, for which the tolls may be imposed; and
- (iii) the maximum cost of the project or facilities to be funded in whole or in part from toll revenues and the principal amount of bonds to be supported by the tolls.

(d) Upon receipt of the ordinance, the county election commission shall conduct a referendum on the question of authorizing an authority to use tolls in the jurisdiction. The referendum must be held on the first Tuesday occurring sixty days after the election commission receives the ordinance. If that Tuesday is a legal holiday then the referendum must be held on the next succeeding Tuesday that is not a holiday. The commission shall publish the date and purpose of the referendum once a week for four consecutive weeks immediately preceding the date of the referendum, in a newspaper of general circulation in the jurisdiction. A public hearing must be conducted at least fourteen days before the referendum, after publication of a notice setting forth the date, time, and location of the public hearing. The notice must be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the county at least fourteen days before the date fixed for the public hearing.

(e) A separate question must be included on the referendum ballot for each purpose and the question must read substantially as follows:

"I approve the imposition of tolls on the following project or projects in (county) for not more than (time) to fund the following project or projects:

Project (1) for \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Yes \_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_

Project (2) etc."

(f) All qualified electors desiring to vote in favor of imposing tolls for a particular purpose shall vote "yes" and all qualified electors opposed to imposing tolls for a particular purpose shall vote "no". If a majority of the votes cast are in favor of imposing tolls for one or more of the specified purposes, then tolls are imposed as provided in this section; otherwise, an authority is not authorized to impose tolls. A subsequent referendum on this question, after the question is disapproved, must not be held more than once in twenty-four months. The election commission shall conduct the referendum under the election laws of this State, mutatis mutandis, and shall certify the result no later than sixty days after the date of the referendum to the appropriate county governing body and authority and to the South Carolina Department of Transportation. Included in the certification must be the maximum cost of the project or facilities to be funded in whole or in part from proceeds of the tolls and the maximum time specified for the imposition of the tolls receiving a favorable vote. Expenses of the referendum must be paid by the jurisdiction conducting the referendum.

(g) Tolls terminate on the earlier of:

- (i) the final day of the maximum time specified for the imposition; or
- (ii) the end of the calendar month during which the authority determines that the tolls have raised revenues sufficient to provide the greater of either the cost of the project or projects as approved in the referendum or the cost to amortize all debts related to the approved projects.

(h) When tolls are imposed for more than one purpose, the governing body of the jurisdiction authorizing the referendum for the tolls shall determine the priority for the expenditure of the net proceeds of the tolls for the purposes stated in the referendum.

(i) Amounts collected in excess of the required proceeds must first be applied, if necessary, to complete each project for which the toll was imposed; otherwise, the excess amounts must be credited to the general fund of the jurisdiction imposing the tax for infrastructure use only.

(2) If the voters have approved the imposition of tolls by referendum and if the authority enters into a partnership, consortium, or other contractual arrangement with the Department of Transportation relating to turnpike facilities, the authority may designate, establish, plan, improve, construct, maintain, operate, and regulate designated

highways, roads, streets, and bridges as "turnpike facilities" as a part of the state highway system or any federal aid system whenever the authority determines the traffic conditions, present or future, justify these facilities. Under such partnership arrangement, the authority may utilize funds available for the maintenance of the state highway system for the maintenance of any turnpike facility financed pursuant to this chapter. If the authority determines it is feasible to make all or part of a construction project a turnpike facility, it may engage in the preliminary estimates and studies incident to the determination of the feasibility or practicability of constructing any toll road as it from time to time considers necessary and the cost of the preliminary estimates and studies may be paid from the general highway fund and must be reimbursed from funds provided under this chapter only if the studies and estimates lead to the construction of a toll road.

(3) Under the partnership arrangement, the authority may acquire such lands and property, including rights of access as may be needed for turnpike facilities, by gift, devise, purchase, or condemnation by easement or in fee simple as authorized by law on or after the effective date of this chapter for acquiring property or property rights in connection with other state highways.

(4) In designating, establishing, planning, abandoning, improving, constructing, maintaining, and regulating turnpike facilities, the authority may exercise such authorizations as are granted generally to the Department of Transportation by the statutory law applicable to the state highway system, except as they may be inconsistent with the provisions included in this chapter.

(5) Whenever it becomes necessary that monies be raised for the transportation facilities described in this chapter, the authority may issue toll revenue bonds in a principal amount not to exceed the amount authorized in the referendum to authorize the authority to impose tolls to provide all or a portion of the cost of these facilities and maintenance of the toll road after adopting its resolution setting forth the following:

(a) the toll facility proposed to be constructed;

(b) the amount required for feasibility studies, planning, design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of the toll facility;

(c) a tentative time schedule setting forth the period of time for which the toll shall be imposed and set forth a schedule for elimination of all or part of all tolls;

(d) a debt service table showing the estimated annual principal and interest requirements for the proposed toll revenue bonds;

(e) any feasibility study obtained by the authority relating to the proposed toll facility;

(f) any covenants to be made in the bond resolution respecting competition between the proposed toll facility and possible future highways whose construction would have an adverse effect upon the toll revenues which would otherwise be derived by the proposed toll facility;

(g) any additional revenue collected above the specified amount to satisfy the principal and interest of toll revenue bonds or maintenance must be applied to the reduction of debt principal of the imposing political subdivision.

(6) In addition to the powers listed above, the authority may in connection with such toll facilities:

(a) fix and revise from time to time and charge and collect tolls for transit over each turnpike facility constructed by it;

(b) combine for the purpose of financing the facilities any two or more turnpike facilities;

(c) control access to turnpike facilities;

(d) to the extent permitted by a bond resolution, expend turnpike facility revenues in advertising the facilities and services of the turnpike facility or facilities to the traveling public;

(e) receive and accept from any federal agency grants for or in the aid of the construction of any turnpike facility;

(f) do all acts and things necessary or convenient to carry out the powers expressly granted in this chapter;

(g) enter into contracts with the Department of Transportation for sharing the cost of building and the revenues derived from the facilities authorized in this chapter and for the operation and maintenance of the facilities for transportation infrastructure debts only.

(C) It is intended that this chapter is an additional and alternative method of financing highway and bridge projects to those already provided under the provisions of the State Highway Bond Act ([Section 57-11-210](#)), the State Turnpike Bond Act ([Section 57-5-1310](#) et seq.), the Revenue Bond Act for Utilities ([Section 6-21-10](#) et seq.), and [Section 4-9-30](#) (5).

(D) The Department of Transportation must not diminish or decrease funds available to a municipality, county, or multi-county area because a project has been funded in the municipality, county, or multi-county area pursuant to a referendum provided in this chapter.

HISTORY: Added by [1995 Act No. 52, § 2](#), eff upon approval (became law without the Governor's signature May 18, 1995). Amended by [1997 Act No. 122, § 1](#), eff June 13, 1997; [1999 Act No. 93, § 6](#), eff June 11, 1999; [2000 Act No. 368, § 1](#), eff June 14, 2000; [2001 Act No. 89, § 41](#), eff July 20, 2001.

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

Act No. 458, Part II, Section 88 of 1996 provides that whenever the term "Department of Revenue" appears in the Acts

and Joint Resolutions of the General Assembly or the 1976 Code of Laws of South Carolina, it shall mean the Department of Revenue."

#### EFFECT OF AMENDMENT

The 1997 amendment, in the first paragraph of subsection (A), inserted "or for multiple projects"; in subsection (A)(1)(a), inserted "or projects" in two places; in subsections (A)(1)(a)(ii) and (iii), inserted ", of the type specified in subsection (i),"; in subsection (A)(1)(c), inserted "or projects"; rewrote subsection (A)(2); in subsection (A)(6), substituted "describe the single project or multiple projects for which the proceeds of the tax are to be used" for "as long as the projects are connected and form a single transportation system"; and made other nonsubstantive changes.

The 1999 amendment in subsection (A)(4) changed "sixty days" to "November thirtieth" and "the month occurring one hundred eighty days after" to "May following", and in subsection (A)(15) changed "the State Treasurer" to "him" and "subsequent" to "later" and added the last sentence.

The 2000 amendment, in the first paragraph of subsection (A), substituted "in an amount not to exceed one percent" for "one percent", in subsection (A)(1)(a) added "mass transit systems, greenbelts,", in subsection (A)(2) deleted from the beginning of the second sentence "If the ordinance is received prior to January 1, 1998, a referendum for this purpose may be held on the Tuesday following the first Monday in November; however, if the ordinance is received on January 1, 1998, or thereafter", in subsection (A)(3) added in the first paragraph "which purpose may, as determined by the governing body of a county, be set forth as a single question relating to several of the projects,", in the first paragraph substituted "in the amount of (fractional amount of one percent (one percent))" for "one percent", and in the first sentence of the second paragraph substituted "as determined by the governing body of a county, may" for "shall", and made nonsubstantive changes throughout subsection (A).

The 2001 amendment in paragraph (A)(15) clarified "misallocations" for purposes of adjusting later distributions.

#### CROSS REFERENCES

Exemption of transportation facility funded by local option sales and use tax from designation as turnpike facility, see § 57-5-1330.

#### NOTES OF DECISIONS

In general 1

1. In general

Activities of State Election Commission and county election commission were ministerial, and thus, neither commission had a stake in referendum on county sales and use tax that would require commissioners to recuse themselves from reviewing election protests. *W.J. Douan v. Charleston County Council* (S.C. 2003) 357 S.C. 601, 594 S.E.2d 261, rehearing denied. Counties ⇄ 55

Technical differences between ballot actually used for referendum on county sales and use tax and required language of model ballot in the statute authorizing such referendum were not cause for declaring the election void and illegal, where actual ballot listed percentage of the total collected amount to be allotted each project instead of the dollar amount for the cost of each project, and actual ballot did not number the two projects to be funded but separated them into two different paragraphs. *W.J. Douan v. Charleston County Council* (S.C. 2003) 357 S.C. 601, 594 S.E.2d 261, rehearing denied. Counties ⇄ 55

Code 1976 § 4-37-30, SC ST § 4-37-30

Current through End of 2005 Reg. Sess.

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**2005 South Carolina Constitution  
(Unannotated)**

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**ARTICLE X.**

**FINANCE, TAXATION AND BONDED DEBT**

**SECTION 1. Taxation and assessment.**

The General Assembly may provide for the ad valorem taxation by the State or any of its subdivisions of all real and personal property. The assessment of all property shall be equal and uniform in the following classifications:

- 1) All real and personal property owned by or leased to manufacturers, utilities and mining operations and used by the manufacturer, utility or mining operation, in the conduct of such business shall be taxed on an assessment equal to ten and one-half percent of the fair market value of such property.
- 2) All real and personal property owned by or leased to companies primarily engaged in transportation for hire of persons or property and used by the company in the conduct of such business shall be taxed on an assessment equal to nine and one-half percent of the fair market value of such property.
- 3) The legal residence and not more than five acres contiguous thereto shall be taxed on an assessment equal to four percent of the fair market value of such property.
- 4) Agricultural real property which is actually used for such purposes shall be taxed on an assessment equal to:
  - A) four percent of its value for such purposes when owned or leased to individuals or partnerships and certain corporations which do not:
    - i) have more than ten shareholders;
    - ii) have as a shareholder a person (other than an estate) who is not an individual;
    - iii) have a nonresident alien as a shareholder; and
    - iv) have more than one class of stock.
  - B) six percent of its value for such purposes when owned or leased to corporations, except for certain corporations specified in (A) above. Provided, that the General Assembly shall by general law provide for a penalty system on lands classified as agricultural lands to insure the proper utilization of this classification.
- 5) All other real property not herein provided for shall be taxed on an assessment equal to six percent of the fair market value of such property.
- 6) All inventories of business establishments shall be taxed on an assessment equal to six percent of the fair market value of such property.

(7) All farm machinery and equipment except motor vehicles licensed for use on the highways owned by farmers and used on agricultural lands shall be taxed on an assessment equal to five percent of the fair market value.

(8)(A) Except as provided in subitem (B) of this item, all other personal property must be taxed on an assessment equal to ten and one-half percent of the fair market value of the property.

(B)(1) Personal motor vehicles which must be titled by a state or federal agency, limited to passenger motor vehicles and pickup trucks, as defined by law, must be taxed on an assessment equal to the following percentage of fair market value of the property:

Property Tax Year Percentage

year 1 9.75

year 2 9.00

year 3 8.25

year 4 7.50

year 5 6.75

year 6 and after 6.00

(2) This subitem applies for property tax years beginning after 2001 or for earlier tax years as the General Assembly may provide by law (2001 Act No. 10, Section 1, eff March 6, 2001).

**SECTION 2.** Defining classes of property and values for property tax purposes thereof; transition to assessment ratios; continuance of existing statutes pertaining to assessment methods; changing assessment ratios.

(a) The General Assembly may define the classes of property and values for property tax purposes of the classes of property set forth in Section 1 of this article and establish administrative procedures for property owners to qualify for a particular classification.

(b) The General Assembly may provide for a gradual transition to any ratio as set out in Section 1 over a period not to exceed seven years.

(c) Statutes pertaining to the methods of assessment of property for ad valorem taxation not in conflict with this article shall continue in force until changed by an act of the General Assembly.

(d) The General Assembly may change the ratios as set forth in Section 1, but only with the approval of at least two-thirds of the membership of each house. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90.)

**SECTION 3.** Property exempt from ad valorem taxation.

There shall be exempt from ad valorem taxation:

(a) all property of the State, counties, municipalities, school districts and other political subdivisions, if the property is used exclusively for public purposes;

(b) all property of all schools, colleges and other institutions of learning and all charitable institutions in the nature of hospitals and institutions caring for the infirmed, the handicapped, the aged, children and indigent persons, except where the profits of such institutions are applied to private use;

(c) all property of all public libraries, churches, parsonages and burying grounds;

(d) all property of all charitable trusts and foundations used exclusively for charitable and public purposes;

(e) all household goods and furniture used in the home of the owner of such goods and furniture, but this exemption shall not apply to household goods used in hotels, rooming houses, apartments or other places of business;

(f) all inventories of manufactures, except manufactured articles which have been offered for sale at retail or which have been available for sale at retail;

(g) all new manufacturing establishments located in any of the counties of this State after July 1, 1977, for five years from the time of establishment and all additions to the existing manufacturing establishments located in any of the counties of this State for five years from the time each of these additions is made if the cost of the addition is fifty thousand dollars or more. The additions shall include additional machinery and equipment installed in the plant. The exemptions authorized in this item for manufacturing establishments, and additions to those manufacturing establishments, do not include exemptions from school taxes or municipal taxes but include only county taxes. All manufacturing establishments and all additions to existing manufacturing establishments exempt under existing statutes are allowed their exemptions provided for by statute until the exemptions expire. Municipal governing bodies may by ordinance exempt from municipal ad valorem taxation for not more than five years all new manufacturing establishments located in any of the municipalities of this State after July 1, 1985, and all additions to the existing manufacturing establishments, including additional machinery and equipment, located in any of the municipalities of this State costing fifty thousand dollars or more made after July 1, 1985. Exemptions from municipal taxation granted pursuant to this item may not result in any refund of taxes;

The governing body of a municipality may by ordinance exempt from municipal ad valorem taxation for not more than five years:

- 1) all new corporate headquarters, corporate office facilities, distribution facilities located in the municipality, and additions to such facilities; and
- 2) all facilities of new enterprises engaged in research and development activities located in the municipality, and additions to such facilities.

The exemptions allowed pursuant to this paragraph are subject to those terms and conditions that the General Assembly may provide by law.

(h) all facilities or equipment of industrial plants which are designed for the elimination, mitigation, prevention, treatment, abatement or control of water, air or noise pollution;

(i) a homestead exemption for persons sixty-five years of age and older, for persons permanently and totally disabled and for blind persons in the amount of ten thousand dollars of the fair market value of the homestead under conditions prescribed by the General Assembly by general law; provided, that the amount may be increased by the General Assembly by general law, passed by a majority vote of both houses;

j) intangible personal property.

The exemptions provided in subitems (c) and (d) for real property shall not extend beyond the buildings and premises actually occupied by the owners of such real property. Homestead exemptions from ad valorem taxation not specifically provided for in this section may be provided for by the General Assembly by general law. In addition to the exemptions listed in this section, the General Assembly may provide for exemptions from the property tax, by general laws applicable uniformly to property throughout the State and in all political subdivisions, but only with the approval of two-thirds of the members of each House. All exemptions not specifically provided for or authorized in this article shall be repealed March 1, 1978. The General Assembly shall provide for methods and procedures in applying for the exemption of any property as is described in this section.

In addition to the exemptions provided and authorized in this section, subject to statutory authorization, the governing body of a county by ordinance may impose a sales and use tax in order to exempt all or a portion of the value of private passenger motor vehicles, motorcycles, general aviation aircraft, boats, and boat motors from property taxes levied in the county. This exemption, or its subsequent rescission, is allowed only pursuant to a referendum held in the county in the manner that the General Assembly provides by law (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90; 1985 Act No. 19, eff March 13, 1985; 1995 Act No. 47, Section 1, eff May 11, 1995; 2001 Act No. 9, Section 1, eff March 6, 2001.)

#### **SECTION 4.** One assessment for all taxes.

The General Assembly shall provide for the assessment of all property for taxation, whether for state, county, school, municipal or any other political subdivision. All taxes shall be levied on that assessment. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90.)

#### **SECTION 5.** No tax without consent; taxes shall be levied in pursuance of law.

No tax, subsidy or charge shall be established, fixed, laid or levied, under any pretext whatsoever, without the consent of the people or their representatives lawfully assembled. Any tax which shall be levied shall distinctly state the public purpose to which the proceeds of the tax shall be applied. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90.)

NOTE: Because Article X was "amended to read" when ratified by Act 71 of 1977, and Acts 8, 9, and 10 of 1977 added three local provisions to the former Section 5, Article X, there exists a question as to the validity of these local provisions.



**SECTION 6.** Assessment and collection of taxes in political subdivisions.

The General Assembly may vest the power of assessing and collecting taxes in all of the political subdivisions of the State. Property tax levies shall be uniform in respect to persons and property within the jurisdiction of the body imposing such taxes; provided, that on properties located in an area receiving special benefits from the taxes collected, special levies may be permitted by general law applicable to the same type of political subdivision throughout the State, and the General Assembly shall specify the precise condition under which such special levies shall be assessed.

Whenever there is a merger of governments authorized under Section 12 of Article VIII, tax districts may be created, based upon the services rendered in each district, but tax levies must be uniform in respect to persons and property within each such district. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90.)

**SECTION 7.** Limitation on annual expenditures of state government and number of state employees; annual budgets and expenses of political subdivisions and school districts.

(a) The General Assembly shall provide by law for a budget process to insure that annual expenditures of state government may not exceed annual state revenue. (1985 Act No. 10, Section 1, eff February 26, 1985).

(b) Each political subdivision of the State as defined in Section 14 of this article and each school district of this State shall prepare and maintain annual budgets which provide for sufficient income to meet its estimated expenses for each year. Whenever it shall happen that the ordinary expenses of a political subdivision for any year shall exceed the income of such political subdivision, the governing body of such political subdivision shall provide for levying a tax in the ensuing year sufficient, with other sources of income, to pay the deficiency of the preceding year together with the estimated expenses for such ensuing year. The General Assembly shall establish procedures to insure that the provisions of this section are enforced. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90.)

(c) The General Assembly shall prescribe by law a spending limitation on appropriations for the operation of state government which shall provide that annual increases in such appropriations may not exceed the average growth rate of the economy of the State as measured by a process provided for by the law which prescribes the limitations on appropriations; provided, however, the limitation may be suspended for any one fiscal year by a special vote as provided in this subsection.

During the regular session of the General Assembly in 1990 and during every fifth annual regular session thereafter, the General Assembly shall conduct and complete a review of the law implementing this subsection. During such session, only a vote of two-thirds of the members of each branch present and voting shall be required to change the existing limitation on appropriation. Unless that is done, the existing limitations shall remain unchanged.

Upon implementation of the provisions of this subsection by law, such law may not be amended or repealed except by the special vote as provided in this subsection.

The special vote referred to in this subsection means an affirmative vote in each branch of the General Assembly by two-thirds of the members present and voting, but not less than three-fifths of the total membership in each branch. (1985 Act No. 10, Section 2, eff February 26, 1985).

(d) The General Assembly shall prescribe by law a limitation on the number of state employees which shall provide that the annual increase in such number may not exceed the average growth rate in the population of the State measured by a process provided for in the law which prescribes that employment limitation; provided, however, the limitation may be suspended for any one fiscal year by a special vote as provided in this subsection.

Upon implementation of the provisions of this subsection by law, such law may not be amended or repealed except by the special vote provided in this subsection.

The special vote referred to in this subsection means an affirmative vote in each branch of the General Assembly by two-thirds of the members present and voting, but not less than three-fifths of the total membership in each branch. (1985 Act No. 10, Section 3, eff February 26, 1985.)

**SECTION 8.** Payments from treasuries.

Money shall be drawn from the treasury of the State or the treasury of any of its political subdivisions only in pursuance of appropriations made by law. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90.)

**SECTION 9.** Statement of receipts and expenditures.

An accurate statement of the receipts and expenditures of the public money shall be published annually in such manner as may be prescribed by law. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90.)

**SECTION 10. Claims against State.**

The General Assembly may direct, by law, in what manner claims against the State may be established and adjusted. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90.)

**SECTION 11. Credit of State and political subdivisions.**

The credit of neither the State nor of any of its political subdivisions shall be pledged or loaned for the benefit of any individual, company, association, corporation, or any religious or other private education institution except as permitted by Section 3, Article XI of this Constitution. Neither the State nor any of its political subdivisions shall become a joint owner of or stockholder in any company, association, or corporation. The General Assembly may, however, authorize the South Carolina Public Service Authority to become a joint owner with privately owned electric utilities, including electric cooperatives, of electric generation or transmission facilities, or both, and to enter into and carry out agreements with respect to such jointly owned facilities.

Provided, however, the General Assembly may obligate or appropriate state funds in order to participate in federal or federally aided disaster related grant or loan programs for individuals or families, but only to the extent that such state participation is a prerequisite to federal financial assistance.

Provided, however, that endowment funds donated specifically to state-supported institutions of higher learning and held by the State Treasurer may be invested and reinvested in equity securities of a corporation within the United States that is registered on a national securities exchange, as provided in the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or a successor act, or quoted through the National Association of Securities Dealers Automatic Quotations System or similar service. The General Assembly shall implement this paragraph by enacting legislation in which these endowment funds held and invested by the State Treasurer must be invested pursuant to a plan recommended by the State Retirement Systems Investment Panel which must be submitted to and approved by the boards of trustees of the respective colleges and universities.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a municipality, county, special purpose district, or public service district of this State which provides firefighting service and which administers a separate pension plan for its employees performing this service may invest and reinvest the funds in this pension plan in equity securities traded on a national securities exchange as provided in the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or a successor act, or in equity securities quoted through the National Association of Securities Dealers Automatic Quotations System or similar service. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90; 1979 Act No. 1, eff January 24, 1979; 1985 Act 7, eff February 26, 1985; 1999 Act No. 11, Section 1, eff March 17, 1999; 2003 Act No. 93, Section 1, eff June 3, 2003.)

**SECTION 12. Counties not to incur bonded indebtedness for special services in certain areas without special tax or charge on area or persons benefitted.**

No law shall be enacted permitting the incurring of bonded indebtedness by any county for sewage disposal or treatment, fire protection, street lighting, garbage collection and disposal, water service or any other service or facility benefitting only a particular geographical section of the county unless a special assessment, tax or service charge in an amount designed to provide debt service on bonded indebtedness or revenue bonds incurred for such purposes shall be imposed upon the area or persons receiving the benefit therefrom. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90.)

**SECTION 13. Bonded indebtedness of State.**

(1) Subject to the conditions and limitations in this section, the State shall have power to incur indebtedness in the following categories and in no others: (a) general obligation debt; and (b) indebtedness payable only from a revenue-producing project or from a special source as provided in subsection (9) hereof.

(2) "General obligation debt" shall mean any indebtedness of the State which shall be secured in whole or in part by a pledge of the full faith, credit and taxing power of the State.

(3) General obligation debt may not be incurred except for a public purpose and all general obligation debt shall mature not later than thirty years from the time such indebtedness shall be incurred.

(4) In each act authorizing the incurring of general obligation debt the General Assembly shall allocate on an annual basis sufficient tax revenues to provide for the punctual payment of the principal of and interest on such general obligation debt. If at any time any payment due as the principal of or interest on any general obligation debt shall not be paid as and when the same become due and payable, the State Comptroller General shall forthwith levy and the State Treasurer shall collect an ad valorem tax without limit as to rate or amount upon all taxable property in the State sufficient to meet the payment of the principal and interest of such general obligation debt then due.

(5) If general obligation debt be authorized by (a) two-thirds of the members of each House of the General Assembly; or (b) by a majority vote of the qualified electors of the State voting in a referendum called by the General Assembly there shall be no conditions or restrictions limiting the incurring of such indebtedness except (i) those restrictions and limitations

(6) General obligation debt may be also incurred on such terms and conditions as the General Assembly may by law prescribe under the following limitations:

(a) General obligation bonds for highway purposes (highway bonds) may be issued if such bonds shall be additionally secured by a pledge of the revenues derived from the "sources of revenue" as such term is defined in this subsection; provided, that the maximum annual debt service on all highway bonds so additionally secured which shall thereafter be outstanding shall not exceed fifteen percent of the proceeds received from the sources of revenue for the fiscal year next preceding.

For the purpose of this subsection, the term "sources of revenue" shall mean so much of the revenues as may be made applicable by the General Assembly for state highway purposes from any and all taxes or licenses imposed upon individuals or vehicles for the privilege of using the public highways of the State.

(b) General obligation bonds for any state institution of higher learning designated by the General Assembly (state institution bonds) may be issued, if such bonds shall be additionally secured by a pledge of the revenues derived from the tuition fees received by the particular institution of higher learning for which such state institution bonds are issued; provided, that the maximum annual debt service on all state institution bonds so additionally secured issued for such state institution thereafter to be outstanding shall not exceed ninety percent of the sums received by such state institution of higher learning from tuition fees for the fiscal year next preceding.

(c) General obligation bonds for any public purpose including those purposes set forth in (a) and (b) may be issued; provided, that the maximum annual debt service on all general obligation bonds of the State thereafter to be outstanding (excluding highway bonds, state institution bonds, tax anticipation notes, and bond anticipation notes) must not exceed five percent of the general revenues of the State for the fiscal year next preceding (excluding revenues which are authorized to be pledged for state highway bonds and state institution bonds).

Upon implementation of the provisions of this item by law, the percentage rate of general revenues may be reduced to four or increased to seven percent by legislative enactment passed by a two-thirds vote of the total membership of the Senate and a two-thirds vote of the total membership of the House of Representatives.

During the regular session of the General Assembly in 1990 and during every fifth annual regular session thereafter, the General Assembly shall conduct and complete a review of the law implementing this item. Unless during such session that review results in an amendment to or repeal of the law implementing this item, which must be accomplished by legislative enactment passed by a two-thirds vote of the total membership of the Senate and a two-thirds vote of the total membership of the House of Representatives. (1985 Act 10, Section 4, eff February 26, 1985.)

(7) General obligation indebtedness may be incurred in anticipation of state tax collections (tax anticipation notes) under such terms and conditions as the General Assembly may prescribe by law. Such tax anticipation notes shall be secured by a pledge of such taxes and by a pledge of the full faith, credit and taxing power of the State. All tax anticipation notes shall be expressed to mature not later than ninety days from the end of the fiscal year in which such notes are issued.

(8) General obligation notes may be issued in anticipation of the proceeds of general obligation bonds which may be lawfully issued (bond anticipation notes) under terms and conditions which the General Assembly may prescribe by law. Such bond anticipation notes shall be secured by a pledge of the proceeds of the bonds in anticipation of which such bond anticipation notes are issued and by a pledge of the full faith, credit and taxing power of the State.

Bond anticipation notes shall be expressed to mature not later than one year following the date of issuance, but if the General Assembly shall so authorize by law, bond anticipation notes may be refunded or renewed.

(9) The General Assembly may authorize the State or any of its agencies, authorities or institutions to incur indebtedness for any public purpose payable solely from a revenue-producing project or from a special source, which source does not involve revenues from any tax but may include fees paid for the use of any toll bridge, toll road or tunnel. Such indebtedness may be incurred upon such terms and conditions as the General Assembly may prescribe by law. All indebtedness incurred pursuant to the provisions of this subsection shall contain a statement on the face thereof specifying the sources from which payment is to be made. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90.)

#### **SECTION 14. Bonded indebtedness of political subdivisions.**

(1) For the purposes of this section, the term "political subdivisions" shall mean the counties of the State, the incorporated municipalities of the State, and special purpose districts, including special purpose districts which are located in more than one county or which are comprised of one or more counties. The term does not include regional planning agencies which are expressly forbidden to incur general obligation debt.

(2) The political subdivisions of the State shall have the power to incur bonded indebtedness in such manner and upon such

and Section 12 of this article.

Such political subdivisions shall have the power to incur indebtedness in the following categories and in no others:

(a) General obligation debt; and

(b) Indebtedness payable only from a revenue-producing project or from a special source as provided in subsection (10) of this section.

(3) "General obligation debt" shall mean any indebtedness of the political subdivision which shall be secured in whole or in part by a pledge of its full faith, credit and taxing power.

(4) General obligation debt may be incurred only for a purpose which is a public purpose and which is a corporate purpose of the applicable political subdivision. The power to incur general obligation debt shall include general obligation debt incurred by counties within the limitations prescribed by Section 12 of this article, and general obligation debt incurred by any political subdivision for purposes permitted by Section 13 of Article VIII of this Constitution. All general obligation debt shall mature within forty years from the time such indebtedness shall be incurred.

(5) No general obligation debt shall be incurred by any political subdivision unless prior to the delivery thereof a schedule showing the date and the principal and interest payments to become due thereon shall be filed in the office of the State Treasurer. If at any time any political subdivision shall fail to effect the punctual payment of the principal or interest on its general obligation debt, then, in such instance, the State Treasurer shall withhold from such political subdivision sufficient moneys from any state appropriation to which such political subdivision may be entitled and apply so much as shall be necessary to the payment of the principal and interest on the indebtedness of the political subdivision then due. Any and all appropriations for political subdivisions of the State shall be subject to the provisions of this subsection.

(6) If general obligation debt be authorized by a majority vote of the qualified electors of the political subdivision voting in a referendum authorized by law, there shall be no conditions or restrictions limiting the incurring of such indebtedness except:

(a) those restrictions and limitations imposed in the authorization to incur such indebtedness;

(b) the provisions of subsection (4) hereof; and

(c) such general obligation debt shall be issued within five years of the date of such referendum.

(7) Subject to the provisions of subsection (4) of this section and on such terms and provisions as the General Assembly may, by general law, prescribe, general obligation debt may also be incurred by the governing body of each political subdivision:

(a) For any of its corporate purposes in an amount not exceeding eight percent of the assessed value of all taxable property of such political subdivision; or

(b) General obligation debt incurred pursuant to and within the limitations prescribed by Section 12 of this article.

(8) In determining the debt limitations imposed by the provisions of subsection (7) of this section, bonded indebtedness incurred pursuant to the authorizations of subsection (6), bonded indebtedness existing on the date of this section becomes a part of the Constitution in 1977, and bonded indebtedness incurred pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, shall not be considered.

(9) General obligation debt may also be incurred in anticipation in the collection of ad valorem taxes or licenses (tax anticipation notes) under such terms and conditions as the General Assembly may prescribe by general law. Such tax anticipation notes shall be secured by a pledge of such taxes or license fees and a pledge of the full faith, credit and taxing power of the political subdivision. All tax anticipation notes shall be expressed to mature not later than ninety days from the date as of which such taxes or license fees may be paid without penalty.

(10) General obligation notes may also be issued in anticipation of the proceeds of general obligation bonds which may be lawfully issued (bond anticipation notes) under such terms and conditions that the General Assembly may prescribe by general law. Such bond anticipation notes shall be secured by a pledge of the proceeds of the bonds in anticipation of which such bond anticipation notes are issued and by a pledge of the full faith, credit and taxing power of the political subdivision.

Bond anticipation notes shall be expressed to mature not later than one year following the date of issuance, but if the General Assembly shall so authorize by law, bond anticipation notes may be refunded or renewed.

...pay, or arise, from a revenue producing project or from a special source, which source does not involve revenues from any tax or license, may be issued upon such terms and conditions as the General Assembly may prescribe by general law; provided, that the General Assembly may authorize by general law that indebtedness for the purpose of redevelopment within incorporated municipalities and counties may be incurred, and that the debt service of such indebtedness be provided from the added increments of tax revenues to result from any such project. Any and all indebtedness incurred pursuant to the provisions of this subsection shall contain a statement on the face thereof specifying the sources from which payment is to be made and shall state that the full faith, credit, and taxing powers are not pledged therefor. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90; 1999 Act 11, Section 2, eff March 17, 1999.)

#### **SECTION 15. Bonded indebtedness of school districts.**

- (1) The school districts of the State shall have the power to incur general obligation debt only in such manner and upon such terms and conditions as the General Assembly shall prescribe by law within the limitations set forth in this section.
- (2) General obligation debt shall mean any indebtedness of the school district which shall be secured in whole or in part by a pledge of its full faith, credit and taxing power.
- (3) General obligation debt may be incurred only for a purpose which is a public purpose and which is a corporate purpose of the applicable school district. The power to incur general obligation debt shall include general obligation debt incurred by any school districts for the purposes permitted by Section 13 of Article VIII of this Constitution. All general obligation debt shall mature within thirty years from the time such indebtedness shall be incurred.
- (4) No general obligation debt shall be incurred by any school district unless prior to the delivery thereof a schedule showing the date and the principal and interest payments to become due thereon shall be filed in the office of the State Treasurer. If at any time any school district shall fail to effect the punctual payment of the principal and interest of its general obligation debt, the State Treasurer shall withhold from such school district sufficient moneys from any state appropriation to which such school district may be entitled and apply so much as shall be necessary to the payment of the principal and interest on the indebtedness of the school district then due. All appropriations for school districts of the State shall be subject to the provisions of this paragraph.
- (5) If the general obligation debt be authorized by a majority vote of the qualified electors of the school district voting in a referendum authorized by law, there shall be no conditions or restrictions limiting the incurring of such indebtedness except:
  - (a) those restrictions and limitations imposed in the authorization to incur such indebtedness;
  - (b) such general obligation debt shall be issued within five years of the date of such referendum; and
  - (c) the provisions of subsection (3) hereof.
- (6) In addition to the bonded indebtedness authorized by subsection (5), during the period beginning on the date of the ratification of this article in 1977 and ending on the fifth anniversary of that date, the governing body of any school district may incur bonded indebtedness to the limit authorized by Section 5, Article X of the Constitution as of January 1, 1976, and upon such terms and conditions as the General Assembly may have heretofore or may hereafter prescribe; provided, however, that in determining the limit authorized by Section 5, Article X of the Constitution, in the event the assessed value of all taxable property in any school district decreases in any year during the aforesaid five-year period to an amount less than the assessed value of all taxable property in any such school district as of December 31, 1975, the assessed value of all taxable property of any such school district as of December 31, 1975, shall be applied in determining any such school district's bonded indebtedness during the aforesaid five-year period. After the fifth anniversary of that date, the governing body of any school district may incur general obligation debt in an amount not exceeding eight percent of the assessed value of all taxable property of such school district subject to the provisions of subsection (3) of this section and upon such terms and conditions as the General Assembly may prescribe.

In computing the eight percent debt limitation imposed by the provisions of this subsection, bonded indebtedness existing on the date of the fifth anniversary of the ratification of this article in 1977 and bonded indebtedness incurred under the provisions of subsection (5) of this section shall not be considered in the computation of the eight percent limitation.
- (7) General obligation debt may also be incurred in anticipation of the collection of ad valorem taxes (tax anticipation notes) under such terms and conditions as the General Assembly may prescribe by law. Such tax anticipation notes shall be secured by a pledge of such taxes and a pledge of the full faith, credit and taxing power of the school district. All tax anticipation notes shall be expressed to mature not later than ninety days from the date as of which such taxes may be paid without penalty.
- (8) General obligation notes may be issued in anticipation of the proceeds of general obligation bonds which may lawfully be issued (bond anticipation notes) under such terms and conditions that the General Assembly may prescribe by law. Such bond anticipation notes shall be secured by a pledge of the proceeds of the bonds in anticipation of which such bond

ond anticipation notes shall be expressed to mature not later than one year following the date of issuance, but if the General Assembly shall so authorize by law, bond anticipation notes may be refunded or renewed. (1976 (59) 2217; 1977 (60) 90.)

**SECTION 16.** Regulation of benefits, funding and membership contributions of state-operated retirement systems; investment of funds; State Retirement Systems Investment Panel.

The governing body of any retirement or pension system in this State funded in whole or in part by public funds shall not pay any increased benefits to members or beneficiaries of such system above the benefit levels in effect on January 1, 1979, unless such governing body shall first determine that funding for such increase on a sound actuarial basis has been provided or is concurrently provided.

The General Assembly shall annually appropriate funds and prescribe member contributions for any state-operated retirement system which will insure the availability of funds to meet all normal and accrued liability of the system on a sound actuarial basis as determined by the governing body of the system.

Assets and funds established, created and accruing for the purpose of paying obligations to members of the several retirement systems of the State and political subdivisions shall not be diverted or used for any other purpose.

Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 11 of this article, the funds of the various state-operated retirement systems may be invested and reinvested in equity securities of any corporation within the United States that is registered on a national securities exchange as provided in the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 or any successor act or quoted through the National Association of Securities Dealers Automatic Quotations System or similar service. Upon the enactment of the implementing legislation required by this paragraph, there is established the State Retirement Systems Investment Panel. The panel shall consist of five members, one each appointed by the Governor, the State Treasurer, the Comptroller General, and the chairmen of the respective committees of the Senate and House of Representatives having subject matter jurisdiction over appropriations. The appointee of the Governor shall serve as chairman. All persons appointed must possess substantial financial investment experience and no person may be appointed or continue to serve who is an elected or appointed officer or employee of the State or any of its political subdivisions, including school districts. The General Assembly shall implement this paragraph by enacting legislation establishing the panel and providing for the terms, duties, and compensation of its members, and which specifically authorizes the investments allowed by this paragraph, and may provide limitations on investments in equity securities as it considers prudent. The panel established by this paragraph shall not exist until it is established in the implementing legislation required pursuant to this paragraph. (1979 Act No. 3, eff January 24, 1979; 1997 Act No. 77, Section 1, eff June 4, 1997.)

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→§ 11-27-40. **Effect of New Article X on bonds of political subdivisions.**

The governing body of each of the political subdivisions of the State shall be empowered to incur general obligation debt for their respective political subdivisions as permitted by Section 14 of New Article X and in accordance with its provisions and limitations. All laws shall continue in force and effect after the ratification date, but each of such laws is amended as follows:

If no election be prescribed in such law and an election is required by New Article X, then in every such instance, a majority vote of the qualified electors of the political subdivision voting in the referendum herein authorized is declared a condition precedent to the issuance of bonds pursuant to such law. The governing body of each of the political subdivisions shall be empowered to order any such referendum as is required by New Article X or any other provision of the Constitution, to prescribe the notice thereof and to conduct or cause such referendum to be conducted in the manner prescribed by Title 7, Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976.

If an election be prescribed by the provisions of such law, but is not required by the provisions of New Article X, then in every such instance, no election need be held (notwithstanding the requirement therefor in such law) and the remaining provisions of such law shall constitute a full and complete authorization to issue bond in accordance with such remaining provisions.

If a statutory debt limitation be prescribed by any such law, then in lieu thereof, the debt limitation shall be that resulting from the provisions of Section 14 of New Article X.

Notwithstanding any contrary provision in any law, any issue of general obligation bonds maturing not later than ten years from their date of issuance and in the amount of not exceeding one million five hundred thousand dollars may be sold at private sale and without advertisement, if not less than seven days prior to their delivery, notice of intention to sell such bonds at private sale shall be given by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in such political subdivision. Such notice shall set forth the purchaser, the purchase price, interest rates, and maturity schedule of such bonds.

As permitted by paragraph 8 of Section 14 of New Article X, all political subdivisions are authorized and empowered to incur general obligation debt in anticipation of the collection of ad valorem taxes or licenses (tax anticipation notes). Tax anticipation notes shall be expressed to mature not later than ninety days from the date on which such taxes or license fees may be paid without penalty. In the case of counties and incorporated municipalities, tax anticipation notes shall be issued pursuant to an ordinance adopted in the manner provided by law. In the case of any special purpose district, tax anticipation notes may be authorized by a resolution of its governing body but such action shall be authorized, approved, or ratified by an ordinance of the governing body or governing bodies (as the case may be) of the county or counties wherein such special purpose district is situate. The provisions of this item shall take effect upon May 30, 1977.

The provisions of Chapter 17 of Title 11, relating to the issuance of bond anticipation notes, shall continue in force and effect after the ratification with respect to all political subdivisions and the governing body of each political subdivision is hereby authorized and empowered to issue bond anticipation notes pursuant to and in accordance with the provisions of that chapter and the limitations imposed by paragraph 9 of Section 14 of New Article X.

All laws now in force permitting any political subdivisions to incur indebtedness (and to issue bonds or other evidences of debt) which shall be payable solely from a revenue-producing project or from a special source, which source does not involve revenues from any tax or license, shall continue in force and effect after the ratification date. Evidences of such indebtedness shall contain a statement on the face thereof specifying the sources from which payment is to be made and shall state that the full faith, credit, and taxing powers of the issuer are not pledged therefor.



Any law containing any provisions inconsistent herewith (including Chapter 19 of Title 11, as amended) is herewith amended by the removal therefrom of such inconsistent provisions.

8. The initiative and referendum provisions contained in Article 13, Chapter 9 of Title 4 and Chapter 17 of Title 5 of the 1976 Code shall not be applicable to any other ordinance authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds unless a notice, signed by not less than five qualified electors, of the intention to seek a referendum, be filed both in the office of the clerk of court of the county wherein such political subdivision is situate and with the clerk or other recording officer of the political subdivision. Such notices of intention to seek a referendum shall be so filed within twenty days following the publication by the governing body of the political subdivision of notice in a newspaper of general circulation in such political subdivision of the adoption of such ordinance.

9. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a political subdivision may issue general obligation bonds in accordance with one or more of the following provisions:

(a) The principal amount of the bonds maturing in a given year shall be in an amount as prescribed by the governing body of the political subdivision. The first maturing bonds of an issue shall mature within five years from the date on which they are issued; and no bond shall mature later than thirty years from the date on which it is issued.

(b) The bonds shall be sold at public sale, after advertisement of the sale in a newspaper having general circulation in the State or in a financial publication published in the City of New York. The advertisement must appear not less than seven days prior to the date set for the sale. The advertisement may set as a sale date a fixed date not less than seven days following publication, or the advertisement may advise that the sale date will be at least seven days following the date of publication. If a fixed date of sale is not set forth in the notice of sale published in accordance with this subitem, the date selected for the receipt of bids must be disseminated via an electronic information service at least forty-eight hours prior to the time set for the receipt of bids. If a fixed date of sale is set forth in the notice of sale, it may be modified by notice disseminated via an electronic information service at least forty-eight hours prior to the time set for the receipt of bids on the modified date of sale. No bonds may be sold pursuant to this subitem on a date that is more than sixty days after the date of the most recent publication of the notice of sale. Bids for the purchase of bonds may be received in such form as determined by the governing body of the issuer.

(c) The bonds may be disposed of at private sale if there are no bids received or if all bids are rejected. The provisions of this section shall not prevent a sale at private sale to the United States of America or any agency thereof.

(d) Bonds issued pursuant to this section may be issued with a provision for their redemption prior to their maturity at par and accrued interest, plus such redemption premium as may be prescribed by the governing body of the issuer, but no bond shall be redeemable before maturity unless it contains a statement to that effect. In the proceedings authorizing the issuance of the bonds, provisions shall be made specifying the manner of call and the notice that must be given.

HISTORY: 1977 Act No. 125 § 5.

HISTORY: Amended by 1999 Act No. 113, § 22, eff June 30, 1999.

#### EFFECT OF AMENDMENT

The **1999** amendment changed "eight years" to "ten years", "five hundred thousand dollars" to "one million five hundred thousand dollars" and "ten days" to "seven days" in subsection (4) and added subsection (9).

#### CROSS REFERENCES

Refunding bond issuance, see § 11-15-440.

#### ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OPINIONS

A county may incur indebtedness in anticipation of a federal grant as provided by article X, section 14(10) of the South Carolina Constitution and Chapter 19 of the Title 11 of the *South Carolina Code of Laws*, 1976. 1989 Op Atty Gen, No. 89-109, p 293.

#### NOTES OF DECISIONS

In general 1

1. In general

Section 11-27-40 and SC Const Art X § 14(8) both provide that tax anticipation notes must mature no later than ninety days after the due date of the taxes anticipated, and this limitation effectively restricts the notes to repayment out of taxes levied for the current fiscal year. Davenport v. City of Rock Hill (S.C. 1993) 315 S.C. 114, 432 S.E.2d 451.

Code 1976 § 11-27-40, SC ST § 11-27-40

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**Beaufort County Council's Public Services Committee minutes of June 13, 2006**

# PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

June 13, 2006

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

The Public Services Committee met on Tuesday, June 13, 2006, at 4:00 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room, Administration Building, Beaufort, SC.

## ATTENDANCE

Members: Chairman Peter Lamb, Vice-Chairman Herbert Glaze, members Margaret Griffin and William McBride present. Members Mark Generales, Dick Stewart and W. R. "Skeet" Von Harten absent. Non-Committee member Gerald Dawson also present.

Staff: Paul Andres, Interim Airports Director; Eddie Bellemy, Public Works Director; Buz Boehm, Public Services Director; David Hughes, CIP Manager; Gregg Hunt, Mosquito Control Director; Colin Kinton, Transportation Engineer; Bob Klink, County Engineer; Suzanne Larson, Public Information Officer; Jim Minor, Solid Waste and Recycling Director.

## ACTION ITEMS

### 1. Consideration of Contract Award

- Restroom/Shelter Facilities Construction at Basil Green and Shell Point Parks (\$245,000)


**Discussion:** Mr. Bob Klink, County Engineer, reviewed this item with the Committee. The two parks are experiencing moderate to heavy use. As a result, users continue to ask Parks and Leisure Services ("PALS") for the installation of restroom facilities at both of these locations. Basil Green Park once had a restroom facility, but that was destroyed by fire in 2005. The restroom at the Shell Point Park will be a first time facility for the park. These two wood and masonry restroom/shelter facilities are both 900 sq ft each.

On May 25, 2006, Staff received the following three bids for the above-referenced project:

New Tech, Inc., Bluffton, SC	\$245,000
Construction Associates	\$320,000
Blaw Construction	\$390,000
Engineer's Estimate	\$261,000

The following is a breakdown of New Tech's bid proposal:

Shell Point Park	\$130,000
Basil Green Park	\$115,000
Total Bid	\$245,000

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Clerk to Council  
Beaufort County, SC  
By:   
Suzanne M. Rainey  
Date: August 15, 2006

New Tech, Inc., of Bluffton, SC, submitted the lowest bid. The bid was analyzed and the price was found to be reasonable. Staff also reviewed this bidder's proposal and has determined that they made a "Good Faith Effort" with respect to the County's requirements regarding Small and Minority Business Enterprises (S/MBE). There is no apparent reason or cause for rejecting this bid. Construction will be simultaneous, and will be completed 150 days after the award of a contract.

**Recommendation:** Council award a contract to New Tech, Inc., in the amount of \$245,000 for the construction of restroom/shelter facilities at Basil Green and Shell Point Parks.

**2. Consideration of Contract Award**

- **Contract #31 – Dirt Road Reconstruction for Fiddler Road, Honeysuckle Lane, Flycatcher Lane, Chickadee Lane, Wood Duck Lane (Quail Run) and Carolyn Drive, Lady's Island (\$998,619.70)**

**Discussion:** Mr. Bob Klink, County Engineer, discussed this issue with the Committee. On June 2, 2006, Staff received two bids for the above-referenced project and reviewed the bid proposals submitted.

REA Contracting, LLC.	\$ 998,619.70
Plowden Construction Co., Inc	\$1,157,963.00
Engineer's Estimate	\$ 979,649.50

REA Contracting, LLC., submitted the lowest bid. An analysis of their bid prices was reviewed, and there is no apparent cause for rejecting their bid. Staff also reviewed this bidder's proposal and has determined that they made a "Good Faith Effort" with respect to the County's requirements regarding Small and Minority Business Enterprises (S/MBE). Based upon this analysis, Staff recommends award of this contract to REA Contracting, LLC, in the amount of \$998,619.70. This project will be funded with BCTC funds with a budget of \$1,000,000.

**Recommendation:** Council award Contract #31 to REA Contracting, LLC, in the amount of \$998,619.70 for the construction and paving of Fiddler Road, Honeysuckle Lane, Flycatcher Lane, Chickadee Lane, Wood Duck Lane (Quail Run), and Carolyn Drive, Lady's Island.

**3. Consideration of Contract Award**

- **Design/Build Construction Proposal for Three Disabilities and Special Needs Community Training Homes (\$1,185,251)**

**Discussion:** Mr. Bob Klink, County Engineer, addressed this item with the Committee. The County's Department of Disabilities and Special Needs ("DSN") has determined that some of the existing Community Training Homes are not compliant with the American Disabilities Act ("ADA"), and fire safety design guidelines. To achieve compliance, it was decided that the most cost-effective approach is to replace the existing homes with three new homes, in northern

Beaufort County. Each single-story home will be approximately 2,000 square feet in size, and designed to accommodate four individuals with special needs plus one supervisory staff person. The homes will have fire sprinkler protection and will be designed using ADA guidelines for full wheelchair access to all rooms, including bathrooms, kitchens and meal preparation areas.

On May 23, 2006, Staff received one proposal for the above-referenced project from Beaufort Construction, Inc., of Beaufort, SC, in the amount of \$1,185,251. The estimate for this project is \$1,200,000. The Review Committee, which consisted of the Deputy Administrator for Community Services, DSN Division Head, DSN Residential Director, and CIP Managers, visited proposed home sites and discussed the proposal submitted by Beaufort Construction.

The proposal price was analyzed and found to be reasonable. The contractor will be using S/MBE subcontractor participation during the construction phase of this project. There is no apparent reason or cause for rejecting this proposal. The funding will come from the proposed FY-2007 CIP, which will have \$1,200,000 allocated for this project. Additionally, the State of South Carolina will provide \$300,000 in grants to the County to be used towards this project. Construction on all three homes will be simultaneous, with the completion of the first home in 120 days and the last in 270 days.

Committee Chairman, Mr. Peter Lamb, observed that on page 2 of 3 of the certification document with Beaufort Construction, Inc., they neglected to answer the question "*Has a federal agency or a federally-certified state or local agency performed any review of your accounts or records in connection with any grant or contract within any grant or contract within the past twelve months?*" Staff is to confirm the answer with Beaufort Construction.

Committee member Mrs. Margaret Griffin inquired if all three of the homes were basically the same requirements? Staff advised all three were essentially the same, using the same floor plan.

**Recommendation:** Council award a design/build contract to Beaufort Construction, Inc., in the amount of \$1,185,251, for the acquisition of three building lots and the design and construction of three DSN Community Training Homes in northern Beaufort County.

#### **4. Consideration of Contract Award**

- **Change Order #6 for the Hilton Head Island Airport Hangar Design/Build Construction (\$232,900)**

**Discussion:** Mr. Bob Klink, County Engineer, reviewed this item with the Committee. On February 28, 2005, Council awarded a design/build contract to Beaufort Construction in the amount of \$1,659,400 to construct aircraft hangars at the Hilton Head Island Airport. Construction of these hangars is a FY-2005 CIP project.

During the design and permitting phases following contract award, a number of significant changes to the original project scope occurred. These changes involve structural modifications to one of the hangars, relocation of two sets of hangars to a different location on site, increased cost of materials, and increased costs associated with complying to the Town of

Hilton Head Island's building codes and other applicable ordinances. Funding for this \$232,900 change order would come from two sources: the remaining balance of \$140,432 in the FY-2005 Hilton Head Island's Hangar CIP project account and \$92,468 from the Airport Enterprise Fund.

**Recommendation:** Council award a contract Change Order in the amount of \$232,900 to Beaufort Construction for the Hilton Head Island Airport Hangar Project.

**5. Consideration of Contract Award**

- **Addendum of Bluffton Parkway contract for Buckwalter Parkway Widening from US Highway 278 to Phase IV of Bluffton Parkway (\$5,337,530.59)**

**Discussion:** Mr. Bob Klink, County Engineer, discussed this item with the Committee. The final plans for the widening of Buckwalter Parkway from US Highway 278 to Phase IV of the Bluffton Parkway were completed in mid-May. Administration requested the Engineering Division to expedite the procurement and hence the construction of this roadway section. The fastest method to get the above-referenced roadway under construction would be a change order to the current contract with Malphrus Construction Company, Inc., which would save about three months time in starting construction on this portion of the Buckwalter Parkway widening.

For the past few weeks Staff and the design engineers, Thomas & Hutton Engineering, have been working with Malphrus on this proposed change order. Malphrus is prepared to do this work with the same overall completion date for \$5,337,530.59 extending already bid unit prices. This includes construction of the much-needed dual, left turn lanes on US Highway 278 onto Buckwalter Parkway, and will be constructed as a first priority.

Staff and the design engineers have reviewed the proposed change order and have determined that if the same work was put out for bid, the prices would be higher than those presented on this change order.

The project will be funded with impact fees, accommodation taxes, Town of Bluffton and Town of Hilton Head Island funds.

Committee members expressed concerns over what appeared to be a \$5.3 million contract that was not put out for bids, which would have allowed small and minority-owned businesses to compete for work. Mr. Klink posted a map demonstrating the area in question, Buckwalter Parkway from SC Highway 170 to Simmonsville Road. The design in one area was completed ahead of schedule and the County Administrator requested the work be expedited on a 1.6 miles stretch of highway with dual left turning lanes. Unfortunately, there was an accident at this location involving a fatality recently.

It was the decision of Staff and Administration to offer the job to Malphrus Construction, since they had secured the contract to do the other leg of the parkway and at a good price. This would be an add-on to the other contract, saving time and expense with equipment and personnel already in the area.



Mr. Lamb stated that for a \$5.3 million contract, Malphrus Construction should at least come in and demonstrate that they attempted to subcontract work to local small businesses and/or minority businesses.

Mr. Gerald Dawson inquired how the “Good Faith Effort” exercise was conducted. Mr. Klink replied the contractor is required to notify certified businesses. It is taken one step further by having the contractor notify any small and/or minority-owned business in the County. Once a business responds, they are given an opportunity to bid. Once a business is contacted and expresses interest in bidding on a particular contract, written correspondence is then forwarded to them. The contractor has to submit forms stating which businesses they have contacted. Staff then verifies their information. Dirt road contracts utilize about 40% of small and/or minority subcontractors, which is somewhat unusual.

Mr. Buz Boehm, Public Services Director, will provide an update on the County’s small and/or minority businesses notification procedures. This is a change order to an existing contract and it is not going out for bids.

**Recommendation:** Council to approve an addendum of the Bluffton Parkway contract for the Buckwalter Parkway widening from US Highway 278 to Phase IV to Malphrus Construction Company in the amount of \$5,337,530.59 for the Buckwalter Parkway

**6. Off-Agenda Item**

• **Discussion of Lighting of Communications Towers**

**Discussion:** Committee members recommended the appropriate lighting be applied to communications towers retrospectively in the County.

**Recommendation:** Council approve the requirement for lighting communications towers retrospectively in the County.

**7. Presentation of the Northern Beaufort County Highway Capital Improvement Projects**

**Discussion:** Mr. Buz Boehm, Public Services Director, and Mr. Colin Kinton, County Traffic Engineer, discussed this issue with the Committee. County Staff worked hand in hand with the Planning and Engineering staff from the Town of Port Royal and the City of Beaufort to develop a list of projects that attacks transportation issues in northern Beaufort County as seen by staff.

The list was prioritized and presented to the mayors and town managers. On June 12 the list was presented to the Transportation Advisory Group, where they recommended it go forward. County Council approved it on first reading, by title only, that night.

**Recommendation:** Committee approve the list of proposed Northern Beaufort County Highway Capital Improvement Projects as submitted, and the combined list of both northern and southern Capital Improvements Projects, subject to the approval of the municipalities, with the lists being forwarded to the Planning Commission for consideration coincidentally to referring to the Planning Commission that these projects be forwarded to the Finance Committee with the necessary documentation supporting a one-cent sales tax.

#### **8. Discussion of a Proposed Transportation Tax Referendum**

**Discussion:** Mr. Buz Boehm, Public Services Director, and Mr. Colin Kinton, County Traffic Engineer, reviewed this item with the Committee.

Southern and northern Beaufort County lists of CIP projects to be funded from a one-penny sales tax were combined into a single list of projects. The first three projects out of ten listed are designated for southern Beaufort County, totaling \$77 million out of the \$147 million to be sought through a proposed penny tax increase.

The proposed transportation tax referendum would be for \$147 million or six years, whichever comes first.

**Recommendation:** Council approve on second reading an ordinance for a one-cent transportation tax referendum for Beaufort County Highway Capital Improvement Projects for \$147 million or six years, whichever comes first.

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

#### **9. Consideration of Contract Award**

- **Household Hazardous Waste Collection and Disposal – One Time Event (>\$50,000)**

**Discussion:** Mr. Eddie Bellemy, Public Works Director, reviewed this item with the Committee. Staff issued an Invitation for Bids for firms to provide Household Hazardous Waste Collection and Disposal Services for a one-time event to be held on June 17, 2006. This is in northern Beaufort County. The following firms responded:

Care Environmental Corp., Landing, NJ  
Pollution Control Industries Inc., East Chicago, IN  
EQ – The Environmental Quality Company, Tampa, FL

A committee consisting of the Public Works Director, the Solid Waste Manager and Recycling Coordinators reviewed the bids. The Review Committee studied the submissions from the firms and Care Environmental Corporation was selected. Selection was based on lower overall unit price costs and much lower mobilization costs. Funds are budgeted in the Solid Waste and Recycling budget. Since pricing for the services will be based on the amount of material received from residents, an exact total cost cannot be determined at this time. To

control costs within the budgeted amount, Care Environmental Corporation will compute a running total during the event and limit total costs not to exceed \$50,000.

The collection will be held at Public Works on Shanklin Road in northern Beaufort County. This site was chosen for this first-time event because the area is easier to control and there is no way to anticipate what the response will be from the public. A running total will be kept and once the cost equals \$50,000, the collections will be stopped. Should this collection effort be successful, it is anticipated that the County will hold future collections in northern and southern Beaufort County at least once a year, if not twice a year.

**Recommendation:** Committee award a construction contract to Care Environmental Corporation in an amount not to exceed \$50,000 for Household Hazardous Waste Collection and Disposal Services for a one-time event to be held on June 17, 2006.

#### **10. Response Protocol for Preventing/Controlling Mosquito-Borne Diseases**

**Discussion:** Mr. Gregg Hunt, Mosquito Control Director, gave a PowerPoint presentation. With the anticipated incursion of West Nile Virus (“WNV”) into the County, a Response Protocol in early 2003 for Mosquito Control personnel was developed to organize abatement efforts against this new public health threat among our residents and visitors. Afterwards, WNV was confirmed in wild birds during September and October of 2003.

This Protocol consists of a sequential approach for proactive and reactive strategies:

(1) Mosquitoes, dead birds (only crows and blue jays), and blood samples collected from humans and horses will be submitted to Mosquito Control, the Department of Health and Environmental Control (“DHEC”) or Clemson Veterinary Diagnostic Center for analysis.

(2) Upon the confirmation of WNV, a 1-mile radius surrounding this positive case will be established for the strategic application of public health insecticides using trucks during the evening twilight hours and throughout the night; if multiple cases of WNV are identified in a general area or throughout Beaufort County, then truck applications will be supplemented with aerial spray missions during the day.

(3) The County Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Public Information Officer, County Council Chairman and corresponding Council member(s) will be notified immediately of any WNV activity.

(4) Coordination of information about the WNV outbreak (via DHEC) and the corresponding Mosquito Control activities will commence and continue with the local and/or regional media in a timely manner; public service announcements (via the media and Mosquito Control website) will emphasize information about mosquito avoidance, prevention of mosquito breeding on properties, and effective personal protection.

(5) Intensified mosquito control activities will continue until DHEC staff has declared the disappearance of the WNV outbreak.

(6) Mosquito Control personnel are prepared to work up to 7 days a week, if required.

The Protocol can be applied to Eastern Equine Encephalitis (“EEE”) in which the target zone is increased to a 3-mile radius. EEE represents another public health threat in Beaufort County wherein a 16-year-old teenager died of an EEE infection on St. Helena Island in 1989. EEE has killed at least one dozen local horses (including one near Pritchardville in 2005) during the previous years. This disease typically occurs during the latter portion of the mosquito season (i.e., April – November). Of particular concern, EEE activity has been documented most recently in wild birds, sentinel chickens and horses within 13 various counties in Florida.

Per DHEC and Clemson University policies, the disclosure of specific locations for any confirmed mosquito-borne disease among mosquitoes, birds, horses and humans is not allowed.

Overall, accurate risk assessment of WNV and/or EEE activity will allow public health authorities to establish control strategies and public awareness campaigns that will reduce the impact of these potential serious mosquito-borne diseases among the residents and visitors of the County.

Committee members agreed this presentation needs to be presented before full Council, the media and the viewing audience as soon as possible for more community awareness. Mr. Hunt also emphasized the inherent danger posed by a multitude of communications towers that endanger the flight crew when dispersing the mosquito spray aerially. The C-130s fly at an altitude of 200 feet and are constantly scanning for 199 existing towers in the County and also for new, previously unknown, towers at 150 feet or so. The towers need to be well lit for the avoidance factor. The issue of lighting the communications towers is an agenda item for the June 21, 2006 Land Management Committee meeting.

**Status:** No action required. Informational only.

#### **11. Off-Agenda Item**

- **Discussion of Request for Traffic Signal by Bluffton Fire Department**

**Discussion:** Committee Chairman, Mr. Peter Lamb, shared a letter from Bluffton Fire District regarding St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church’s (“Church”) request for the installation of a traffic signal in front of fire headquarters on Fording Island Road. The Bluffton Fire District is in full support of this request, however they are of the understanding that this may not become a reality, as SCDOT and County staff are not in favor of this.

The Fire Commission and Bluffton Fire Chief Clay Graves would like to set up a meeting with others who would have approval power and discuss the feasibility of installing a traffic signal. With the increase in the volume of traffic on Fording Island Road, it is becoming increasingly dangerous to enter and exit. A new aerial ladder truck is scheduled for delivery to the fire department in August and it will not fit in the current crossover. Mr. Lamb stated personally he finds it absurd that a fire department does not have a controlled traffic light to facilitate entering and exiting US Highway 278.

Mr. Buz Boehm stated Staff and Wilbur Smith Associates has met with this group several times. The study conducted by Wilbur Smith Associates that has been approved by Council does not have an intersection curb cut for every business, fire department, organization, school, etc. Now Wilbur Smith Associates, who was hired by the Church, is saying a curb cut can be added to allow ingress and egress at the fire station. The Church and school want to tie in to this location.

Staff will attempt to set up another meeting with the Church and the Fire Department.

**Status:** No action required. Informational only.

**Beaufort County Council's Public Services Committee minutes of July 18, 2006**

## PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

July 18, 2006

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

The Public Services Committee met on Tuesday, July 18, 2006, at 4:00 p.m. in Room 280, Administration Building, Beaufort, SC.

### ATTENDANCE

Members: Vice-Chairman Herbert Glaze, members Mark Generales, Margaret Griffin, William McBride and Dick Stewart present. Member W. R. "Skeet" Von Harten absent. Non-Committee member Starletta Hairston also present.

Staff: Paul Andres, Interim Airports Director; Eddie Bellemy, Public Works Director; Buz Boehm, Public Services Director; Morris Campbell, Community Services Director; David Hughes, CIP Manager; Colin Kinton, Transportation Engineer; Bob Klink, County Engineer; Jim Minor, Solid Waste and Recycling Director; Jack Sullivan, Register of Deeds.

### ACTION ITEMS

1. Consideration of Contract Award
  - Sale of Old Beaufort County Jailhouse (\$511,142)

**Discussion:** Committee Vice-Chairman Mr. Herbert Glaze opened the meeting. Mr. Bob Klink, County Engineer, reviewed this item with the Committee. In May 2006, Staff decided to solicit offers from the public to purchase the old jailhouse on Duke Street "as is". On June 15, 2006, the following purchase proposals were received, along with deposits equaling ten percent (10%) of each proposal.

Proposer	Location	Amount
Gumbo Limbo, LLC	Hilton Head SC	\$511,142
Factory Creek Landings Group, LLC	Beaufort SC	\$475,000
BIV, LLC	Beaufort SC	\$471,000
Prince Street Group	Beaufort SC	\$225,000

Staff developed two estimates. The first estimate is for the value of the land without discounting the financial liabilities. The second estimate is for the cost to provide a minimum level of essential improvements required to make the jailhouse safe and fit for any type of commercial use. This second estimate does not include any allowance for alterations to improve the usability/efficiency of the space. After discounting the \$800,000 estimated land value by the \$340,000 estimated cost to make the structure habitable, Staff recommended an adjusted fair market value of \$460,000.

Certified True Copy  
Clerk to Council  
Beaufort County, SC  
By: Suzanne M. Rainey  
Suzanne M. Rainey  
Date: August 10, 2006

The Selection Committee for this proposal consisted of the Deputy Administrator for Public Services, Controller, Public Works Deputy Director, CIP Manager and Purchasing Contract Specialist. The Committee reviewed and evaluated the process used to determine a fair market value and the proposals received. They concluded that the adjusted fair market value of \$460,000 is reasonable, and that Gumbo Limbo, LLC, has submitted a valid offer to purchase the old Beaufort County jailhouse for the amount of \$511,142.

The City of Beaufort needs to approve the subdivision of the lot and the prospective buyers are aware of this. The buyers have no definitive plans for the use of this property at this time. They are also aware of the requirements for the beautification and restoration of a historical structure.

Committee members approved the sale unanimously.

**Recommendation:** Council award a contract to Gumbo Limbo, LLC, Hilton Head Island, SC, to purchase the old Beaufort County Jailhouse for the amount of \$511,142 pending the City of Beaufort's approval of the subdivision of the old jailhouse/SCHEC lot.

**2. Tree Obstructions at Hilton Head Island and Beaufort County (Lady's Island) Airports (\$168,044)**

**Discussion:** Mr. Bob Klink, County Engineer, addressed this item with the Committee. Wilbur Smith Associates (WSA) is currently under contract to provide professional design and consulting services for aviation-related projects at both Beaufort County airports. Over the past few years, numerous trees have grown to heights where they are protruding into obstacle-free approach airspace at both airports. The FAA and State Division of Aeronautics have expressed concerns over this matter and requested that the County takes steps to expeditiously correct these problems.

Aviation easements have been obtained on most of the affected properties to allow the County to trim or remove the trees as required. WSA Task Orders #7 and #8 provide professional design and construction management services needed to remove and mitigate the tree obstructions at both airports. Funding for these professional services contracts will initially come from the Airports Enterprise Fund. Tree obstruction removal projects are eligible for both FAA and State Division of Aeronautics grant reimbursement once the work has been completed and both agencies have indicated their willingness to do so. The Aviation Advisory Board concurs with these projects.

The Committee agreed unanimously to award Task Order #7 and Task Order #8 to Wilbur Smith Associates who will do the planning and the mitigation, and identify the trees in question.

**Recommendation:** Council award to Wilbur Smith Associates Task Order #7 in the amount of \$95,618 and Task Order #8 in the amount of \$72,426, totaling \$168,044, for



professional services contracts for the removal of tree obstructions at both Beaufort County airports.

### 3. Bluffton Parkway Access Management Plan

**Discussion:** Mr. Colin Kinton, County Traffic Engineer, described this item to Committee members. The Bluffton Parkway Access Management Plan (“Plan”) establishes guidelines designed to improve the efficiency, capacity and safety of the Bluffton Parkway. The guidelines are intended to achieve the following: reduce potential traffic congestion by controlling where vehicles enter, exit and turn along the Parkway, smooth the flow of traffic by minimizing potential disruptions, reduce the number of conflict points and standardize access to reduce accident potential, reduce the reliance on the Parkway for local-type trips, provide access to businesses and residences, and improve mobility. The goal is to maintain a minimum acceptable arterial corridor service for week-day peak hours.

The Plan was presented to the Beaufort County Transportation Advisory Group and was then recommended to be forwarded to this Committee for consideration.

Committee member Mrs. Margaret Griffin observed the map included in Council’s package was out of date, as it did not depict an existing road, US Highway 278 to Sun City. Mr. Buz Boehm assured Committee members an updated map would be distributed to Council in their next packet. The Committee agreed unanimously to recommend Council approve the Bluffton Parkway Access Management Plan.

**Recommendation:** Council approve the Bluffton Parkway Access Management Plan as submitted.

### 4. Review of a Proposed Transportation Tax Referendum Projects List

**Discussion:** Mr. Buz Boehm, Public Services Director, and Mr. Colin Kinton, County Traffic Engineer, reviewed this item with the Committee. Mr. Kinton distributed an updated list of projects for the proposed transportation tax referendum and a copy of a letter he received from SCDOT regarding the US Highway 17 widening project.

Mr. Boehm advised Committee members there have been some changes in available funding for the projects, and some changes in the potential cost estimates for the capital roadway projects. This newly revised list was mailed out to the municipalities last week for their comments.

Mr. Kinton referred to the SCDOT letter he distributed, wherein the letter describes an anticipated shortfall of \$19 million for the US Highway 17 widening project. There are changes to the new list, totaling \$152 million, compared to \$147 on the original list. Deleted from the original list was transit service (LRTA) at \$5 million. Two projects on Hilton Head Island are included under US Highway 278 improvements, totaling \$28 million.

**Recommendation:** Council approve the revised funding of the widening of US Highway 17 in the amount of \$5 million.

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**5. Consideration of Contract Award**

- **Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) for Management Information Systems (MIS) (\$32,422)**

**Discussion:** Mr. Bob Klink, County Engineer, discussed this issue with the Committee. The existing 40 KVA UPS located at the Arthur Horne Building provides emergency power to critical MIS computers and other electronics during utility power loss. The system is approximately 15 years old. The County has been notified by the manufacturer that service and replacement parts support will discontinue soon. The unit batteries have failed, and the system is off-line. Replacement cost of the batteries is approximately \$10,000.

New electronic equipment/components have been added to the MIS inventory, thus requiring the need to increase the uninterruptible power supply to 50 KVA. Due to the age of the old system, cost of replacement batteries and the need for additional capacity, it is recommended that the entire UPS be replaced with an upgraded system.

The Deputy Director for Public Works has gotten the following quotes for the replacement of the old UPS at the Arthur Horne Building with a new 50 KVA UPS:

Lee Technologies, Inc.	\$32,422
Eaton Power Quality Corporation	\$36,041

Public Works and the Engineering Division have reviewed these quotes, and recommend purchasing from Lee Technologies the 50 KVA UPS at \$32,422 to replace the old system at the Arthur Horne Building. The funding for the new UPS would be from the FY 2002 CIP for Special Capital Equipment. This account has a current balance of \$67,331.

Committee members agreed unanimously to approve this purchase.

**Recommendation:** Committee approve the purchase of a new 50 KVA UPS for the Arthur Horne Building from Lee Technologies, Inc., for \$32,422 to replace the existing old system.

**6. Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event Held June 17, 2006**

**Discussion:** Eddie Bellemy, Public Works Director and Mr. Jim Minor, Solid Waste and Recycling Director, described the recent event held on June 17 on Shanklin Road to Committee members. This was an opportunity for County residents to get rid of dangerous, "hard to dispose of" chemical products. Two part-time recycling coordinators were hired and they organized this effort.

It was unknown how much of a response there would be to this first-time event. The plan was to stop at a \$50,000 expenditure. It ended up being less at \$26,195.42. The response was excellent and the procedure very orderly. Care Environmental, Inc. supervised the collection. The Burton and Hilton Head Island Fire Departments and Burton's Haz Mat Team assisted, EMS stood by and MCAS was alerted in the event of a situation such as the disposal of any explosives collected.

A total of 150 vehicles disposed of items. Some items collected were 2,630 gallons of paint and other flammable liquids, 242 propane tanks, 220 gallons of corrosive acid and base, 220 gallons of liquid pesticides, 55 gallons of antifreeze and one quart of mercury. Ideally Staff would like to hold similar events at least four times yearly, twice north of the Broad River and twice south of the Broad River.

**Status:** No action required. Informational only.

#### **7. Bid Process of Small and Minority-Owned Businesses**

**Discussion:** Mr. Bob Klink, County Engineer, and Mr. David Hughes, CIP Manager, reviewed this item with the Committee. At the last Public Services Committee meeting, members requested a briefing on the County's bid process regarding small and minority-owned businesses. Mr. Hughes spoke to what the Engineering Division does in respect to this program. Exhibits had been previously distributed to Council members illustrating various documents utilized in the Small and Minority Business Notification Program.

These included copies of (i) Beaufort County Ordinance 2005/11 for the Small and Minority Business Notification Program ("Program"); (ii) Small and Minority Business Participation Provisions; (iii) Business Opportunity Notification for the Chambers of Commerce; (iv) Bid and Proposal Project Plan Holders Listing; (v) Business Opportunity Notification for Contractors; (vi) Business Opportunity Notification for Consultants; and (vii) Notification of Bid Solicitation. Also included was a local listing of small and minority businesses in the County.

The Ordinance is the driver of the program. Bidders are required to take affirmative steps and demonstrate they are doing a maximum recruiting effort as required by the Ordinance. Small and Minority businesses are defined as those firms listed and certified with the State Governor's Office and SCDOT.

To insure the Program is well communicated, in addition to utilizing the County's website, notifications are sent out to numerous organizations including the Chambers of Commerce and the Hispanic Contractors Association of the Carolinas. A list of local small and minority contractors, not necessarily certified, is included in the packages sent to bidders. These local contractors are encouraged to become certified.

Some fine tuning with the Purchasing Department is needed to make this a more effective document. At the pre-bid meetings it is stressed that non-compliance with the County's ordinance may result in rejection of a bid.

The County recently held workshops organized by the Purchasing Department on educating local and small businesses how to complete the paperwork and the process required to become state-certified. Committee Vice-Chairman Mr. Herbert Glaze suggested the notation of “certification pending” be added to records of vendors who have applied for state certification but have not yet received this.

**Status:** No action required. Informational only.

**8. Off-Agenda Item**

• **Old House Creek Landing**

**Discussion:** Committee member Mr. Mark Generales relayed an inquiry he received regarding Old House Creek Landing. Oakview Subdivision residents are seeking to close the boat landing after hours (7:00 p.m.) to deter vandalism and parking there.

This is a County boat landing and access is not blocked off. This would be a law enforcement issue and it has been addressed to the Sheriff’s Department.

**Status:** No action required. Informational only.

5

**Beaufort County Council Minutes**  
**June 12, 2006**

Official Proceedings  
County Council of Beaufort County  
June 12, 2006

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

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Council of Beaufort County was held at 4:00 p.m., Monday, June 12, 2006, in Council Chambers of the Administration Building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort, South Carolina.

**ATTENDANCE**

Chairman Weston Newton, Vice Chairman W. R. "Skeet" Von Harten, and members Frank Brafman, Gerald Dawson, Mark Generales, Herbert Glaze, Margaret Griffin, Starletta Hairston, Peter Lamb, William McBride and Dick Stewart.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Chairman led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**INVOCATION**

Councilman Herbert Glaze gave the Invocation.

**REVIEW OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD MAY 22, 2006**

There were no corrections and/or additions made to the minutes of the regular meeting held May 22, 2006.

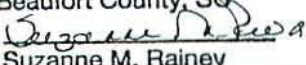
It was moved by Mr. McBride, seconded by Mr. Glaze, that Council approve the proceedings of the regular meeting held May 22, 2006. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

**PROCLAMATION**

**Daufuskie Island Day**

The Chairman proclaimed Saturday, June 24, 2006, as Daufuskie Island Day in Beaufort County, and encouraged everyone to participate in the day of festivities. Mr. Morris Campbell, Beaufort County Deputy Administrator for Community Services, accepted the proclamation.

**RETIREMENT RECOGNITION**

Certified True Copy  
Clerk to Council  
Beaufort County, SC  
By:   
Suzanne M. Rainey  
Date: August 15, 2006

**Joseph McDomick, Jr.**

The Chairman presented a Certificate of Appreciation to the Honorable Joseph McDomick, Jr. in recognition of his 26 years of outstanding service as Beaufort County Magistrate, St. Helena Island, and to express the gratitude of the members of the Beaufort County Council. Chairman Newton acknowledged Judge McDomick's dedication and exemplary service to the citizens of Beaufort County and wished him happiness upon his retirement.

**SOUTH CAROLINA COURT CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The Honorable Elizabeth Smith, Clerk of Court, introduced the Honorable Jean Toal, Chief Justice of the South Carolina Supreme Court. Justice Toal was elected to the South Carolina Supreme Court in 1988 and elected as its Chief Justice in 2000. She is an individual of distinction, as well as a woman of distinction. Judge Toal made a PowerPoint presentation on the South Carolina Statewide Court Case Management System.

This report is for the governing body of Beaufort County about the statewide court case management system. It is an absolutely marvelous success story for the state judicial department, as well as for Beaufort County, in terms of new leadership. In 2000, given budget constraints, Chief Justice Toal realized there would not be any new money, new judges, new resources, yet the case loads were exploding. She was challenged to get more efficiency out of her operations without much in the way of additional resources. Technology was to be the key to making the system more efficient and also more accessible to the citizens. Four relational databases are integrated together into one very sophisticated system. The goal is to have all counties in South Carolina on the system by 2008.

The South Carolina Judicial Department's ("SCJD") technology vision is for: (i) Consistent court operations; (ii) More effective management of resources; (iii) An electronic exchange of information between courts and other agencies; (iv) Eliminate redundancy of operations while increasing accuracy, timeliness, and access to court information; and (v) Improving the effectiveness of the overall criminal justice system of South Carolina.

The Statewide Court Case Management System project includes: (i) Common Pleas Court (Circuit Court - Civil); (ii) General Sessions Court (Circuit Court - Criminal); (iii) Magistrates Court (Criminal, Civil, and Traffic); (iv) Accounting; and (v) Jury Management. Beaufort joins Greenville, Pickens, Richland, York, and Sumter Counties with approximately 31% of the state's litigation now tracked by the statewide court Case Management System ("CMS"). Teams are now completing deployment in Jasper County and beginning implementation in Horry County, then nearly 35% of the state litigation will be tracked by the statewide court CMS.

Some benefits of the court Case Management System are: (i) Cost savings: Eliminates redundant data entry which increases the integrity of the data. Captures information at the source of origin and enables it to be accessible to other users of the system, without having to re-key data, which reduces data entry errors; (ii) Forms generation: Use of multi-part, preprinted forms has been eliminated with the use of laser printers and completion of the forms from within the system;



(iii) Direct public access: Citizens can do research from home through the internet; (iv) Integration: Ability to electronically exchange information with other criminal justice agencies and systems, circuit and summary courts with each other, municipalities, solicitors, sheriff's Office; (v) Ability to respond to changes in the legislation that affects the courts; (vi) Increased public safety: Ability to have in-courtroom processing with the system. Ability to electronically access a person's individual file, enabling the judge to be more informed regarding repeat offenders (past court charges, rehab options, status). Ability to be more responsive to requests for court information by law enforcement.

Public Access to the system goes live today (June 12, 2006): (i) Access through the Beaufort County website ([www.bcgov.net](http://www.bcgov.net)) will provide the public information without having to call or visit the courthouse. Case status, case history, provide attorneys, business community, and other court users real-time information for their research; (ii) Available for both the Circuit and Magistrate Courts; (iii) Available from the SCJD website ([www.sccourts.org](http://www.sccourts.org)).

Public Access Functionality: (i) Case data viewed on the public index is the same data available and used by the judicial personnel in the Circuit and Magistrate Courts; (ii) Search for persons or cases; (iii) View case summary, case parties, charges and dispositions, sentencing, associated cases, actions (events, filings, and dates). Print capability and credit card processing is available August 2006.

Public Index Search Using Web Browser: (i) No personal identifying information that is deemed confidential is published to the web; (ii) Public index provides case information to the public.

Firsts for Case Management System in Beaufort County: (i) First SQL implementation; (ii) First mentoring of neighbor county with regards to technology; (iii) First hosting of a county without an IT staff.

Collaboration is the True Success: (i) Beaufort County assisted Jasper County in numerous ways that has numerous possibilities for the future: Development of the network infrastructure of Jasper County that also includes the Jasper municipalities of Hardeeville and Ridgeland. Hiring and mentoring of the IT CMS Tier II Support Engineer of Jasper County. Hosting of the court CMS for Jasper County; (ii) Beaufort County assisted the City of Beaufort and the Town of Bluffton with establishing connectivity from each municipality to the County. Hosting the court CMS for these municipalities; (iii) While providing professional assistance to other counties and municipalities, maintained the expected high-level of service to the citizens of Beaufort County.

Accolades to Beaufort County Information Technology: (i) Frank Guth, IT Director, and his entire Beaufort County IT staff; Rita Simmons, Chief Magistrate, and staff; Elizabeth Smith, Clerk of Court, are to be commended: Municipal clerks and judges are to be commended for their professionalism and leadership in technology for our entire state. (ii) The use of the web and proven, state-of-the-art technologies by Beaufort County, is a model for other counties and state agencies. The court system will always be a work in progress. Beaufort County is a bright and shining star for making this program such a success.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The Chairman recognized Mr. Tom Taylor, a Hilton Head Island resident and Co-Chairman of Citizens for Open Land, who thanked Council members for their service. He thanked Council for its support in preserving open land by dedicating millage in the proposed FY 2006-2007 budget to bridge the funding gap for services provided by the Trust for Public Land, until the \$50 million bond referendum is presented to the voters in November 2006.

Ms. Joni Dimond, a Hilton Head Island resident, commented that 1,000 feet of the Russell Bell Bridge was built before anyone gave any thought to the rising and lowering of the tide. The contractor in charge of widening US Highway 278 had to replace 671 tons of freshly laid asphalt. This is an example of bad planning.

Mr. Jim Bequette, a Lady's Island resident, stated the School District is spending about \$11 million more than Horry County if Beaufort County had the same number of students. Beaufort County is spending \$6 million for facilities operations and maintenance alone. He volunteered for two days monitoring the PAC test in a science room at Lady's Island Middle School. The maintenance was a disaster. There were three lab tables. Electric covers were missing on one lab table. The photocopier had been broken since December 2005. In the teachers' lounge, the restroom sink and faucet were loose. Council should pull down the School District proposed budget by \$6 million and let them work at getting their costs down where it should be.

**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

**Two-Week Progress Report**

In the absence of Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, Mr. Tom Henrikson, Chief Financial Officer, circulated copies of Mr. Kubic's Two-Week Progress Report, which summarized his activities that took place May 22, 2006 through June 9, 2006.

**Staff Reports Provided to Council**

In the absence of Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, Mr. Tom Henrikson, Chief Financial Officer, reported Council has received reports from the following departments: (i) Treasurer - Cash Flow Weekly Report - May 22, May 30 and June 5; (ii) Clerk to Council – Citizen Volunteers Reappointment/Vacancy Monthly Report, Ordinances Pending Monthly Report, Committee Assignments Monthly Report; (iii) Detention Center – Population Report/Status Report – May 8 to May 21; (iv) Chief Financial Officer – Road Improvement Program effective April 30, Del Webb Agreement Fund April 30, and Impact Fee Collection Report April 30; (v) Animal Shelter and Control – Monthly Report May; and (vi) Staff Attorney – List of ratified acts/vetoes and overrides.

**Summary of SCDOT US Highway 278 Widening Project Weekly Meeting**

In the absence of Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, Mr. Tom Henrikson, Chief Financial Officer, gave a brief construction update on the SCDOT US Highway 278 Widening Project. APAC-Southeast, the contractor, is continuing widening towards Hilton Head National Golf Club. APAC will continue eastbound with binder and asphalt. When eastbound second asphalt lift is finished, APAC will switch to westbound exterior widening, which should take approximately four to five weeks. Two paving crews will start work tonight in order to accelerate that work. APAC is anticipating shifting traffic westbound within the next three weeks.

### **Report on Simulated Hurricane Evacuation Exercise**

In the absence of Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, Mr. Tom Henrikson, Chief Financial Officer, gave a brief summary of the Emergency Management Department's successful, full-scale, simulated hurricane evacuation held on Wednesday, June 7, and Thursday, June 8, that involved participation from area municipalities, three military installations, the State Highway Patrol, other law enforcement agencies, B/J Water and Sewer Authority, and several County departments. The exercise accomplished its mission by allowing emergency personnel in every sector of the County to respond as if in a real-life situation. It provided an opportunity to test all communications systems and through the exercise, allowed emergency personnel to identify key processes that will be necessary in the event of a real emergency. Many County departments were involved to include the Sheriff's Office, Public Works, Mosquito Control helicopter, Public Information, EMS, Engineering, fire, and others. An estimated 100 individuals, from throughout the County, worked together to achieve the goal of a successful emergency operation.

In addition to implementation of satellite communications and other technologies, elements of the search and rescue command were tested and an actual point of distribution was established to give us an opportunity to examine one major element of recovery. In a real emergency, this provides a place to distribute food, ice and other necessities. Also, there was much interest among the local media in the exercise. We had two sets of Savannah television news units imbedded in the evacuation to Jasper County. We also had coverage from three local newspapers. We appreciate the cooperation and goodwill of Jasper and Allendale Counties during our trial set up of alternative headquarters at those sites. The effort and cooperation of all participants was also commendable. The people of Beaufort County are better protected because of this successful exercise.

### **RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE COMPOSITION OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE NORTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY REGIONAL PLAN**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Stewart, that Council adopt a resolution establishing the composition of the Steering Committee for the Northern Beaufort County Regional Plan: three representatives - Beaufort County Council, one representative - Beaufort City Council, one representative - Port Royal Town Council, one representative - Yemassee Town Council, one representative - an additional Municipal representative, two representatives - Beaufort County Planning Commission, two representatives - Joint Planning Commission, one representative - Beaufort County Board of Education, and one representative - Lowcountry

Council of Governments. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

The Chairman asked the Staff Attorney to look into the issue of some type of commitment by County Council not to upzone property within the County zoning jurisdiction during the pendency of the Northern Beaufort County Regional Plan.

### **PROPOSED FY 2006-2007 SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET**

Mr. Tom Henrikson, Chief Financial Officer, reported the proposed FY 2006-2007 School District budget ordinance has been revised based on the presentation the School Board (hereinafter "Board") members made to the Finance Committee on May 22, 2006. The changes involve the fact that the proposed ordinance, as approved on first reading, indicated that they were going to use \$1,100,000 of their fund balance to limit their need for local taxes in fiscal year 2007. The Board has voted not to do that. Therefore, the School District (hereinafter "District") requirement for taxes in fiscal year 2007 is \$132,980,629, which will require a tax increase from the previously discussed 91.7 mils (approved at first reading) to 92.5 mils. This does not affect their debt service millage for fiscal year 2007. Fiscal year 2006 millage was 77.9. The District's unreserved fund balance is approximately \$11 million or 8%. It is in line with the Board's policy relative to keeping between a 7.5% and 9% fund balance.

#### **Main motion.**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Lamb, that Council approve on second reading the proposed FY 2006-2007 School District budget at 111.5 mils (92.5 mils for operations and 19.0 mils for debt service). The dollar amount is \$147,325,551 (\$132,980,629 to be derived from tax collections, \$13,344,922 to be derived from State revenues, \$600,000 to be derived from Federal revenues, and \$400,000 to be derived from local revenues.)

Mr. McBride finds it inconceivable, given the tremendous millage increase required due to the \$15.6 million reduction in State funding, that the Board has decided not to use \$1.1 million of their fund balance in an effort to reduce the dollars to be derived from tax collections. The Board should be doing whatever they can to lessen that tremendous impact on local taxpayers. Mr. McBride will not support the motion.

Mr. Henrikson stated the Maintenance of Effort computation, under the Education Finance Act (hereinafter "EFA"), only takes into account the local taxation over the number of students plus an inflation factor. It does not take into account the loss of State revenue that has occurred to the Beaufort County School District because of the inability for the School District to get the hold harmless provision they were able to obtain last year. Likewise, there were further reductions under the EFA formula that occurred because of Beaufort County's index of taxpaying ability. The reduction in State funding is approximately \$15.6 million.

**Addendum to the Bluffton Parkway Contract for the Buckwalter Parkway Widening from US 278 to Phase 4 of Bluffton Parkway**

It was moved by Mr. Lamb, as Public Services Committee Chairman (no second required), Council approve an addendum of the Bluffton Parkway contract for the Buckwalter Parkway widening from US Highway 278 to Phase IV to Malphrus Construction Company in the amount of \$5,337,530.59. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. ABSTAINED – Mr. Glaze. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

**Photocopiers for Beaufort County Departments**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Lamb, that Council award a contract extension for an additional three years to IKON Office Solutions of Savannah, Georgia. Extending the contract for three years is \$176,976 less expensive than our current cost and \$90,227 less expensive than a contract for new equipment from IKON. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

**PROPOSED FY 2006-2007 SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, as Finance Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on third and final reading the proposed FY 2006-2007 School District budget at 108.7 mils (91.7 mils for operations and 17.0 mils for debt service). The dollar amount is \$147,325,551 (\$131,880,629 to be derived from tax collections, \$13,344,922 to be derived from State revenues, \$600,000 to be derived from Federal revenues, \$400,000 to be derived from local revenues, and \$1,100,000 to be derived from previous year fund balance.)

Mr. Newton stated Council has made a number of adjustments within the County's budget which will now require a no mil increase. In that vein, and recognizing the State of South Carolina cut \$15.6 million in funding from the Beaufort County School District (hereinafter "District") FY 2006-2007 budget, the District had requested \$8 million in Maintenance of Effort, \$2 million in "new money", and the replacement of the \$15.6 million loss from the State for a total of \$25 million of new taxpayer money in Beaufort County. Keeping in mind the FY 2005-2006 budget required \$107,756,242 to be derived from tax collections and the proposed FY 2006-2007 budget requires \$131,880,629 to be derived from tax collections. Council has known this loss was coming, and has been working with the Legislative Delegation and School Board in an attempt to stave off this shortfall by some action in Columbia. Unfortunately, that did not happen. Therefore, through productive discussions in the Finance Committee meeting held earlier today, Council is considering a modified School District budget, which does not reduce their operating dollars (which will serve as a baseline under the new funding formulas from Columbia next year), but utilizes some of the District's debt service millage to pass on a savings to the taxpayers. In essence, the operating budget, as presented by the District and approved by Council on first and second readings, includes a reduction in two mils from debt service that

Mrs. White replied new spending equates to 4.6 mils. Mr. Newton responded, effectively, we can thank our friends in Columbia for a 10 mil tax increase in Beaufort County because they chose to spend the money elsewhere.

Mr. Generales asked, “Does the District fear that in years 2008, 2009, and 2010, the County is going to be capped in its ability to raise taxes to meet its needs”?

It is Mrs. White’s understanding in FY 2008 the District will be capped by student growth and the Consumer Price Index (“CPI”).

It is Mr. Henrikson’s understanding of the law, as it was signed by the Governor last week, indicates that there is no impact in FY 2006/2007. Should the referendum receive voter approval in November, in the FY 2007/2008 budget for both the School District and the County, there will be a significant limit on the millage rate that we can charge to the citizens of Beaufort County. That will not only apply to county government, but the municipalities as well as the fire districts. Millage will only be allowed to the extent that there is growth. For the School District this means student growth. For the County and municipalities it is population growth. Likewise, there is also a CPI. This is not a local CPI factor, but the Southeast Average Consumer Price Index number. Therefore, if the local CPI was 3%, but the Southeast Average was 2%, we would be limited to the 2%. This applies to all properties in the establishment of the millage that is set. Millage is still created and established whether it is owner-occupied or it is not owner-occupied. That millage rate when applied to the tax base of owner-occupied properties, generates an amount of tax relief.

In FY 2007/2008 it is Mr. Henrikson’s understanding of the law, counties will be reimbursed dollar-for-dollar for whatever property tax relief is given on that owner-occupied property. However, in subsequent years it is not dollar-for-dollar. In subsequent years the reimbursement is limited to, again, growth and CPI. There are other issues relative to the legislation with regards to the assessment process so that the point of sale is taken into account, properties are able to be added on later in the year, both of which are advantages to the growth in our local tax base. The reassessment issue says that properties, reassessed over a five-year period (which is State law), are to be capped at a total of 15% or 3% per year. Mr. Henrikson has some concern that in years 2008, 2009 and 2010 we may be required to give a greater property relief than we receive in money from the State of South Carolina. With the limits on millage rates, that may create some significant issues with School District funding and all government funding.

Mr. Stewart remarked that none of us really know what the Legislature has done, or is likely to do, to us. But every school district in the state, or county, will receive a minimum of \$2.5 million, which is about \$300,000 more than we are receiving as a total this year. Is this statement accurate?

Mr. Henrikson replied the \$2.5 million refers to the owner-occupied exemption. It does not refer to EFA funding. There are several school districts where there is not a large tax base of owner-occupied property. In those school districts the amount of property tax relief given to the

property owners is less than \$2.5 million. In those school districts where that amount is less than \$2.5 million, they are guaranteed a minimum of \$2.5 million funding for the property tax relief sales tax referendum.

Mr. Brafman noted the National Consumer Price Index this year was 4.1% and; if one listens to the Federal Reserve Board, it is going to be higher next year. The referendum on the 15% cap is not a slam dunk. Nobody knows how that is going to come out. Insofar as point-of-sale, that is a plus. There are all kinds of contingencies. To raise taxes based on all these contingencies does not seem reasonable. A more reasonable approach is to use the unreserved fund balance. Some of these things are not going to happen for a year or two down the road. We should not be worried about the use of \$1,100,000 because something two or three years from now may happen. It is good judgment to cap it now not only for the school district, but for the County to do the same thing.

Mrs. Griffin's biggest concern is on a \$200,000 home we are talking about trying to save \$6.40 which may end up tying the School District hands next year toward funding. It may end up costing us more in the long run. Is saving \$6.40 worth causing a problem next fiscal year?

Mr. Generales does not want to see the School District and the County in a situation where we spend money that we cannot put back. Ultimately, the risk here is that if future increases are capped, then we will have a competing situation between the money put in the unreserved fund balance and the operating budget.

Mr. Newton intends to vote for Mr. McBride's amendment. Have we really become so immune to the fact that since the Legislature gave us a 10 mil tax increase for schools we are not going to worry about .8 mils (using \$1,100,000 from unreserved fund balance) because the School District might need it next year? There are a lot of things we do not know. Mr. Brafman hit the nail directly on the head when he said, "The fund balance is for contingencies, just as this catastrophe." We might look back on this year as "Hurricane General Assembly".

Vote on the motion to amend by substitution: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Generales, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. OPPOSED – Mr. Dawson, Mr. Glaze and Mrs. Griffin. The motion passed.

Vote on the amended motion, which is now the main motion and includes the motion to amend by substitution.

Council approve on second reading the proposed FY 2006-2007 School District budget at 110.7 mils (91.7 mils for operations and 19.0 mils for debt service). The dollar amount is \$146,225,551 (\$131,880,629 to be derived from tax collections, \$13,344,922 to be derived from State revenues, \$600,000 to be derived from Federal revenues, and \$400,000 to be derived from local revenues.) The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

**PROPOSED FY 2006-2007 COUNTY BUDGET**

**Main motion.**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Lamb, that Council approve on second reading the proposed FY 2006-2007 County budget at 54.6 mils (\$89,000,977 of which \$63,390,320 is to be derived from tax collections) which includes budgets for Beaufort County government 41.2 mils, Purchase of Real Property Program, 3.5 mils County Debt Service 5.4 mils, Indigent Health Care 1.5 mils, and Continuing Education 3.0 mils. Further, Bluffton Fire District 20.3 mils operations and 0.7 mils debt service, Burton Fire District 51.9 mils operations and 6.0 mils debt service, Daufuskie Island Fire District 29.7 mils and 2.6 mils debt service, Lady's Island/St. Helena Island Fire District 28.9 mils operations and 1.4 mils debt service, and Sheldon Fire District 34.9 mils operations and 2.5 debt service.

Mr. Henrikson, Chief Financial Officer, stated in dollars it means the County's general operating budget is funded at \$89,000,977 of which \$63,390,320 is to be derived from property taxes. This represents a 3.0 mil increase over the FY 2005-2006 operating millage. There is a 2.0 mil increase proposed in the Purchase of Real Property Program to take that millage from 1.5 to 3.5. Within the County operating budget there is a 5.0 mil increase. The fire districts' budgets will remain basically the same with the exemption of the Bluffton Fire District that has a 0.8 mil increase. At present for County operations there is no application of fund balance.

Mr. Stewart has previously expressed his concern about being able to support a tax increase until Council dealt with the matter of business licenses. Next, Mr. Stewart circulated copies of a proposed resolution regarding the County's FY 2006-2007 budget and modifications of business license fees. The operating requirements of Beaufort County services and programs indicate an additional requirement for approximately \$4,600,000 during FY 2006-2007. The proposed budget, prepared at the direction of County Council's Finance Committee, contemplates a 3.0 mil property tax increase to provide such funds. County Council, at its March 2005 annual planning meeting, agreed as one of its Goals for Financially Sound Government, "to explore the fees that are legally available and the variety of other income sources, including business licenses, in order to reduce the tax burden on property owners." Serious concerns have been raised about the effective enforcement of the current business license program, which indicates as an example that there are 11 licensed eating and drinking establishments in unincorporated Beaufort County. Council has authorized funding for staff to implement an effective and enforced business license program. The average Beaufort County business license fee is only 15.4% of the average business license fee in surrounding areas. Estimates indicate that businesses located outside Beaufort County, that do business in Beaufort County and use roads, law enforcement and other taxpayer-provided facilities, would pay as much as 40% of all business license fees. County Council's Finance Committee received two recommendations for the appropriate business license fee program, either one of which is expected to significantly reduce the burden on property taxpayers. The implementation and enforcement of a business license program that would raise fees to the average of the surrounding area will reduce the burden on property taxes by at least \$3 million. Council is now confronted with the option of decreasing services, raising property taxes, decreasing the fund balance, funding other revenue



sources (as agreed March 2005) or some combination of the two. State funding for public schools has declined, and necessitates a property tax increase for School District operations for FY 2006/2007. County Council desires not to impose an additional property tax increase when other alternatives are available. Therefore, County Council resolves to do the following: (i) eliminate the proposed 3.0 mil property tax increase for FY 2006-2007 and, instead, complete the implementation of an effective enforcement plan for business license fees for the licensing period beginning January 1, 2007; (ii) adopt the business license fee schedule recommended to the Finance Committee last year by Councilmen Generales and Brafman which should reasonably be expected to offset property tax funding by at least \$4 million beginning no later than January 1, 2007; (iii) reduce the County's fund balance by an amount not to exceed \$1.5 million to fund operations.

**Motion to amend by substitution No. 1.**

It was moved by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Brafman, that Council eliminate the proposed 3.0 mil property tax increase for FY 2006-2007 and, instead, complete the implementation of an effective enforcement plan for business licenses for the licensing period beginning January 1, 2007; (ii) adopt the business license fee schedule recommended to the Finance Committee last year by Councilmen Generales and Brafman, which should reasonably be expected to offset property tax funding by at least \$4 million beginning no later than January 1, 2007; (iii) reduce the County's fund balance by an amount not to exceed \$1.5 million to fund operations.

Mr. Brafman encouraged Council members to support the motion to amend by substitution No. 1.

Mr. Dawson stated when considering the 3.0 mil property tax increase for FY 2006/2007, how much of the unreserved fund balance would we have to use to offset a millage increase. Mr. Henrikson replied approximately \$4.6 million.

Mr. Newton remarked Council adopted a resolution on April 11, 2005, that a portion of increased business license fee collections be set aside in a fund to be used for Economic Development at the discretion of County Council. It was recommended that an amount equal to 80% of the increase in collections be used to create a fund for economic development. As an example, if business license fees for the past year totaled \$440,000, and for the current year the collections are \$500,000, then the funds would be distributed as follows: (i) \$270,000 to fund economic development via the Economic Development Partnership; (ii) \$170,000 to the County general fund; (iii) 50% of the balance to the County general fund; and (iv) 50% of the balance to a County reserve fund to be used at the discretion of Council for economic development. County Council would retain complete control over the reserve funds.

**Vote on the motion to amend by substitution No. 1.**

FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Lamb and Mr. Stewart. OPPOSED – Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mr. Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton and Mr. Von Harten. The motion failed.

Motion to amend by substitution No. 2.

It was moved by Mr. Lamb, seconded by Mr. Generales, that Council use \$1,540,000 of unreserved fund balance to reduce the recommended tax increase of three mils to two mils. The net effect would reduce the unreserved fund balance from \$12 million to \$10.5 million. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton and Mr. Stewart. OPPOSED – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

Vote on the amended motion, which is now the main motion and includes the motion to amend by substitution No. 2.

Council approve on second reading the proposed FY 2006-2007 County budget at 53.6 mils (\$89,143,027 of which \$61,850,320 is to be derived from tax collections and using \$1,682,050 from the previous year fund balance) which includes budgets for Beaufort County government 40.2 mils, Purchase of Real Property Program, 3.5 mils, County Debt Service 5.4 mils, Indigent Health Care 1.5 mils, and Continuing Education 3.0 mils, Bluffton Fire District 20.3 mils operations and 0.7 mils debt service, Burton Fire District 51.9 mils operations and 6.0 mils debt service, Daufuskie Island Fire District 29.7 mils and 2.6 mils debt service, Lady's Island/St. Helena Island Fire District 28.9 mils operations and 1.4 mils debt service, and Sheldon Fire District 34.9 mils operations and 2.5 debt service. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton and Mr. Von Harten. OPPOSED – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson and Mr. Stewart. The motion passed.

The Chairman assigned to the Finance Committee the issue of business license fees both enforcement of and increasing the fees to the average business license fee in surrounding areas. Unless Council takes action on business license fees at third and final reading, that the Finance Committee, by September 1, 2006, come back with a projected plan for increasing the fee to the average fee in surrounding areas.

**AN ORDINANCE TO IMPOSE A TRANSPORTATION TAX WITHIN BEAUFORT COUNTY TO FUND MULTIPLE CAPITAL PROJECTS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$147 MILLION FOR NOT MORE THAN SIX YEARS OR WHICHEVER COMES FIRST**

It was moved by Mr. Lamb, seconded by Mr. Von Harten, that Council approve on first reading, by title only, an ordinance to impose a transportation tax within Beaufort County to fund multiple capital projects in the amount of \$147 million for not more than six years or whichever comes first. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton and Mr. Stewart. ABSTAINED – Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

**ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ROAD, LIBRARY, AND PARK FACILITIES IMPACT FEES WITHIN SOUTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY**

It was moved by Mr. Lamb, seconded by Mr. Generales, that Council approve on first reading, by title only an ordinance to amend the Road, Library and Park Facilities Impact Fees within southern Beaufort County. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

### PUBLIC HEARINGS

#### CONSIDERATION OF CAROLINA AIR CENTER OF HILTON HEAD, INC. (FIXED BASE OPERATOR AT HILTON HEAD ISLAND AIRPORT) GROUND LEASE REQUEST AND SUBLEASE PROPOSAL TO CONSTRUCT A THREE-UNIT HANGAR AT THE HILTON HEAD ISLAND AIRPORT

The Chairman opened a public hearing at 6:02 p.m. for the purpose of receiving information from the public regarding and ordinance authorizing Carolina Air Center of Hilton Head, Inc.'s request to exercise an option to lease approximately one-third of an acre, more or less, of unimproved real property at the Hilton Head Island Airport (the "premises"); to consent to a proposed assignment and sublease of the premises to HH&M, LLC, including a proposed operating agreement/ground lease by and between Carolina Air Center and HH&M, LLC, entered into for the purpose of constructing a three-unit hangar on the premises. After calling three times for public comment and receiving none, the Chairman declared the hearing closed at 6:03 p.m.

It was moved by Mr. Lamb, as Public Services Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on third and final reading an ordinance authorizing Carolina Air Center of Hilton Head, Inc. request to exercise an option to lease approximately one-third of an acre, more or less, of unimproved real property at the Hilton Head Island Airport (the "premises"); to consent to a proposed assignment and sublease of the premises to HH&M, LLC, including a proposed operating agreement/ground lease by and between Carolina Air Center and HH&M, LLC, entered into for the purpose of constructing a three-unit hangar on the premises. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. ABSTAINED – Mr. Dawson. The motion passed.

#### AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING A GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND BORROWING OF AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$17,500,000

Mr. Tom Henrikson, Chief Financial Officer, reported the bond issue is in the amount of \$17,800,000. There is an additional \$300,000 that is required by the Technical College of the Lowcountry (hereinafter "TCL"). Last year County Council authorized the building of the South Campus for TCL to fund with an amount, through an additional borrowing of an amount of approximately \$1.2 million to \$1.5 million. TCL has indicated that they do require all \$1.5 million and the project, as originally approved, included \$1.2 million. The \$1.5 million will be repaid by TCL, therefore, there is taxpayer cost to increasing the bond issue. That cost will be incurred by TCL.

The Chairman opened a public hearing at 6:05 p.m. for the purpose of receiving information from the public regarding an ordinance authorizing the issuance and sale of not exceeding \$17,800,000 to provide funds for capital projects of the County. After calling three times for public comment and receiving none, the Chairman declared the hearing closed at 6:06 p.m.

**Main motion.**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Lamb, that Council approve on third and final reading an ordinance authorizing the issuance and sale of not exceeding \$17,500,000 to provide funds for capital projects of the County. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

**Motion to amend by substitution.**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Lamb, that Council approve on third and final reading an ordinance authorizing the issuance and sale of not exceeding \$17,800,000 to provide funds for capital projects of the County. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

**Vote on the amended motion, which is now the main motion and includes the motion to amend by substitution.**

Council approve on third and final reading an ordinance authorizing the issuance and sale of not exceeding \$17,800,000 to provide funds for capital projects of the County. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

**MOTION TO EXTEND BEYOND 8:00 P.M.**

It was moved by Mr. McBride, seconded by Mr. Glaze, that Council extend its meeting to 8:15 p.m. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

The Chairman passed the gavel to the Vice Chairman in order to receive committee reports.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Community Services and Public Safety Committee**

**Disabilities and Special Needs Board**

Helen Gruber

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. Mrs. Gruber garnered the eight votes required to serve as a member of the Disabilities and Special Needs Board.

#### **Foster Care Review Board**

Linda Cecil

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. Mrs. Cecil garnered the six votes required to serve as a member of the Foster Care Review Board.

#### **Lady's Island/St. Helena Island Fire District**

David Townsend

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. Col. Townsend, representing Lady's Island, garnered the six votes required to serve as a member of the Lady's Island/St. Helena Island Fire District.

#### **Economic Development Committee**

#### **Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority**

Thomas Heyward

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. Mr. Heyward garnered the ten votes required to serve as a member of the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority.

#### **Finance Committee**

#### **Accommodations Tax Board**

Lynda Potter

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. Ms. Potter, representing cultural, garnered the six votes required to serve as a member of the Accommodations Tax Board.

### **Outside Agencies (Eleemosynary) Funding**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, as Finance Committee Chairman, that Council approve funding for various outside agencies as follows: (i) USCB Small Business Development Center - \$25,000, an increase of \$20,000; (ii) Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service - \$7,500, an increase of \$2,500; (iii) Beaufort Soil and Water Conservation District - \$31,300, an increase of \$13,000; (iv) Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority - \$245,417, an increase of \$90,000; (v) Child Abuse Prevention Association - \$45,000, an increase of \$5,000; (vi) Citizens Opposed to Domestic Abuse - \$25,000, an increase of \$4,500; (vii) Hope Haven of the Lowcountry - \$16,500, an increase of \$3,500; (viii) Senior Services of Beaufort County - \$82,500, an increase of \$10,000; (ix) Literacy Volunteers of the Lowcountry - \$10,000, an increase of \$5,000. These increases total \$153,500. The funding source is the unreserved fund balance. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride and Mr. Von Harten. OPPOSED – Mr. Newton and Mr. Stewart. ABSTAINED – Mrs. Hairston. The motion passed.

### **Funding for Friends of Hunting Island and Beaufort Water Search and Rescue Marine Squadron**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, as Finance Committee Chairman, that Council approve funding: (i) Friends of Hunting Island in the amount of \$65,000 from 3% accommodations tax funds (river/beach access expenditures); and (ii) Beaufort Water Search and Rescue Marine Squadron in the amount of \$14,300, an increase of \$2,850 from 3% accommodations tax funds (tourism-related expenditures). The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

### **Public Services Committee**

#### **Aviation Board**

Leonard Law, Jr.

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. Mr. Law, representing relative close proximity to Hilton Head Island Airport, garnered the six votes required to serve as a member of the Aviation Board.

Jared Newman

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton and Mr. Von Harten. OPPOSED – Mr. Stewart. Mr. Jared Newman, representing relative close proximity to Beaufort County Airport, garnered the six votes required to serve as a member of the Aviation Board.

**Mr. Newton – Move and Relocation of Residence from Beaufort County Council District 3 to District 4**

Mr. Newton announced that his family has now moved to Bluffton effective Saturday, June 10, 2006. On May 19, 2006, a letter was dispatched to the Governor advising of Mr. Newton's plan to move and relocate his residence from Beaufort County Council District 3 to District 4. Mr. Newton's understanding of the law has been confirmed by the Attorney General that since there are fewer than 180 days prior to the next general election, that Mr. Newton will continue to serve in his capacity as a member of Beaufort County Council until, and unless, the Governor appoints a successor. If the Governor appoints no successor Mr. Newton will continue to serve throughout the remainder of the term he was elected to serve.

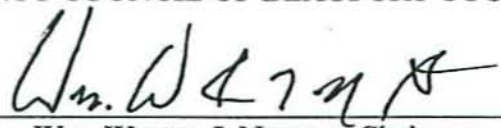
**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no requests to speak during public comment.

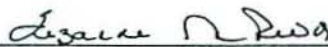
**ADJOURNMENT**

Council adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY

By:   
Wm. Weston J. Newton, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
Suzanne M. Rainey, Clerk to Council

Ratified: July 24, 2006

**Beaufort County Council Minutes**  
**June 26, 2006**



Official Proceedings  
County Council of Beaufort County  
June 26, 2006

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

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Council of Beaufort County was held at 4:00 p.m., Monday, June 26, 2006, in Council Chambers of the Administration Building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort, South Carolina.

**ATTENDANCE**

Chairman Weston Newton\*, Vice Chairman W. R. "Skeet" Von Harten, and members Frank Brafman, Gerald Dawson, Mark Generales, Herbert Glaze, Margaret Griffin, Starletta Hairston, Peter Lamb, William McBride and Dick Stewart. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

\* Mr. Newton is serving as a member of Beaufort County Council in a *de facto* status. He has moved to Bluffton effective Saturday, June 10, 2006. On May 19, 2006, a letter was dispatched to the Governor advising of Mr. Newton's plan to move and relocate his residence from Beaufort County Council District 3 to District 4. Mr. Newton's understanding of the law has been confirmed by the Attorney General that since there are fewer than 180 days prior to the next general election, that Mr. Newton will continue to serve in his capacity as a member of Beaufort County Council until, and unless, the Governor appoints a successor. If the Governor appoints no successor, Mr. Newton will continue to serve throughout the remainder of the term he was elected to serve.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Chairman led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**INVOCATION**

Councilman Herbert Glaze gave the Invocation.

**PROCLAMATION**

**Recreation and Parks Month**

The Chairman proclaimed July 2006 as Recreation and Parks Month and urged all citizens to join in this nationwide celebration bringing recognition to all the benefits derived from quality public and private recreation and park resources at the local level. Mr. Arthur Middleton, Chairman, Parks and Leisure Services Board, accepted the proclamation.

Certified True Copy  
Clerk to Council  
Beaufort County, SC  
By: Suzanne M. Rainey  
Suzanne M. Rainey  
Date: August 15, 2006

### EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, announced that Mrs. Marjorie Arnold, Administrative Assistant, Building Codes Department, has been selected as Employee of the Month for July 2006. Mrs. Arnold has been with Beaufort County 14 years, and is well versed on all administrative processes necessary for building permits as well as for inspections and flood plain requirements. Marjorie's supervisor, Mr. Arthur Cummings, said he is fortunate to have an employee who goes above and beyond the call of duty to provide service to the public and support for other members of staff. Marjorie has excellent skills, and makes decisions on a daily basis that facilitate smooth operations of her department. She will not accept defeat. When challenged, she seeks solutions—and always finds them. This requires her to go the extra mile in running and managing the office and working with the many people who come to her office. She is dedicated and highly qualified. But, on top of that, her customer service skills make her exceptional. Marjorie is a people person, and gets much satisfaction from helping people through the paperwork associated with building permits. Arthur has received letters of appreciation and many positive comments from citizens who were grateful for the good service they received from Marjorie. Marjorie is married to Dave Arnold, former Beaufort County Mosquito Control Director. They have two children and four grandchildren. She likes boating and swimming and being on this region's many waterways.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chairman recognized Ms. Ethel Boson, a Burton resident, representing the Healing Revival Deliverance Center, who requested the paving of Opossum Hill Road in the Habersham Development where the church is located.

Mr. Tommy O'Brien, a Burton resident, addressed increasing the cost of business license fees. He commented the original purpose of a business license fee was to keep track of County businesses, not to generate income.

Mr. Bill Ladson, a Sheldon resident, spoke briefly on an article written in the *Beaufort Gazette*, June 2006, by Mr. Jim Bequette regarding County operations.

Mr. Reggi Frazier, a Gray's Hill resident, brought forward concerns of sewage back-up since April 2006 into his home in Crestwood Mobile Home Park located in Grays Hill.

### COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

#### **Two-Week Progress Report**

Mr. Gary Kubic circulated copies of his Two-Week Progress Report, which summarized his activities that took place June 12, 2006 through June 23, 2006.

#### **Staff Reports Provided to Council**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, reported Council has received reports from the following departments: (i) Staff Attorney – Supreme Court and Appellate Court Opinions; Major Issues from 2006 Legislative Session; and (ii) Detention Center – Population Report and Status Report – Week of June 5 to June 18.

### **County Credit Cards**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, clarified the issue surrounding usage of County credit cards. The Internal Audit Department conducted an audit of the Purchasing Department, not County credit card usage. The Audit noted the amount of credit cards out, as well as some deficiencies. But, what did not make the news was that the Internal Auditor sampled 1,000 credit card purchases and found 960 or 96%, compliant with existing controls. The reference to credit cards in the Purchasing Audit was that, perhaps, we should go to one credit card, as well as modify the limits, so that our public safety issues can be addressed. We had some issues about availability to patrolmen/deputies which allowed those credit card purchases to circumvent the controls. Mr. Kubic does not want anyone to have an impression that our controllers did not institute the proper controls, because they did. The reference to credit cards was that we have too many, and we do, but that is no longer the case as of July 1, 2006. Mr. Kubic has asked the Internal Audit Department, working with other departments, to take a look at “best practices in the private sector,” to develop an ordinance, and then everyone will be required to follow what is traditional practice.

### **Summary of SCDOT US Highway 278 Widening Project Weekly Meeting**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, gave a brief construction update on the SCDOT US Highway 278 Widening Project. APAC-Southeast, the contractor, continues working primarily in the westbound lanes. Binder work continues from Burnt Church to Simmonsville Road. Widening continues in the shoulder areas adjacent to the Greenery and Home Depot. Asphalt production is approximately 1,000 tons per night. APAC is using two paving crews. Lane shift will occur in two stages. The first phase will occur the first week from Tanger Outlets Center 2 to Burnt Church Road. Traffic will be shifted to the newly constructed inside lane next to the median and the existing left lane westbound. The second phase will occur after the Fourth of July holiday. This lane shift is from Burnt Church Road to Simmonsville Road. APAC will be working outside the shoulder widening. The Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Chamber of Commerce reported there were 63,000 visitors to Hilton Head Island with 82% capacity. Bolts broke on the overhead traffic signal at Tanger Outlet Centers 1. The span wire for the signal was connected to a wooden pole at Sawmill Creek Road and US Highway 278 intersection. All traffic signals are scheduled for inspection.

### **Bluffton Parkway Phases 3A, 3B, 3C and 4 Update Report**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, gave a brief update on Bluffton Parkway Phases 3A, 3B, 3C and 4. Phase 3A - Buckwalter Parkway through Pinecrest Subdivision is 7% complete. Phase 3B - Pinecrest Subdivision to Simmonsville Road is 7% complete. Phase 3C -

Buckwalter Parkway Overlap Section is 53% complete. Phase 4 – SC Highway 170 to Buckwalter Parkway is 33% complete.

### **Jasper County Council**

#### **US Highway 278/SC Highway 170 Corridor Access Management Plan**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, reported on June 19, 2006, Jasper County Council approved a resolution adopting the Okatie Highway (SC Highway 170) and West Fording Island Road (US Highway 278) Joint Access Management Plan.

### **Bluffton Parkway Phases 5A and 5B**

Mr. Colin Kinton, Transportation Engineer, gave a PowerPoint presentation displaying an aerial photograph and brief explanation on Bluffton Phases 5A and 5B. Phase 5A is an extension of Bluffton Parkway from Burnt Church Road to a point near Fording Island Road. The extension is approximately three miles in length. Phase 5B is an extension of Bluffton Parkway from the current intersection under construction of Phase 4 and Buckwalter Parkway to the current intersection under construction of Phase 3 and Buck Island Road for a distance of approximately two miles.

The study corridors closely follow the powerline easement. The proposed typical sections are proposed to match the existing Parkway, which includes two travel lanes in each direction and a landscaped median with joint use pedestrian/bicycle paths on each side. The project is being developed in accordance with all Federal and State requirements to ensure future funding opportunities.

The schedule: Project studies begin Spring 2006, public meetings Summer 2006, environmental technical studies and concept alignment studies Winter 2006, public hearings and final environmental documentation Spring 2007, right-of-way plans Fall 2007, and construction plans Spring 2008. Dependent on funding, right-of-way acquisition could begin in Summer 2007 requiring approximately 18 months and construction could begin in Fall 2008, requiring approximately 24 months.

### **Response Protocol for Preventing/Controlling Mosquito-Borne Diseases**

Mr. Gregg Hunt, Mosquito Control Director, remarked with the anticipated incursion of West Nile Virus (WNV) into Beaufort county, he developed a Response Protocol in early 2003 for Mosquito Control personnel to organize abatement efforts against this new public health threat among our residents and visitors. Afterwards, WNV was confirmed in wild birds during September and October of 2003.

This Protocol consists of a sequential approach for proactive and reactive strategies: (1) Mosquitoes, dead birds (only crows and blue jays), and blood samples collected from humans and horses will be submitted to Mosquito Control, the Department of Health and Environmental Control (“DHEC”), or Clemson Veterinary Diagnostic Center for analysis; (2) Upon the

confirmation of WNV, a one-mile radius surrounding this positive case will be established for the strategic application of public health insecticides, using trucks during the evening twilight hours and throughout the night. If multiple cases of WNV are identified in a general area or throughout Beaufort County, then truck applications will be supplemented with aerial spray missions during the day; (3) The County Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Public Information Officer, County Council Chairman, and corresponding Council member(s) will be notified immediately of any WNV activity; (4) Coordination of information about the WNV outbreak (via DHEC) and the corresponding Mosquito Control activities will commence and continue with the local and/or regional media in a timely manner. Public service announcements (by way of the media and Mosquito Control website) will emphasize information about mosquito avoidance, prevention of mosquito breeding on properties, and effective personal protection; (5) Intensified mosquito control activities will continue until DHEC staff has declared the disappearance of the WNV outbreak; and (6) Mosquito Control personnel are prepared to work up to seven days a week, if required.

The Protocol can be applied to Eastern Equine Encephalitis (“EEE”) in which the target zone is increased to a 3-mile radius. EEE represents another public health threat in Beaufort County, wherein a 16-year-old teenager died of an EEE infection on St. Helena Island in 1989. EEE has killed at least one dozen local horses (including one near Pritchardville in 2005) during the previous years. This disease typically occurs during the latter portion of the mosquito season (April through November). Of particular concern, EEE activity has been documented most recently in wild birds, sentinel chickens and horses within 13 various counties in Florida. Per DHEC and Clemson University policies, the disclosure of specific locations for any confirmed mosquito-borne disease among mosquitoes, birds, horses, and humans is not allowed. Overall, accurate risk assessment of WNV and/or EEE activity will allow public health authorities to establish control strategies and public awareness campaigns that will reduce the impact of these potential serious mosquito-borne diseases among the residents and visitors of the County.

### **Progress Report on Affordable Housing Consortium**

Mrs. Wendy Zara, Chairperson of the Affordable Housing Governing Council, gave an update briefly explaining the activities that have taken place since January 2006. Four goals were established: Goal 1 – Down payment Assistance Partnership, Goal 2 – Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance, Goal 3 – Compliance Agreement, Goal 4 – Work with county staff on revisions to Chapter 10, Affordable Housing, of the Comprehensive Plan.

Next, Mrs. Zara commented on the Lowcountry Regional Consortium. The Consolidated Plan has been submitted to HUD, and we are awaiting final approval. Beaufort County’s local match is \$56,000 annually for the next three years. In return, the County will receive \$331,400 in HOME funds. We are encouraging both Habitats, the Housing Authority and EOC to become Community Housing Development Ordinances (CHDOs). This designation will allow the County to utilize the \$101,156 that will be set aside by HUD for CHDO activities within the four counties.

In closing, Mrs. Zara distributed copies of the Affordable Housing Inventory Report showing the status of the various projects.

### CONSIDERATION OF CONTRACT AWARDS

#### **Restroom/Shelter Facilities Construction at Basil Greene and Shell Point Parks**

It was moved by Mr. Lamb, as Public Services Committee Chairman (no second required), Council award a contract to New Tech, Inc. in the amount of \$245,000 for the construction of restroom/shelter facilities at Basil Green and Shell Point Parks. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant.

#### **Contract #31 – Dirt Road Improvements – Lady’s Island**

It was moved by Mr. Lamb, as Public Services Committee Chairman (no second required), Council award Contract #31 to REA Contracting, LLC in the amount of \$998,619.70 for the construction and paving of Fiddler Road, Honeysuckle Lane, Flycatcher Lane, Chickadee Lane, Wood Duck Lane (Quail Run), and Carolyn Drive, Lady’s Island. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant.

#### **Design Build Construction Proposal for Three Disabilities and Special Needs Community Training Homes**

It was moved by Mr. Lamb, as Public Services Committee Chairman (no second required), Council award a design/build contract to Beaufort Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$1,185,251, for the acquisition of three building lots and the design and construction of three Disabilities and Special Needs Community Training Homes in northern Beaufort County. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant.

#### **Change Order for the Hilton Head Airport Hangar Design Build Construction**

It was moved by Mr. Lamb, as Public Services Committee Chairman (no second required), Council award a change order in the amount of \$232,900 to Beaufort Construction for the Hilton Head Island Airport Hangar Project. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant.

**Addendum to the Bluffton Parkway Contract for the Buckwalter Parkway Widening from US 278 to Phase 4 of Bluffton Parkway**

It was moved by Mr. Lamb, as Public Services Committee Chairman (no second required), Council approve an addendum of the Bluffton Parkway contract for the Buckwalter Parkway widening from US Highway 278 to Phase IV to Malphrus Construction Company in the amount of \$5,337,530.59. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. ABSTAINED – Mr. Glaze. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

**Photocopiers for Beaufort County Departments**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Lamb, that Council award a contract extension for an additional three years to IKON Office Solutions of Savannah, Georgia. Extending the contract for three years is \$176,976 less expensive than our current cost and \$90,227 less expensive than a contract for new equipment from IKON. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

**PROPOSED FY 2006-2007 SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, as Finance Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on third and final reading the proposed FY 2006-2007 School District budget at 108.7 mils (91.7 mils for operations and 17.0 mils for debt service). The dollar amount is \$147,325,551 (\$131,880,629 to be derived from tax collections, \$13,344,922 to be derived from State revenues, \$600,000 to be derived from Federal revenues, \$400,000 to be derived from local revenues, and \$1,100,000 to be derived from previous year fund balance.)

Mr. Newton stated Council has made a number of adjustments within the County's budget which will now require a no mil increase. In that vain, and recognizing the State of South Carolina cut \$15.6 million in funding from the Beaufort County School District (hereinafter "District") FY 2006-2007 budget, the District had requested \$8 million in Maintenance of Effort, \$2 million in "new money", and the replacement of the \$15.6 million loss from the State for a total of \$25 million of new taxpayer money in Beaufort County. Keeping in mind the FY 2005-2006 budget required \$107,756,242 to be derived from tax collections and the proposed FY 2006-2007 budget requires \$131,880,629 to be derived from tax collections. Council has known this loss was coming, and has been working with the Legislative Delegation and School Board in an attempt to stave off this shortfall by some action in Columbia. Unfortunately, that did not happen. Therefore, through productive discussions in the Finance Committee meeting held earlier today, Council is considering a modified School District budget, which does not reduce their operating dollars (which will serve as a baseline under the new funding formulas from Columbia next year), but utilizes some of the District's debt service millage to pass on a savings to the taxpayers. In essence, the operating budget, as presented by the District and approved by Council on first and second readings, includes a reduction in two mils from debt service that

would be passed on to Beaufort County taxpayers. Beaufort County is the only county being crushed by “the 06-07 General Assembly tax increase for Beaufort County.” No other county in South Carolina got “hit” with an application of the based student cost like Beaufort County.

Mr. Lamb is disgusted with the State Legislature and what they have done to Beaufort County and our taxpayers. Our taxpayers should express their anger with the State Legislature’s willingness to line their pockets at our expense, given the amount of money Beaufort County sends to Columbia in real estate taxes and income taxes. It is an outrageous sum of money. Mr. Lamb finds it personally repugnant as a taxpayer. It is an unfair position to put the School District in. It is equally unfair to make Beaufort County Council bless it. It is totally unfair.

Mr. Stewart stated what Beaufort County is experiencing is the State resuming control of funding and defining public education in the State of South Carolina. This is not a local issue. Beaufort County got shafted on the \$15.6 million shortfall.

Mr. Von Harten stated the property tax increases for the operation of the School District in FY 2006-2007 will require an additional \$25 million to be derived from local tax collections. The bottom line is the \$25 million and who has to pay it. The State Legislature “did a job on us.” The FY 2006-2007 budget is the one last opportunity to shape the spending plans for the 2006-2007 school year with taxes collected from homeowners. The rates that are settled upon become the starting point for what future State Legislators will provide from sales tax revenue. Mr. Von Harten is going to vote against this budget because it is positioning for next year’s budget as to what the State Legislature is going to do.

Mrs. Hairston stated the School District should add the achievement gap as a major challenge. The achievement gap has been falling for the past three years. It is a major concern.

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. OPPOSED – Mrs. Hairston and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

#### **PROPOSED FY 2006-2007 COUNTY BUDGET**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, as Finance Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on third and final reading the proposed FY 2006-2007 County budget at 50.6 mils or \$89,343,027, which includes budgets for Beaufort County government 38.2 mils, Purchase of Real Property Program 2.5 mils, County Debt Service 5.4 mils, Indigent Health Care 1.5 mils, and Continuing Education 3.0 mils as well as Bluffton Fire District 20.3 mils operations and 0.7 mils debt service, Burton Fire District 51.9 mils operations and 6.0 mils debt service, Daufuskie Island Fire District 29.7 mils and 2.6 mils debt service, Lady’s Island/St. Helena Island Fire District 28.9 mils operations and 1.4 mils debt service, and Sheldon Fire District 34.9 mils operations and 2.5 debt service. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.



Mr. Newton noted the FY 2006-2007 budget represents a zero mil increase for County operations. The budget, however, includes a single mil increase this year for bridge financing/ interim financing in order to continue the Rural and Critical Lands Program.

**AN ORDINANCE TO IMPOSE A TRANSPORTATION TAX WITHIN BEAUFORT COUNTY TO FUND MULTIPLE CAPITAL PROJECTS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$147 MILLION FOR NOT MORE THAN SIX YEARS OR WHICHEVER COMES FIRST**

The Chairman announced that a public hearing on an ordinance to impose a transportation tax within Beaufort County to fund multiple capital projects in the amount of \$147 million for not more than six years or whichever comes first will be held Monday, July 24, 2006, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the large meeting room of the Bluffton Branch Library, 120 Palmetto Way, Bluffton Village, Bluffton.

**ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ROAD, LIBRARY, AND PARK FACILITIES IMPACT FEES WITHIN SOUTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY**

The Chairman announced that a public hearing on an ordinance to amend the Road, Library and Park Facilities Impact Fees within southern Beaufort County will be held Monday, July 24, 2006, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in the large meeting room of the Bluffton Branch Library, 120 Palmetto Way, Bluffton Village, Bluffton.

**AN ORDINANCE TO CORRECT THE BEAUFORT COUNTY ZONING MAP FOR LADY'S ISLAND FOR PARCEL R200 011 000 0041 0000 (7.20 ACRES), FROM RURAL TO LADY'S ISLAND COMMUNITY PRESERVATION**

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on first reading a map correction for a 7.20 acre parcel on Lady's Island from Rural (R) to Lady's Island Community Preservation (CP) District. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

**TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS ORDINANCE, ARTICLE V, SECTIONS 106-1357(c) AND 106-1363, AND TABLE 106-1556 (LIGHTING STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL COMMUNICATION TOWERS)**

Mr. Newton left the room prior to the discussion and vote on the proposed text amendment to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance, Article V, Sections 106-1357(c) and 106-1363, and Table 106-1556 (Lighting Standards for Commercial Communication Towers).

Mr. Von Harten, as Vice Chairman, read correspondence from Mr. Newton, dated June 26, 2006, "Please allow this correspondence to serve as notice that I will be recusing myself from Council's deliberation of the above-referenced matter on today's agenda. While not required by

law, because my firm serves as legal counsel for Hargray Communications Group, Inc., I intend to abstain from Council's deliberation to avoid even an appearance of impropriety. In accordance with *South Carolina Code of Laws*, Section 8-13-700(B)4, please cause this statement to be printed in the minutes of all Council meetings at which the matter is considered. I will continue to excuse myself from all votes and deliberations on this matter."

Mr. Von Harten stated the essence of the proposed text amendment is that all towers 150 feet and taller shall be lighted unless otherwise required by the FAA. All communication towers existing prior the adoption of this amendment shall have nine months from the effective date of this amendment to comply with Section 106-1357(c).

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on first reading text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance, Article V, Sections 106-1357(c) and 106-1363, and Table 106-1556 (Lighting Standards for Commercial Communication Towers). The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. ABSTAINED – Mr. Newton\*. The motion passed.  
\*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

The Vice Chairman returned the gavel to the Chairman in order to continue the meeting.

**TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS ORDINANCE ARTICLE III, ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES, DIVISION 2, PROVISIONS GENERALLY APPLICABLE TO REVIEWS AND ACTIONS**

Mr. Von Harten stated the proposed text amendments take the language of the development approval document and formalize it into language of the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance to give it the force of law. Any violation of the development permit, noted in Section 106-372(b), shall result in a stop-work order to be issued by the Zoning and Development Administrator for the project for a minimum of 30 days or upon resolution of the violation.

Mr. Von Harten questioned if the violation is not corrected within the 30-day period, does the stop-work order continue? This language might be ambiguous. He asked the Planning staff to examine the existing language for clarity.

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on first reading text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance Article III, Administrative Procedures, Division 2, provisions generally applicable to reviews and actions. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

**TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS ORDINANCE ARTICLE VII, DIVISION 4, OPEN SPACE USES AND STANDARDS,**

**SECTION 106-1876 (USES IN OPEN SPACE) AND ADD A NEW SECTION 106-1917 (RESIDENTIAL ACCESSORY USES)**

Mr. Von Harten stated the original language restrained the homeowner from putting such things as a fence or play apparatus for their children or, perhaps, an observation deck. The residential lot may contain, under this provision, none solid-type fences, playground equipment, benches, picnic tables, observation decks (not exceeding 100 total square feet), pathways and other similar outdoor recreation uses within the river buffer provided that the ground surface remains permeable. The question was asked during the Land Management Committee meeting if that applies to the river buffer, what about the headwaters buffer? We do not have an answer to that question about the headwaters buffer yet? What Mr. Von Harten is asking, and what the Land Management Committee members decided to move forward, was approval on first reading of the river buffer language. Staff is examining the questions of headwaters definition and what buffering we may or may not wish to enforce.

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on first reading text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance Article VII, Division 4, Open Space Uses and Standards, Section 106-1876 (Uses in Open Space) and add a new Section 106-1917 (Residential Accessory Uses). The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.  
\*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

The Chairman passed the gavel to the Vice Chairman in order to receive committee reports.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Community Services and Public Safety Committee**

**Disabilities and Special Needs Board**

Mr. McBride, as Community Services/Public Services Committee Chairman, nominated Mrs. Carol Myers and Mr. James Matthews to serve as members of the Disabilities and Special Needs Board.

**Economic Development Committee**

**Multi-Purpose (Joint Use) Stadium at Burton Wells Park**

It was moved by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. Glaze, that Council instruct the County Administrator to include in the Master Plan of the Parks and Leisure Services Department the capacity and capability of building a joint use stadium at Burton Wells Park. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.  
\*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

**Grants/Minority Affairs Committee**

**Local Preference Ordinance**

It was moved by Mr. Glaze, as Grants/Minority Affairs Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve the adding of the County's local preference ordinance to the Greater Beaufort/Hilton Head Island Economic Development Partnership's contract. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

\*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

**Land Management Committee**

**Scope of Services for Clarion Associates**

Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman, reported Committee members awarded a contract to Clarion Associates in the amount of \$47,000 to review, revise and draft the necessary methodology, calculations, and ordinances for staff to present the newly revised and updated impact fees for southern Beaufort County to the full Council.

The Vice Chairman returned the gavel to the Chairman in order to continue the meeting.

**RESIGNATION – COUNCILMAN PETER LAMB**

Mr. Peter Lamb, representing Council District 4, announced his resignation effective Tuesday, July 18, 2006, when he will be sworn in as Bluffton Magistrate.

The Chairman remarked that Mr. Lamb has served his constituents honorably in representing Council District 4. It has been a pleasure to serve more than six years with Mr. Lamb on County Council.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no requests to speak during public comment.

**CALL FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Von Harten, that Council go immediately into executive session for the purpose of discussing negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed purchase of property. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

RECONVENE OF REGULAR SESSION

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Lamb, that Council acquire the Robinson property at Crystal Lake on Lady's Island. The property consists of 0.48 acres (.35 acres of upland and .13 acres of saltwater marsh). The purchase price is \$200,000. The property fronts approximately 700 feet along SC Highway 802. It adjoins the Flint Tract, Crystal Lake, and Butler Marine. This acquisition is part of the development of Crystal Lake Park. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. Lamb, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

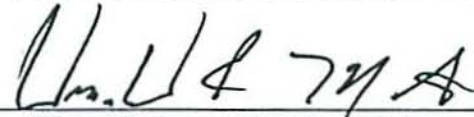
\*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant.

ADJOURNMENT

Council adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY

By:



Wm. Weston J. Newton, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
Suzanne M. Rainey, Clerk to Council

Ratified: July 24, 2006

**Beaufort County Council Minutes**  
**July 24, 2006**

Official Proceedings  
County Council of Beaufort County  
July 24, 2006

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

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Council of Beaufort County was held at 4:00 p.m., Monday, July 24, 2006, in the large meeting room of the Bluffton Branch Library, 120 Palmetto Way, Bluffton, South Carolina.

**ATTENDANCE**

Chairman Weston Newton\*, Vice Chairman W. R. "Skeet" Von Harten, and members Frank Brafman, Gerald Dawson, Mark Generales, Herbert Glaze, Margaret Griffin, Starletta Hairston, William McBride and Dick Stewart. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Peter Lamb resigned July 18, 2006, therefore, Council District 4 is vacant.

\* Mr. Newton is serving as a member of Beaufort County Council in a *de facto* status. He has moved to Bluffton effective Saturday, June 10, 2006. On May 19, 2006, a letter was dispatched to the Governor advising of Mr. Newton's plan to move and relocate his residence from Beaufort County Council District 3 to District 4. Mr. Newton's understanding of the law has been confirmed by the Attorney General that, since there are fewer than 180 days prior to the next general election, Mr. Newton will continue to serve in his capacity as a member of Beaufort County Council until, and unless, the Governor appoints a successor. If the Governor appoints no successor, Mr. Newton will continue to serve throughout the remainder of the term he was elected to serve.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Chairman led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**INVOCATION**

Councilman Gerald Dawson gave the Invocation.

**REVIEW OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING HELD JUNE 7, 2006**

There were no corrections and/or additions made to the minutes of the public hearing held June 7, 2006.

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Brafman, that Council approve the proceedings of the public hearing held June 7, 2006. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von

Certified True Copy  
Clerk to Council  
Beaufort County, SC  
By: Suzanne M. Rainey  
Suzanne M. Rainey  
Date: 8-15-06

Harten. ABSTAINED – Mr. Brafman. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

### **REVIEW OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE PUBLIC HEARING HELD JUNE 8, 2006**

There were no corrections and/or additions made to the minutes of the public hearing held June 8, 2006.

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Brafman, that Council approve the proceedings of the public hearing held June 8, 2006. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. ABSTAINED – Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mrs. Griffin and Mr. Newton\*. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

### **REVIEW OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD JUNE 12, 2006**

There were no corrections and/or additions made to the minutes of the regular meeting held June 12, 2006.

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Brafman, that Council approve the proceedings of the regular meeting held June 12, 2006. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

### **REVIEW OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD JUNE 26, 2006**

There were no corrections and/or additions made to the minutes of the regular meeting held June 26, 2006.

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Brafman, that Council approve the proceedings of the regular meeting held June 26, 2006. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

### **PRESENTATION TO COUNCILMAN PETER LAMB**

The Chairman presented Councilman Peter Lamb a plaque for his five years of service as a member of the Beaufort County Council, representing Council District 4, Bluffton/Daufuskie Island. Mr. Lamb was elected April 3, 2001, to fill the term left vacant by Mr. Barry Connor. Mr. Lamb served as Chairman of the Public Services Committee and Development Agreement Committee. He served as Vice Chairman of the Land Management Committee and was a member of Employee Services, Finance, Grants/Minority Affairs Committees, Lowcountry



Council of Governments and Transportation Advisory Group. Mr. Lamb has been administered the oath of office to serve as Bluffton Magistrate.

### **EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, announced that Mr. Mike Taylor, System/Network Analyst, Management Information Systems Department, has been selected as Employee of the Month for July 2006. Mike works for the MIS Department but his name was brought forward by a grateful Jack Sullivan, Register of Deeds Director. Mike single-handedly worked through an entire weekend to prevent destruction of valuable documents in the Register of Deeds. Mike has, on numerous occasions, given up entire weekends and many evenings to fix serious problems in order to ensure that computers are up and running the next day and to minimize disruption to on-going operations. Mike put the MIS 'system crash' planning and preparation policy into action one recent weekend and saved the day for the Register of Deeds. He discovered that two vital hard drives, which contained the Register of Deeds database, had 'crashed' irreparably. During that weekend he had to find a source to replace the hard drives, order the equipment, and then determine how he could re-establish the database in such a way that there would be no interference with operations on Monday. He worked many, many hours both Saturday and Sunday to complete a seamless continuation of operations. Mike has responsibility for technical support of a number of major automated systems throughout the country. Mike Taylor exemplifies the highest work ethic, and is certainly deserving of this recognition.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The Chairman recognized Mr. Joe Croley, a Bluffton resident, who asked Council to vote "no" to the proposed Barrel Landing Planned Unit Development.

Mrs. Karen Heitman, a Sun City resident, stated she is amazed Council is ignoring the Planning Staff and Planning Board's recommendation to deny a request to rezone R600-21-11 and R600-21-11B (7.14 acres), from Light Industrial to Planned Unit Development, to be known as Barrel Landing Chevrolet.

Mr. Charlie Wetmore, a Bluffton resident, stated there are sites other than McGarvey's Corner to locate an automobile dealership. He encouraged Council to deny a request to rezone R600-21-11 and R600-21-11B (7.14 acres), from Light Industrial to Planned Unit Development, to be known as Barrel Landing Chevrolet.

Mr. Tommy O'Brien, a Burton resident, asked Council why the County wants to sell the old jailhouse located on King Street. The School District could use the land for a new administration building.

### **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

**Two-Week Progress Report**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, circulated copies of his Two-Week Progress Report, which summarized his activities that took place June 26, 2006 through July 21, 2006.

#### **Staff Reports Provided to Council**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, reported Council has received reports from the following departments: (i) Chief Financial Officer – Del Webb Agreement Fund (effective May 31, 2006) and Impact Fee Collection Report (effective May 31, 2006); (ii) Animal Shelter and Control – Monthly Report (June 2006); (iii) Treasurer – Cash Flow Reports (weeks of June 13 and July 11); (iv) Detention Center – Population Report and Status Report (weeks of June 10 to July 16); and (v) County Administrator – 2005 Adjusted Tax Summary Report.

#### **Summary of SCDOT US Highway 278 Widening Project Weekly Meeting**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, gave a brief construction update on the SCDOT US Highway 278 Widening Project. APAC-Southeast, the contractor, continues westbound asphalt widening operations on the outside lanes. Asphalt production has been good. APAC is almost complete with intermediate binder course eastbound except in several turn lanes. Remaining work for eastbound will be surface course. Next week two paving crews will be working. APAC will continue asphalt structural paving operations eastbound in right turn lanes and intersections from Simmonsville Road to Burnt Church Road. Crews are completing base widening westbound. A project completion date of November 10, 2006 is still good and on schedule. There will be one more month of tourist traffic. After August 15, 2006, traffic should reduce. School started this week. Traffic Management Control has not seen any impact on US Highway 278 traffic.

#### **Bluffton Parkway Phases 3A, 3B, 3C and 4 Update Report**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, gave a brief update on Bluffton Parkway Phases 3A, 3B, 3C and 4. Phase 3A - Buckwalter Parkway through Pinecrest Subdivision is 25% complete. Phase 3B - Pinecrest Subdivision to Simmonsville Road is 9% complete. Phase 3C - Buckwalter Parkway Overlap Section is 54% complete. Phase 4 - SC Highway 170 to Buckwalter Parkway is 41% complete.

#### **Buckwalter Parkway Phases 1A and 1B**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, gave a brief update on Buckwalter Parkway Phases 1A and 1B. Phase 1A begins at US Highway 278 and ends at Bluffton Parkway Phase 4. Council awarded a change order on June 26, 2006, to add construction of Phase 1A to the current Bluffton Parkway Phases 3 and 4 contract to Malphrus Construction Company.

Phase 1B begins at SC Highway 26 and ends at Bluffton Parkway Phase 3. Design work is underway with an estimated completion date of September 2006.

### **Update on County Contracts**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, reported as of July 21, 2006, the Purchasing Department has received 386 contracts from the various County departments. The next task is to digitize all contracts and then make them available on both the intranet and internet.

### **Announcement of Council Special Meeting**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, announced a special meeting of Council will be held on Monday, August 28, 2006, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Administration Building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort, South Carolina. The purpose of the meeting is to vote to override the tax limitation, as determined by the South Carolina Department of Revenue, and to increase the millage rate for School District operations for FY 2006-2007.

### **Acceptance of Grant Offered by the South Carolina Department of Commerce, Aeronautics Commission, Project No. 06-016, Beaufort County Airport (Lady's Island)**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. McBride, that Council accept a grant in an amount up to \$2,968 offered by the Department of Commerce, Aeronautics Commission, for replacement of Precision Approval Path Indication (PAPI) light on the end of Runway 25 located at the Beaufort County Airport (Lady's Island). The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

### **Acceptance of Grant Offered by the US Department of Transportation, FAA, Project No. 3-45-0030-26**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Stewart, that Council accept a grant in an amount up to \$305,643 offered by the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration, to pay the United States' share of 95% of the allowable costs incurred in accomplishing the project consisting of the following: (i) Conduct Environmental Study (Stormwater Pollution Prevention) Plans. The contract was awarded to Wilbur Smith Associates on or about May 23, 2006. The fee estimate is \$15,434; (ii) Conduct Miscellaneous Study (Wildlife Assessment Study). The contract was awarded to the United States Department of Agriculture on or about January 4, 2005. The fee estimate (excluding reimbursable expenditures) is \$12,452; (iii) Final AIP grant relating to land acquisition costs incurred on or about October 16, 2000. The cost of land acquisition at the Hilton Head Island Airport was \$1,875. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

### **Motion to Authorize Staff Attorney to Correct Schedule of Precincts in the Rural and Critical Lands Preservation \$50 Million Bond Ordinance**

It was moved by Mr. McBride, seconded by Mr. Von Harten, that Council authorize the Staff Attorney to correct the Schedule of Precincts stated in the Rural and Critical Lands Program \$50 Million Bond Authorization Ordinance so to correct and delete certain precincts which did not receive Legislative approval for use in the 2006 General Election. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

### **Presentation on Pandemic Flu Planning**

Mr. Matthew Petrofess, DHEC Director for the Lowcountry Health District, introduced Mr. Nick Davidson, DHEC Region 8 Director of Public Health Preparedness. Mr. Davidson stated each fall and winter DHEC prepares for and vaccinates residents for the seasonal flu. Outbreaks follow predictable seasonal patterns, occur annually, and usually in the winter. A pandemic flu occurs rarely. It occurred three times in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century with the last in 1968. The Asian strain of bird flu (HP H5N1) is not in the United States currently. There is no human-to-human spread of HP H5N1; therefore, there is no pandemic. The bird virus would have to change in order to easily infect human-to-human, but this has not happened yet. The longer the current bird HP H5N1 virus exists in the poultry populations in Asia, then the greater the risk this change will have time to occur. A pandemic flu impact on South Carolina could last a year or more coming in multiple waves each lasting six to eight weeks. Being prepared can reduce its duration. It could infect 15% to 30% of the population thereby disrupting everyday life. Employers would experience personnel shortages. The medical profession would experience shortages in medical supplies, equipment, and hospital beds. Between 500,000 and 1,200,000 people would require doctor visits. Between 7,000 and 17,000 people would need hospital care. There could be from 2,000 to 5,000 deaths.

A pandemic influenza will happen sooner or later. No one knows when a pandemic will occur. It could be many years from now. No one knows whether the pandemic virus will evolve from the current bird flu. The people, who caught "bird flu", caught it by having close contact with infected birds. At this time it does not spread from one person to another. Health officials are, however, very concerned about this bird flu virus changing and becoming able to spread from one person to another.

### **CONSIDERATION OF CONTRACT AWARDS**

#### **Sale of Old Beaufort County Jail (King Street)**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, explained the former Beaufort County jail is a two-story structure with approximately 7,775 gross square feet of interior space. It is located on approximately 0.87 acres of land in the City of Beaufort. The facility was decommissioned in 1992. It has remained vacant due to the following reasons: (i) inflexible and inefficient interior design; (ii) restrictions on demolition and exterior modifications due to the facility's historic registration; and (iii) significant cost to renovate and meet the needs of present-day code requirements. In May 2006, Staff decided to solicit offers from the public to sell the old jail

located on King Street “as is”. On June 15, 2006, the following purchase proposals were received, along with deposits equaling ten percent (10%) of each proposal: (i) Gumbo Limbo, LLC, Hilton Head Island, \$511,142 (ii) Factory Creek Landings Group, LLL, Beaufort, \$475,000, (iii) BIV, LLC, Beaufort, \$471,000, and (iv) Prince Street Group, Beaufort, \$225,000.

Staff developed two estimates. The first estimate is for the value of the land without discounting the financial liabilities. The second estimate is for the cost to provide a minimum level of essential improvements required to make the jail safe and fit for any type of commercial use. This second estimate does not include any allowance for alterations to improve the usability/efficiency of the space. After discounting the \$800,000 estimated land value by the \$340,000 estimated cost to make the structure habitable, Staff recommended an adjusted fair market value of \$460,000.

It was moved by Mr. Glaze, as Public Services Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council award a contract to Gumbo Limbo, LLC, Hilton Head Island, SC, to purchase the old Jail, for the amount of \$511,142 pending the City of Beaufort’s approval of the subdivision of the Jail/SC Health and Environmental Control lot. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. ABSTAINED – Mrs. Hairston and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

#### **Tree Obstructions at Beaufort County Airports**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, explained Wilbur Smith Associates (“WSA”) is currently under contract to provide professional design and consulting services for aviation-related projects at both Beaufort County airports. Over the past few years, numerous trees have grown to heights where they are protruding into obstacle-free approach airspace at both airports. The FAA and State Division of Aeronautics have expressed concerns over this matter and requested the County takes steps to expeditiously correct these problems. Aviation easements have been obtained on most of the affected properties to allow the County to trim or remove the trees as required. WSA Task Orders #7 and #8 provide professional design and construction management services needed to remove and mitigate the tree obstructions at both airports. Funding for these professional services contracts will initially come from the Airports Enterprise Fund. Tree obstruction removal projects are eligible for both FAA and State Division of Aeronautics grant reimbursement once the work has been completed and both agencies have indicated their willingness to do so. The Aviation Board concurs with these projects.

It was moved by Mr. Glaze, as Public Services Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council award a contract to Wilbur Smith Associates Task Order #7 in the amount of \$95,618 and Task Order #8 in the amount of \$72,426, totaling \$168,044, for professional services contracts for the removal of tree obstructions at both Beaufort County airports. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**Aerial Photography for Calendar Year 2007**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, explained the Geographic Information Systems (“GIS”) Department is requesting \$153,379 to acquire aerial photography of Beaufort County for calendar year 2007. This would be a two-year contract with the first year cost of \$76,987 and the second year cost of \$76,392. Pictometry International Corporation, Rochester, NY, provides a patented unique overhead and oblique imagery that no other aerial company has yet marketed.

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council award a contract to Pictometry International Corporation, Rochester, NY, in the amount of \$153,379 for aerial photography of Beaufort County for calendar year 2007. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

\*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**AN ORDINANCE TO CORRECT THE BEAUFORT COUNTY ZONING MAP FOR LADY’S ISLAND PARCEL R200 011 000 0041 0000 (7.20 ACRES), FROM RURAL TO LADY’S ISLAND COMMUNITY PRESERVATION DISTRICT**

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on second reading a map correction for a 7.20 acre parcel on Lady’s Island from Rural (R) to Lady’s Island Community Preservation (CP) District. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

The Chairman announced that a public hearing on this issue would be held on Monday, August 14, 2006, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Administration Building, Beaufort.

**TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS ORDINANCE, ARTICLE V, SECTIONS 106-1357(c) AND 106-1363, AND TABLE 106-1556 (LIGHTING STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL COMMUNICATION TOWERS)**

Mr. Newton left the room prior to the discussion and vote on the proposed text amendment to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance, Article V, Sections 106-1357(c) and 106-1363, and Table 106-1556 (Lighting Standards for Commercial Communication Towers).

Mr. Von Harten, as Vice Chairman, read correspondence from Mr. Newton, dated June 26, 2006, “Please allow this correspondence to serve as notice that I will be recusing myself from Council’s deliberation of the above-referenced matter on today’s agenda. While not required by law, because my firm serves as legal counsel for Hargray Communications Group, Inc., I intend to abstain from Council’s deliberation to avoid even an appearance of impropriety. In accordance with *South Carolina Code of Laws*, Section 8-13-700(B)4, please cause this statement to be printed in the minutes of all Council meetings at which the matter is considered. I will continue to excuse myself from all votes and deliberations on this matter.”

Mr. Von Harten stated the essence of the proposed text amendment is that all towers 150 feet and taller shall be lighted unless otherwise required by the FAA. All communication towers existing prior to adoption of this amendment shall have nine months from the effective date of this amendment to comply with Section 106-1357(c).

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on second reading text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance, Article V, Sections 106-1357(c) and 106-1363, and Table 106-1556 (Lighting Standards for Commercial Communication Towers). The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. ABSTAINED – Mr. Newton\*. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

The Chairman reentered the room.

The Vice Chairman returned the gavel to the Chairman in order to continue the meeting.

The Chairman announced that a public hearing on this issue would be held on Monday, August 14, 2006, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Administration Building, Beaufort.

**TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS  
ORDINANCE ARTICLE III, ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES, DIVISION 2,  
PROVISIONS GENERALLY APPLICABLE TO REVIEWS AND ACTIONS**

Mr. Von Harten stated the proposed text amendments take the language of the development approval document and formalize it into language of the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance to give it the force of law. Any violation of the development permit, noted in Section 106-372(b), shall result in a stop-work order to be issued by the Zoning and Development Administrator for the project for a minimum of 30 days or upon resolution of the violation.

Main motion.

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on second reading text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance Article III, Administrative Procedures, Division 2, provisions generally applicable to reviews and actions.

Motion to amend by substitution.

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, seconded by Mr. Generales, that Council amend the text in Section 106-372(b) as follows: The Zoning Administrator in concert with the DRT will ascertain the extent and the nature of the violation and determine appropriate mitigation measures which will resolve the violation. Any violation that the Zoning Administrator/DRT determines shall have a thirty-day (30) day stop-work order imposed upon it will require a notification and

approval of the County Administrator. If the violation has not been resolved prior to the expiration of the stop-work order, the County Administrator shall be advised and the stop-work order may be extended with the express consent of the County Administrator. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

Vote on the amended motion, which is now the main motion, and includes the motion to amend by substitution.

Council approve on second reading text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance Article III, Administrative Procedures, Division 2, provisions generally applicable to reviews and action and, further to amend the text in Section 106-372(b) as follows: The Zoning Administrator in concert with the DRT will ascertain the extent and the nature of the violation and determine appropriate mitigation measures which will resolve the violation. Any violation that the Zoning Administrator/DRT determines shall have a thirty-day (30) day stop-work order imposed upon it will require notification and approval of the County Administrator. If the violation has not been resolved prior to the expiration of the stop-work order, the County Administrator shall be advised and the stop-work order may be extended with the express consent of the County Administrator. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant.

The Chairman announced that a public hearing on this issue would be held on Monday, August 14, 2006, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Administration Building, Beaufort.

**TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS ORDINANCE ARTICLE VII, DIVISION 4, OPEN SPACE USES AND STANDARDS, SECTION 106-1876 (USES IN OPEN SPACE) AND ADD A NEW SECTION 106-1917 (RESIDENTIAL ACCESSORY USES)**

Mr. Von Harten stated the original language restrained the homeowner from putting things such as a fence or play apparatus for their children or, perhaps, an observation deck. The residential lot may contain, under this provision, none solid-type fences, playground equipment, benches, picnic tables, observation decks (not exceeding 100 total square feet), pathways and other similar outdoor recreation uses within the river buffer provided that the ground surface remains permeable.

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on second reading text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance Article VII, Division 4, Open Space Uses and Standards, Section 106-1876 (Uses in Open Space) and add a new Section 106-1917 (Residential Accessory Uses).



Prior to consideration of third and final reading Mr. Newton asked Mr. Criscitiello, Planning Director, to contact the municipalities to find out what type uses are permitted in their river buffers.

Prior to consideration of third and final reading Mr. Von Harten asked Planning Staff to examine the questions of headwaters definition and what buffering we may or may not wish to enforce.

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

\*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

The Chairman announced that a public hearing on this issue would be held on Monday, August 14, 2006, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Administration Building, Beaufort.

**SOUTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY MAP AMENDMENT/REZONING REQUEST FOR R600-21-11 AND R600-21-11B (7.14 ACRES), FROM LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (LI) TO PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD), TO BE KNOWN AS BARREL LANDING CHEVROLET**

Mr. Von Harten remarked the applicant, seeks approval of a Planned Unit Development (PUD) district to place a Chevrolet dealership and an automotive service center at this site. The current zoning of the property is Light Industrial, which does not permit an automotive dealership. In exchange for the PUD zoning, the applicant claims the proposed use would reduce the daily traffic impact as compared to allowable by-right uses under the current zoning. The applicant is also submitting additional commercial and office uses for this site should unanticipated conditions occur that would not allow the development of the car dealership and automotive center.

Both Planning Staff and the Planning Commission have recommended denial of this request. Staff believes the PUD would not be consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan. The Southern Regional Plan says that the County and the municipalities (the Town of Hilton Head Island and the Town of Bluffton) will work out a detailed land use plan for the remaining 11% of uncommitted land in the County. This area would be a part of this specific land use plan and that everything would be kept status quo until such time as the Plan was in place so it could all be done together.

Mr. Von Harten suggested a car dealership did not belong at this particular location, primarily because the property abuts a 32-acre park recently purchased by the County for \$1.2 million.

Mr. Stewart remarked the current Light Industrial zoning was probably part of a regional planning effort at that time. The current zoning gives the property owners a reasonable expectation that they can do something on the property they own. A PUD is a tool by which the citizen's interests and those of the applicant can be reconciled.

Mr. Criscitiello stated that a part of this PUD application is that the car dealership, if approved, would be in place for only two years, after which time those successor uses may come to light. The applicant will provide: (i) a concept plan for providing signage and parking for the Barrel Landing Park. (ii) Underground storage of retention ponds. (iii) A 100-foot buffer to the May River. (iv) Upsized plantings to decrease the visibility from US Highway 278 and Highway 170. (v) No balloons. (vi) No outside speakers. (vii) No strobe lights or bright lighting. (viii) A specific traffic count cap (cannot exceed "X" intensity) and any replacement use also meets this intensity requirement. (ix) Any future alternative uses and proposed plan use/zoning changes will be addressed by the Planning Commission and forwarded to the Land Management Committee.

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on first reading a Southern Beaufort County Map amendment/rezoning request for R600-21-11 and R600-21-11B (7.14 acres), from Light Industrial (LI) to Planned Unit Development (PUD), to be known as Barrel Landing Chevrolet. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Generales, Mrs. Griffin, Mr. McBride and Mr. Stewart. OPPOSED – Mr. Glaze, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Von Harten. ABSTAINED – Mr. Dawson and Mrs. Hairston. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

The Chairman announced that a public hearing on this issue would be held on Monday, August 14, 2006, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Administration Building, Beaufort.

**LADY'S ISLAND ZONING MAP AMENDMENT TO INCLUDE R201-18-7C (0.49 ACRE), R201-18-7D (0.85 ACRE) AND R201-18-573 (0.74 ACRE) WITHIN THE LADY'S ISLAND REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

Mr. Von Harten explained these parcels lie to the north of Rue De Bois along F & B Lane. The original proposed rezoning from Lady's Island Community Preservation District (LICPD) to Lady's Island Professional Office District would allow commercial activity on the parcels which could permit development size, type and scale incompatible with the existing neighborhood. Once the parcels in question were examined more closely, it became apparent that inclusion in the LICPD would be the most appropriate course of action. Inclusion in the LICPD would permit a higher density of residential development than the LICPD, while protecting the existing neighborhood by requiring increased buffering and architectural standards to reach the higher densities. No commercial activity would be permitted. One of the three parcels is already included in the LICPD.

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on first reading a Lady's Island Zoning Map amendment to include R201-18-7C (0.49 acre), R201-18-7D (0.85 acre), and R201-18-573 (0.74 acre) within the Lady's Island Redevelopment District. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS ORDINANCE/ZDSO, APPENDIX B, SECTION 5, LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES (ADDS STANDARDS PROHIBITING EARTHEN BERMS AND NOISE ABATEMENT WALLS IN THE U.S. HIGHWAY 21 CORRIDOR BETWEEN CHOWAN CREEK AND HARBOR RIVER)**

Mr. Von Harten explained that SCDOT has been working on a design for widening US Highway 21 on St. Helena Island. They have been offering adjacent land owners the option of earthen berms for noise attenuation. Acceptance by scattered property owners could result in an intermittent wall of earthen berms along the highway. Visually attractive earthen berms have been successfully installed in other parts of Beaufort County, such as at the entrance to River Bend at the intersection of SC Highway 170 and US Highway 278. Because the creation of raised berms along the roads on St. Helena Island would be determined by each property owner, the resulting intermittent nature of the berms would result in a visual anomaly and be detrimental to both the physical character of the Island and to the traditional landscape that the residents are trying to preserve. Local residents agreed to using landscaping instead of earthen berms where needed.

It was moved by Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on first reading text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance/ZDSO, Appendix B, Section 5, Landscape Design Guidelines (adds standards prohibiting earthen berms and noise abatement walls in the U.S. Highway 21 Corridor between Chowan Creek and Harbor River). The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Von Harten. ABSTAINED – Mr. Stewart. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**AN ORDINANCE TO IMPOSE A TRANSPORTATION TAX WITHIN BEAUFORT COUNTY TO FUND MULTIPLE CAPITAL PROJECTS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$147 MILLION FOR NOT MORE THAN SIX YEARS OR WHICHEVER COMES FIRST**

Mr. Newton reported members of the Public Services Committee met on July 18, 2006. At that meeting, Mr. Colin Kinton, County Traffic Engineer, distributed an updated list of projects for the proposed transportation tax referendum and a copy of a letter he received from SCDOT regarding the US Highway 17 widening project. Members were advised that there have been some changes in available funding for the projects, and some changes in the potential cost estimates for the capital roadway projects. This newly revised list was mailed to the municipalities last week for their comments. A letter dated July 18, 2006, from Mr. Wilson Elgin, SCDOT Project Manager, to Mr. Colin Kinton describes an anticipated shortfall of \$19 million for the US Highway 17 widening project. There are changes to the new list, totaling \$152 million, compared to \$147 million on the original list. Deleted from the original list was transit service (LRTA) at \$5 million. Two projects on Hilton Head Island are included under US

Highway 278 improvements, totaling \$28 million. The Public Services Committee is recommending the imposition of a transportation tax in the amount of \$152 million.

Mr. Kinton gave an overview of the ten projects included in the referendum question.

**Bluffton Parkway Phase 5.** This project begins at Buckwalter Parkway and ends at Mackays Creek. It is five miles in length. It includes eight-foot pathways. The total project cost is \$60 million (\$10 million County Road Impact Fee and \$50 million County Roadway Sales Tax).

**US Highway 278 Improvements.** This project begins at Sea Pines Circle and ends at SC Highway 170. It is 15 miles in length. It includes paved shoulders. The total project cost is \$39 million (\$8.1 million State/Federal funding, \$2.9 million Updated County Road Impact Fee, \$28 million County Roadway Sales Tax).

**SC Highway 170 Widening.** This project begins at Bluffton Parkway Phase 4 and ends at Ride Watch Drive (Rivers Bend). It is 6 miles in length. It includes pathways and paved shoulders. The total project cost is \$13.5 million (\$7.5 million updated County Road Impact Fee and \$6 million County Roadway Sales Tax).

**US Highway 17 Widening.** This project begins at US Highway 21 (Garden's Corner) and ends at Combahee River. It is 6 miles in length. It includes pathways. The total project cost is \$79.2 million (\$72.2 million State/Federal funding, \$2 million updated County Road Impact Fee, \$5 million County Roadway Sales Tax).

**US Highway 21 (Boundary Street) Improvements.** This project begins at Broad River Boulevard and ends at Palmetto Street. It is 2 miles in length. It includes a pathway on Southside Boulevard. The total project cost is \$13.250 million (\$3.750 County Road Impact Fee and \$9.5 million County Roadway Sales Tax).

**Boundary Street Parallel Road.** This project begins at Robert Smalls Parkway and ends at Palmetto Street. It is one mile in length. It includes sidewalks. The total project cost is \$8.750 million (\$4.550 million County Road Impact Fees, \$4.2 million County Roadway Sales Tax).

**SC Highway 802 (Ribaut Road) Improvements.** This project begins at Lenora Drive (near Russell Bell Bridge) and ends at Lady's Island Drive. It is 1.5 miles in length. It includes sidewalks. The total project cost is \$2.265 million (\$450,000 State/Federal funding, \$1.215 million County Road Impact Fee, \$600,000 County Roadway Sales Tax).

**SC Highway 21/SC Highway 802 (Lady's Island Drive) Widening.** This project begins at SC Highway 802 (Ribaut Road) and ends at US Highway 21 (Sea Island Parkway). It is 2.8 miles in length. It includes pathways and/or shoulders. The total cost is \$35.5 million from County Roadway Sales Tax.

Northern Beaufort Bypass. This project begins at US Highway 21 and ends at SC Highway 802. It is 9 miles in length. It includes pathways. The total project cost is \$6 million from County Roadway Sales Tax.

SC Highway 802 (Savannah Highway) Widening. This project begins at SC Highway 170 (Robert Smalls Parkway). It is 2.1 miles in length. It includes pathways and/or shoulders. The project cost is \$7.2 million from County Roadway Sales Tax.

The Chairman opened a public hearing at 6:50 p.m. for the purpose of receiving information from the public regarding an ordinance to impose a Transportation Tax within Beaufort County to fund multiple capital projects in the amount of \$152 million for not more than six years or whichever comes first. After calling once for public comment, the Chairman recognized Mrs. Karen Heitman, representing Greater Bluffton Pathways, who stated GBP appreciates the inclusion of pathways in the referendum question. GBP supports the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority and would like to see bus service provided between USC-Beaufort (South Campus) to Hilton Head Island. Alternative transportation is badly needed in southern Beaufort County.

Mr. Charlie Wetmore, a Bluffton resident, asked Council to please consider reinstating the bus route along US Highway 278. Please consider installing pathways along the roadways. They are important to the residents of Beaufort County.

Mr. Bill Coleman, a Hilton Head Island resident, expressed opposition to the proposed transportation tax referendum.

Mr. Perry White, a Hilton Head Island resident, suggested Council take another look at making public transportation available to the residents and visitors of Beaufort County.

Mr. Roberts Vaux, a Bluffton resident, urged Council to approve on second reading an ordinance to impose a transportation tax to fund multiple capital projects in the amount of \$152 million.

Mr. Michael Sampogna, a Bluffton resident, stated the extension of the Bluffton Parkway is a benefit to developers. It will take 30 years for the infrastructure to catch up with the on-going development.

Mr. Bill Dever, representing Crowne Plaza Resort, urged Council to include some funding for bus service in the referendum question.

Mrs. Fran Gellman, a Hilton Head Island resident, urged Council to approve on second reading an ordinance to impose a transportation tax to fund multiple capital projects in the amount of \$152 million. She encouraged Council to include some concept for mass transportation in the referendum question.

Mr. William Kamins, a Windmill Harbor resident, encouraged Council to include a traffic signal at the entrance to Windmill Harbor.

Mr. Henry Sanders, a Hilton Head Island resident, urged Council to approve on second reading an ordinance to impose a transportation tax to fund multiple capital projects in the amount of \$152 million.

Mr. Hank Johnston, Town of Bluffton Mayor, encouraged Council to approve on second reading an ordinance to impose a transportation tax to fund multiple capital projects in the amount of \$152 million. He encouraged Council to consider including some type of funding for public transportation in the referendum question.

Mrs. Rochelle Ferguson, Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority Director, urged Council to include some type of funding for public transportation in the referendum question.

After calling twice more for public comment and receiving none, the Chairman declared the public hearing closed at 7:33 p.m.

**Main motion.**

It was moved by Mr. Glaze, as Public Services Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on second reading an ordinance to impose a transportation tax within Beaufort County to fund multiple capital projects in the amount of \$152 million for not more than six years or whichever comes first.

**Motion to amend by substitution.**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Dawson, that Council amend the motion to apply an additional \$6 million toward the US Highway 17 Widening Project beginning at US Highway 21 (Garden's Corner) and ending at the Combahee River and, in turn, reduce the \$6 million designed for planning and engineering for the Northern Beaufort Bypass Project beginning at US Highway 21 and ending at SC Highway 802. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales and Mr. Glaze. OPPOSED – Mr. Brafman, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion failed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**Vote on the main motion.**

Council approve on second reading an ordinance to impose a transportation tax within Beaufort County to fund multiple capital projects in the amount of \$152 million for not more than six years or whichever comes first. FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Generales, Mrs. Griffin, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. ABSTAINED - Mr. Dawson, Mr. Glaze and Mrs. Hairston. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**MOTION TO EXTEND**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. Von Harten, that Council extend beyond 8:00 p.m. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ROAD, LIBRARY, AND PARK FACILITIES IMPACT FEES WITHIN SOUTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY**

Mr. Tony Criscitiello, Planning Director, explained the proposed Impact Fee revisions in Southern Beaufort County. State statute Section 6-1-9 enables local governments to exact impact fees on new development to fund the cost local government will incur to provide capital improvements to accommodate that new development. The County has engaged Clarion Associates to assist with the revision of the County's Impact Fee Program and ordinance. Since Beaufort County has a Comprehensive Plan, state law authorizes the imposition of impact fees for roads, parks and libraries. To develop an Impact Fee Program and Ordinance, one must: establish Level of Service (LOS) standards for each public facility, determine existing conditions and deficiencies, prepare a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) for the public facilities, establish service units for each public facility, prepare proportionate share impact fees based on the CIP, and establish policy to address existing deficiencies. The impact fees proposed to be updated are transportation, parks/recreation, and libraries.

Transportation. The Southern Regional Plan has identified \$229.9 million in transportation projects needed to accommodate future growth. Existing Transportation Impact Fees are estimated to generate \$38.8 million and are committed to the Bluffton Parkway (Phases 1 – 4) and the Buckwalter Parkway. A revision to the Impact Fee Program is being proposed in conjunction with the Capital Projects Sale Tax to address the funding gap for future transportation needs.

Parks and Recreation. The Southern Regional Plan identified the need for an additional 525 acres of park land and \$48.8 million in park facilities to serve future population growth. This amount does not cover operations and maintenance. Current impact fees are estimated to generate only \$16.2 million. Current impact fees only pay for park facilities, not land purchases. Currently, there is no dedicated funding source for the purchase of active park land.

Libraries. The Library staff is currently working with the Library Board of Trustees to review its Facilities Master Plan and determine the proper level of service for a revised Impact Fee Program. Revisions may include: adjusting building construction cost estimates, covering the cost of future furniture, fixtures and equipment needs, and covering the cost of future land purchases.

The Chairman opened a public hearing at 8:12 p.m. for the purpose of receiving information from the public regarding an ordinance to amend the Road, Library, and Park Facilities Impact

Fees within southern Beaufort County. The Chairman recognized Mr. Charlie Wetmore, a Bluffton resident, who expressed support for a proposed increase in Road, Library and Park Facilities Impact Fees within southern Beaufort County.

Mr. John Geisler, a Hilton Head Island resident, expressed support for a proposed increase in Road, Library and Park Facilities Impact Fees within southern Beaufort County.

Mr. Greg Goldberg, representing the Hilton Head Island Homebuilders Association, expressed concern about the proposed increase in Road, Library and Park Facilities Impact Fees within southern Beaufort County.

Mr. Mark Ellis, a Hilton Head Island resident, expressed opposition to the proposed increase in Road, Library and Park Facilities Impact Fees within southern Beaufort County.

Mrs. Wesley Murdaugh, a Hilton Head Island resident, expressed opposition to the proposed increase in Road, Library and Park Facilities Impact Fees within southern Beaufort County.

Mr. Henry Sanders, a Hilton Head Island resident, expressed support for the proposed increase in Road, Library and Park Facilities Impact Fees within southern Beaufort County.

Mr. Jim Garman, a Hilton Head Island resident, expressed concern about Council increasing Road, Library and Transportation Facilities Impact Fees in southern Beaufort County.

The Chairman passed the gavel to the Vice Chairman in order to receive committee reports.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Community Services and Public Safety Committee

#### **Disabilities and Special Needs Board**

Carol Myers

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. Ms. Myers garnered the six votes required to serve as a member of the Disabilities and Special Needs Board.

\*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

James Matthews

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. Mr. Matthews garnered the six votes required to serve as a member of the Disabilities and Special Needs Board.

\*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.



## Intergovernmental Relations Committee

### **Local Legislative Agenda Resolutions**

It was moved by Mr. Stewart, as Intergovernmental Relations Committee Chairman, that Council adopt a 2007 Local Legislative Agenda consisting of 12 resolutions as follows: (i) Support the enactment of legislation which would alter the State's method of calculating award of economic incentives to counties from income-based to average wage rate-based; (ii) Support the enactment of legislation which would include average wage rates in its formula for calculating tax-paying ability as used to determine the State's allocation of public education funding; (iii) Support the enactment of legislation which would permit local governments to assess a transfer fee on the sale of real estate provided the use of such fees is restricted to those uses currently allowed within the Town of Hilton Head Island; (iv) Support the enactment of legislation which would allow Counties to opt for more frequent reassessments than currently provided for by the SC Code; (v) Support the enactment of legislation that would authorize Counties to enact School Impact Fees; (vi) Support the enactment of legislation which would ensure that no County (School District) receive less than 50% of the per student base allocation from the State in each fiscal year; (vii) Support enactment of legislation that would require some measure of "Tourism" to be included in the formula for determining support of local road improvements and maintenance; (viii) Support enactment of Legislation (amending current State law) which would allow, as an authorized purpose, the consideration of a local sales tax funding for established Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Programs without predetermination of properties to be considered for acquisition; (ix) Encourage the South Carolina Association of Counties and the Legislature to explore all opportunities for property tax relief including, but not limited, to the ability to conduct annual reassessments, point of sale valuations, and the consideration of circuit breakers on property valuations; (x) Support the enactment of legislation to adequately fund the South Carolina Department of Transportation to allow maintenance and improvements of existing roads and the construction of new roads as needed to preserve and protect the well-being of South Carolina's citizens, visitors and commerce; (xi) Support the enactment of legislation to allow collection of property taxes beginning in the first full month after issuance of a certificate of occupancy of newly constructed or improved properties; and (xii) Support the enactment of legislation that will allow the use of fair market value of property at the time it is sold for tax purposes. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

## Land Management Committee

### **Northern Corridor Review Board**

Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman nominated Mr. William Harris, representing architect, to serve as a member of the Northern Corridor Review Board.

### **Planning Board**

It was moved by Mr. McBride, seconded by Mr. Glaze, that Council suspend its Rules and Procedures to allow for a second name to be placed in nomination. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\*, Mr. Stewart and Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

Mr. Von Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman, nominated Ms. Mary Legree, representing Comprehensive Plan planning area, St. Helena Township, to serve as a member of the Planning Board.

Mrs. Bernice Wright was nominated on January 25, 2005, to serve as a member of the Planning Board.

The Vice Chairman passed the gavel by to the Chairman in order to continue the meeting.

### **Committee Assignments**

The Chairman assigned Mr. Glaze to serve as Chairman of the Public Services Committee due to the resignation of Mr. Lamb.

The Chairman assigned Mr. Brafman to serve as Vice Chairman of the Land Management Committee due to the resignation of Mr. Lamb.

The Chairman assigned Mr. Dawson to serve as a member of the Lowcountry Council of Governments to complete the unexpired term left vacant by the resignation of Mr. Lamb.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no requests to speak during public comment.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Council adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY

By: Wm. Weston J. Newton  
Wm. Weston J. Newton, Chairman

ATTEST:

Suzanne M. Rainey  
Suzanne M. Rainey, Clerk to Council  
Ratified: August 14, 2006

**Beaufort County Council Minutes**  
**August 14, 2006**

Official Proceedings  
County Council of Beaufort County  
August 14, 2006

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

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Council of Beaufort County was held at 4:00 p.m., Monday, August 14, 2006, in Council Chambers of the Administration Building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort, South Carolina.

**ATTENDANCE**

Chairman Weston Newton\* and members Frank Brafman, Gerald Dawson, Mark Generales, Herbert Glaze, Margaret Griffin, Starletta Hairston, William McBride and Dick Stewart. Vice Chairman W. R. "Skeet" Von Harten absent. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Peter Lamb resigned July 18, 2006; therefore, Council District 4 is vacant.

\* Mr. Newton is serving as a member of Beaufort County Council in a *de facto* status. He has moved to Bluffton effective Saturday, June 10, 2006. On May 19, 2006, a letter was dispatched to the Governor advising of Mr. Newton's plan to move and relocate his residence from Beaufort County Council District 3 to District 4. Mr. Newton's understanding of the law has been confirmed by the Attorney General that, since there are fewer than 180 days prior to the next general election, Mr. Newton will continue to serve in his capacity as a member of Beaufort County Council until, and unless, the Governor appoints a successor. If the Governor appoints no successor, Mr. Newton will continue to serve throughout the remainder of the term he was elected to serve.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Chairman led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

**INVOCATION**

Rev. Horace Williams, Jr., Faith Memorial Baptist Church, gave the Invocation.

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

The Chairman called for a moment of silence in remembrance for Lee Walters, Sheldon Fire District Assistant Chief. Chief Walters, age 54, collapsed and died of a heart attack on August 2, 2006, while supervising his crew as they fought a home fire on Brays Island Plantation.

Certified True Copy  
Clerk to Council  
Beaufort County, SC  
By: Suzanne M. Rainey  
Suzanne M. Rainey  
Date: 9-5-06

**REVIEW OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD JULY 24, 2006**

There were no corrections and/or additions made to the minutes of the regular meeting held July 24, 2006.

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. McBride, that Council approve the proceedings of the regular meeting held July 24, 2006. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The Chairman recognized Mr. Joe Croley, a Bluffton resident, who stated before Council adjourns tonight the Southern Beaufort County Planning Board Subcommittee will probably have made a recommendation on the proposed 524-unit Planned Unit Development at the current site of the Hilton Head Executive Golf Course. Regardless of their recommendation, he fully expects the issue to come before Council, much like the Barrel Landing Chevrolet Planned Unit Development (Barrel Landing PUD), after Planning Commission denial and located next to “critical land.” Obviously, we have either too many golf courses in the County, or too many greedy developers. They have no concern for our schools, roads, and overburdened taxpayers who will ultimately pay for the inevitable shortcomings in any Development Agreement. The reasons to stop the proposed Barrel Landing PUD in its tracks, are too many and too obvious to most of us here in this room. Unfortunately, our concerns don’t matter. Only your vote when the time comes. Don’t allow this farce to go any further.

Ms. Ethel Boson, representing the residents of Opossum Hill Road and The Healing Revival Deliverance Center, stated the residents and parishioners are hereby petitioning Council to pave Outreach Lane. Nothing has occurred thus far. The road has neither been scraped nor cleaned. Please do something immediately.

Ms. Paula Loftis, a Lady’s Island resident, expressed opposition to the proposed text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance, Section 106-1917 (Residential Accessory Uses). It seems there is a “bully in the schoolyard.” We have someone who hires an attorney and wishes to jeopardize our safety, our quality of life, so they can erect, which they have already done illegally, a fence in the wetlands. We should not allow bullies to do this. It is our future. It is our safety. Council will set a precedence by approving this text amendment. Ms. Loftis opposes any changes to the river buffer protection, and opposes this proposed ordinance.

Mrs. Sandy Stephan, a Lady’s Island resident, expressed opposition to the proposed text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance, Section 106-1917 (Residential Accessory Uses). Beaufort County staff, whether Planning, Zoning or Codes Enforcement, cannot possibly monitor all of the violations of the river buffer code. Weakening the code invites more violations that lead directly to the degradation of our rivers and wetlands.

The river buffer zone surely was not meant as a personal recreation park. She pledged, with Council's help, to deliver notice--that there is a river buffer code--to every real estate agency, landscaper, bush hogger, and developer north of the Broad River.

Mr. Bill Zahler, is a Bluffton resident who lives next door to 105 Baywood Drive where, on January 1, 2006, a murder and arson incident occurred at that residence. Mr. Zahler has made several telephone calls requesting County assistance as a health and safety issue. No assistance was rendered because it is a court matter. This situation at 105 Baywood Drive is worsening—no trash pickup, old food is in the house, animals are wandering in and out of the house, and several very young children live in the immediate area. He, along with half the neighborhood, has to look at the burned home and smell the charred wood daily.

### **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

#### **Two-Week Progress Report**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, circulated copies of his Two-Week Progress Report, which summarized his activities that took place July 24, 2006 through August 11, 2006.

#### **Reports Provided to Council**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, reported Council has received reports from the following departments: (i) Treasurer – Cash Flow Reports (weeks of July 24, July 31 and August 7); (ii) Veterans Affairs – Semi-annual Operations Report – January through June 2006; (iii) Clerk to Council – Citizen Volunteers Reappointment/Vacancy Monthly Report, Ordinances Pending Monthly Report, Committee Assignments Monthly Report; (iv) Chief Financial Officer – Impact Fee Collection Report January/June 2006, Road Improvement Program Report June 30, Del Webb Development Agreement Collection Report June 30; (v) Detention Center – Population Report and Status Report July 17 to July 30; and (vi) Animal Shelter and Control – July Monthly Report.

#### **Summary of SCDOT US Highway 278 Widening Project Weekly Meeting**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, gave a brief construction update on the SCDOT US Highway 278 Widening Project. APAC-Southeast, the contractor, continues asphalt widening and base operations westbound. Lane one eastbound is surfaced, and APAC is working on lane two. Westbound base widening mainline was completed on August 10, 2006. This week APAC will continue paving westbound and start concentrating on the final lift at the intersections. During the day, grading crews will be cleaning up shoulder areas throughout the entire project. There is a potential for rear-end accidents caused by drivers stopping short of the median crossover in the traveling lane. Drivers are not pulling into the median. There are new median crossovers on US Highway 278 that do not have left turn lanes. They have been designated for future closing. In the construction zone there are two median crossovers that will not have deceleration lanes. They are located at OC Welch Ford Lincoln Mercury (Fording Island Road)

and a BP Station (May River Road). Accidents have been minimal. There were two. Fortunately, they were fender benders with no injuries.

### **Update on Amended Road, Library and Park Facilities Impact Fees within Southern Beaufort County**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, circulated copies of an Executive Summary Report for Council's review. A PowerPoint presentation will be made at the August 28, 2006, Council meeting.

### **Property Tax Reform – Impact of School District**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, explained that on October 24, 2005, Council adopted a joint resolution that the County of Beaufort and the Beaufort County Board of Education, as partners, agreed to obtain a consultant and/or legal services to advise and represent the County and the School District in their pursuit to amend or change the present Educational Finance Act. Beaufort County and the Board of Education agreed to equally fund this effort in an amount not to exceed \$125,000. In addition, the County and the Board of Education agreed to meet with local state delegation and State Assembly representatives at the statehouse in Columbia to express the need to modify the Act and to pursue other public education funding possibilities.

Over the past few weeks Mr. Kubic has been involved in discussions with the McNair Law Firm and has been passing that information to the School Board. Mr. Kubic reported that he has asked the McNair Law Firm to formalize an Engagement Letter for Governmental Affairs Services to the County and School Board. The County and School District will be sharing the terms and conditions of that Engagement Letter. Basically, it is to have a presence through the McNair Law Firm to seek adjustments to the formula of distribution of funds for EFA and EIA. The estimated value of this service is approximately \$100,000. The cost is to be divided equally between the County and School District, each responsible for paying \$50,000.

### **Northern Beaufort County Regional Plan Webpage**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, remarked as Beaufort County moves forward with local municipalities to develop our shared vision for the future, he has tasked staff with the construction of new webpages for the Northern Regional Plan set to go online at the end of August 2006. The new site will include many features, and will help provide the public with valuable information as we work through the Plan development process. It is designed to generate input and will include a "Concept Board" for citizens to post their preferred concepts and ideas for future land use and planning in northern Beaufort County. The site will be user-friendly and interactive. It will include links to maps detailing possible land use and background reports on such issues as population growth, land use trends, highways, schools and other public facilities, costs of meeting the demands of growth, environmental concerns, and natural assets and constraints to growth. We will post meeting notices, minutes from steering committee meetings, the guiding principals established by the steering committee, descriptions of possible land use categories and other information that will help residents stay informed and participate in

this major public project. The County has engaged a consultant, at a minimal cost, to help develop the web page.

### **Parks and Leisure Services Department**

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator, announced that the Bluffton ball fields of the County Parks and Leisure Services Department (hereinafter "PALS") have been chosen as the site of the 2008 Dixie Youth World Series for 13-year olds, as well as for the 2007 S.C. Dixie Youth Tournament. The past two state tournaments were an economic boon for Bluffton, bringing in hundreds of boys, girls and their families. The selection of Bluffton for the tournament proves the success of PALS efforts to serve the community. An impressive South Carolina Dixie Softball state tournament held here this year, demonstrated we have the organizational ability to run a big tournament and that our fields and facilities are of good quality.

### **Kinsie Park**

Mr. Tony Criscitiello, Planning Director, explained that Kinsie Park is an approximate 320-acre residential subdivision already approved. It is a by-right development. The property is zoned Rural (one unit per three acres) in southern Beaufort County. The subdivision fronts directly on SC Highway 46. The project is at the stage now where application to the Development Review Team ("DRT") has been made by the developer. The project has been reviewed from the conceptual standpoint. We are now at the point where the application will require approval by the DRT for final Master Plan approval, which then allows the developer to begin the process of constructing the subdivision. As it currently stands, the largest outstanding issue is the highway entrance off SC Highway 46 onto the property for development. The DRT has indicated to the developer that the County is satisfied with the interior of the proposed development from a subdivision design standpoint. But in the spirit of the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan, the County has asked the Town of Bluffton (hereinafter "Town") to review the entrance into the development as the DRT is reviewing the entrance. We are trying, this week, to gain a collaborative staff effort between the County DRT and the Town Planning Department to look at the impact on SC Highway 46. It is important that the Town's plan for a scenic highway mesh with the County's review responsibility for this entrance. There could be tree issues associated with trimming or cutting that would result from the installation of proper decel and accel lanes and any right-of-way adjustments that have to be made. Mr. Criscitiello pointed out to Council that no permit from SCDOT has been issued yet. The County, SCDOT and the Town will endeavor to work cooperatively on this entrance issue to establish a game plan for the developer to move forward. No tree cutting will be allowed or required in order for the developer to gain access to the property for construction of the subdivision. There will be potential impacts on the trees along SC Highway 46.

### **UPDATED COUNCIL RULES AND PROCEDURES, AS AMENDED**

Mr. McBride, as Parliamentarian, highlighted the amendments to Council Rules and Procedures. Page 21, Paragraph B, Travel, "Council shall be reimbursed mileage equal to the rate established by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS); page 22, Paragraph C3, "Council members traveling



outside the county shall receive reimbursement for meals and county-related expenses in accordance with US General Services Administration (GSA); and page 22, Paragraph E2 Mileage Reimbursement, “In addition to the base annual pay received for service on Council, members and/or the Chairman may be paid a stipend of \$40 per meeting for his/her attendance at any Council committee meeting and other Council-related business meetings. Each member of Council shall be reimbursed mileage to and from their residences for all scheduled meetings, i.e., regular meetings, work session, and public hearings.”

Mr. Generales suggested the following adjustments: Page 16, Paragraph D, Ordinance Review, add “If applicable written comments and a cost/benefit analysis shall be prepared by County Staff . . .”; and page 17, paragraph F, Flow Chart of Ordinance Passage, move “Committee” to top of flowchart.” Council agreed to incorporate these adjustments.

It was moved by Mr. McBride, seconded by Mr. Generales, that Council update its Rules and Procedures, as amended. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**AN ORDINANCE TO IMPOSE A TRANSPORTATION TAX WITHIN BEAUFORT COUNTY TO FUND MULTIPLE CAPITAL PROJECTS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$152 MILLION FOR NOT MORE THAN SIX YEARS OR WHICHEVER COMES FIRST**

**Main motion.**

It was moved by Mr. Glaze, as Public Services Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on third and final reading an ordinance to impose a one percent (1%) Transportation Sales and Use Tax for not more than six years, if approved by referendum; to authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds not to exceed \$152 million if approved by referendum, to describe the transportation-related projects and estimated capital costs of the projects to be funded in whole or in part from the proceeds of the tax; to order a county-wide referendum on the question of imposing the tax and authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds; to proscribe the contents of the ballot questions; and provide for all other things necessary to submit the aforesaid questions to the electorate. The ten projects are: (i) Bluffton Parkway Phase 5, \$50 million; (ii) US Highway 278 Improvements, \$28 million; (iii) SC Highway 170 Widening, \$6 million; (iv) US Highway 17 Widening, \$5 million; (v) US Highway 21 (Boundary Street) Improvements \$9.5 million; (vi) Boundary Street Parallel Road, \$4.2 million; (vii) SC Highway 802 (Ribaut Road) Improvements, \$600,000; (viii) SC Highway 21/SC Highway 802 (Lady’s Island Drive) Widening, \$35.5 million; (ix) Northern Beaufort Bypass, \$6 million; and (x) SC Highway 802 (Savannah Highway) Widening, \$7.2 million.

Mr. Newton remarked that on July 28, 2006, he sent a letter to the municipalities specifically asking for their position on the inclusion of this ballot question. The project list has its genesis from the Beaufort Transportation Advisory Group (BTAG) and a process that was loosely termed the Northern and Southern Traffic Teams that were made up of the staffs of Beaufort

County and all of the municipalities by region, developing consensus priority project lists, not focused on funding sources, but purely based on priorities of projects county-wide with the penny sales tax being one of the funding options. We are fortunate to have Port Royal Town Mayor Samuel Murray, Beaufort City Mayor Bill Rauch, and Hilton Head Island Town Mayor Tom Peebles in attendance today for the purpose of conveying their Councils' positions on County Council moving forward with this effort. The County has received letters back from each municipality.

Mayor Murray stated that on August 9, 2006, Port Royal Town Council unanimously approved the project list and its inclusion on the November 2006 ballot.

Mayor Rauch stated that on July 20, 2006, Beaufort City Council unanimously approved the project list and its inclusion on the November 2006 ballot.

Mayor Peebles stated that on August 1, 2006, Hilton Head Island Town Council voted unanimously to place the proposed Beaufort County transportation sales tax referendum on the November 2006 ballot for consideration by the electorate.

Mr. Newton reported receipt of correspondence from Bluffton Mayor Hank Johnston (who is out of the state) wherein Bluffton Town Council, on August 9, 2006, concurred with holding the Transportation Sales Tax Referendum in November 2006 rather than waiting 18 months.

Mr. Newton remarked that one of the reasons the Mayors and he thought it was appropriate for them to be here tonight and weigh in with their Councils is while this question was developed by County Council, in 2002 we did not ask for their input and full participation. As a consequence, we ended up with governments taking opposing positions on certain projects and the development of the question. In 2004 when the question was presented to the voters in Beaufort County, collectively with the municipalities, we created a Capital Projects Sales Tax Commission who developed a project list which included expenditures beyond simple road improvements. It was not limited to highway and safety improvements. As we prepared and looked forward to the November election this year, the Mayors, he, and our respective staffs, and he talked about the need for a transportation question, the types of state law under which that could be authorized, and their Council's inclusion in the development of the process moving forward. This list, as prioritized, is limited to US Highway 278 and SC Highway 170 in the southern portion of the County and US Highway 21, SC Highway 802, and US Highway 17 in the northern portion of the County. Mr. Newton urged all members of Council to support this measure and move forward with placing this issue on the ballot in November.

**Motion to amend by substitution.**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, that Council amend the motion to reduce the \$6 million designated for planning and engineering for the Northern Beaufort Bypass Project beginning at US Highway 21 and ending at SC Highway 802 and substitute \$3 million to create bikeways and pathways in southern Beaufort County and \$3 million to create bikeways and pathways in northern Beaufort County. The motion died for lack of a second.

Mrs. Hairston expressed concern that there is no money included on the project list for a mass transit service. We need to look at some way to take cars off the highway and put people in some type of vehicle that would allow more people to ride, such as a bus system, transit system.

Mr. Stewart is supportive of alternative means of transportation. He is concerned, however, that we do it with a plan and do it well when we do it. This initiative to include an initial round of funding would not have achieved that goal. His perception was that we would have a partial system and a failing system in the eyes of the public, rather than a successful system. He would support through whatever means, such as the County's Capital Improvement Program, looking at projects as well as working with our neighbors in Jasper County to put together a program that designates where the bus stops would likely be along US Highway 278 and what the distribution of people would be when they disembark from their vehicles at whatever point they choose to disembark. Until those things are accomplished, Mr. Stewart does not believe this referendum is the right place for this funding.

Mr. Dawson expressed disappointment with the \$5 million allocation for the US Highway 17 widening project. Given the nature of US Highway 17, the accidents, the deaths, the fact it is a dangerous highway, Council needs to allocate more than \$5 million to assist SCDOT with this widening project. He is not satisfied with Council allocating \$5 million to be raised by this referendum. He supports funding the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority. Mr. Dawson is not satisfied with the project list.

Mr. Newton noted there is neither a plan being worked nor in place at this time for a mass transit service for which \$5 million could be spent to develop an effective system in Beaufort County. There was a concept that was advanced by the Northern Beaufort Transportation Team as the last priority in the list of projects that was developed. It was included as an item because of the prioritization of the northern and southern project lists and the fact that the allocation of dollars would be reached. However, when news came from the State that US Highway 17 (which was higher on the priority list than the mass transit project) was not going to be fully funded (but that the State continued to accept the responsibility to pursue the funding), communications were had with SCDOT regarding how Beaufort County might enhance its commitment previously made of \$2 million in impact fees toward financing this State project. The State has accepted full responsibility for improving this roadway. None of the other projects that are on this list has the State accepted or acknowledged that responsibility. Therefore, the \$5 million to the State is a number beyond that which they have requested from Beaufort County, but a number that appeared to be necessary for them to be able to move forward with that project. The Lowcountry Council of Governments continues to seek additional funds for this project.

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. ABSTAINED – Mr. Dawson. ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**SOUTHERN BEAUFORT COUNTY MAP AMENDMENT/REZONING REQUEST FOR R600-21-11 AND R600-21-11B (7.14 ACRES), FROM LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (LI) TO PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD), TO BE KNOWN AS BARREL LANDING CHEVROLET**

Mr. Tony Criscitiello, Planning Director, remarked the proposed ordinance includes the most salient and important considerations in the Barrel Landing Planned Unit Development (PUD) document that was submitted. This PUD will permit the building of a car dealership at the Barrel Landing site on property currently zoned Light Industrial. The PUD would be for the purpose of building the car dealership, or a successor use that would deem to be low impact, or would be synonymous with the type of uses in the general vicinity. In summary, it is a very high quality site plan design for the property. Approximately 1.54 acres is the landscaped area or protected resources. A number of considerations and concerns were expressed by staff. The applicant, through his attorney and site designer, attempted to address the eight points in the ordinance which represent the most important critical ones that Staff identified in attempting to address the concerns that they had.

It was moved by Mr. Brafman, as Land Management Committee Vice Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on second reading a Southern Beaufort County Map amendment/rezoning request for R600-21-11 and R600-21-11B (7.14 acres), from Light Industrial (LI) to Planned Unit Development (PUD), to be known as Barrel Landing Chevrolet.

Mr. Newton remarked that while this car dealership may be the best car dealership that has ever been planned, it is the wrong place and the wrong time. The County has spent a lot of money on the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan and spent a lot of money preserving Barrel Landing Preserve next to it. The only prevailing argument that was advanced in favor of this PUD was that it was the better of what could be built there. Good government is not simply about choosing between the lesser of two evils. If we don't think Light Industrial zoning is appropriate here, then it would be appropriate to send this matter back to the Planning Commission with a statement of our concern regarding the current zoning designation for this property. Section 106-452 of the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance specifically authorizes Council to do that. This is not the appropriate rezoning.

The Chairman passed the gavel to Mr. McBride, as Parliamentarian, in order to make a motion.

**Motion to amend by substitution.**

It was moved by Mr. Newton, that Council send the matter back to the Planning Commission with a statement of our concern about the Light Industrial zoning designation at this site. The motion died for lack of a second.

Mr. McBride returned the gavel to the Chairman in order to continue the meeting.

Mr. Generales noted this issue was raised by both the Planning Department and Planning Commission. It is fascinating that we are having problems with this issue at this late in time

after money has been spent and all this discussion. There are five other properties that front the Barrel Landing Preserve, all of which have a much greater impact than anything that this particular project offers. He is at a loss at what we are doing at the eleventh hour when it was sitting with the folks who could have brought forward something for months. Something does not make sense in this process. This is part of the problem with our process. It is terribly unfair to the applicant. The Planning Department brought Light Industrial to this location for a specific reason because it was consistent with what was going on three other parcels, which are all designed Commercial. The applicant has done everything the County has asked him to do. This particularly business entity will probably have the lowest impact on this location.

Mr. Brafman noted he was serving as a Council member in 1999 when this property was designated Light Industrial. It has been Light Industrial for a long time. Only when someone comes forward with a use of property, which, in his judgment, is not consistent with that designation, do we object to it. Some of that property has already been developed by investment. What are we going to do, downzone the property? It is that kind of thing that brings on cockamamie takings legislation. We don't want to look like we are downzoning the property because you don't like the application of a specific use. If we wanted to downzone the property, we should have done it a long time ago. He recalls when the County purchased the Barrel Landing Preserve property. We all knew it was zoned Light Industrial. That is why the County paid so much money for it. But there was no thought, either in the Planning Department, Planning Commission, or Council, to consider downzoning the property in order to protect it, protect the headwaters of the Okatie River, or some other purpose. If Council thought it was so terrible that this property was adjacent to Light Industrial, then why didn't someone bring it up before now? Why, now, when someone has a use, which, in Mr. Brafman's opinion is appropriate, do we get so excited about it?

Mr. Stewart posed several questions of Mr. Criscitiello. (i) Between the Barrel Landing piece of property we are addressing today and the Rural and Critical Land property that was purchased, there is approximately 150' of shared common border. Is that correct? Mr. Criscitiello responded in the affirmative. (ii) The current Light Industrial zoning would include truck and RV sales and a number of obnoxious sort of activities. Is that a fair statement? Mr. Criscitiello responded in the affirmative. (iii) Under this proposed PUD, which is the first Council has considered under its new PUD Ordinance, is there a limitation on the future use of this property proposed if the car dealership stopped being there, the future use would have some limitation on it? Mr. Criscitiello responded in the affirmative. (iv) The Development Review Team can refer a successor use to the Planning Commission or County Council if, in their judgment, they felt there was a problem with that use. That limitation is largely tied to traffic generation. Is that correct? Mr. Criscitiello responded in the affirmative. (v) Is there a limitation on sound and noise of a typical car dealership that is usually limited on this particular one? Mr. Criscitiello responded in the affirmative. (vi) Is there a limitation on lighting that would be usually expected in Light Industrial car dealership? Mr. Criscitiello responded in the affirmative. It includes balloons, too. (vii) Is there a requirement for a large planting area and planting material buffering this car dealership from nearby highways? Mr. Criscitiello responded in the affirmative. (viii) Is the marsh buffer on this property increased from 50' to 100' as part of this PUD? Mr. Criscitiello responded in the affirmative.

Next, Mr. Stewart remarked that to the extent those characteristics are in here, he would interpret this is to be a significantly better transaction under the current PUD being brought forward than the by-right alternatives that exist there or under many likely rezonings that may apply to this property whether it be retail offices or, in some cases, residential. He encouraged Council members to support the motion at second reading.

Mrs. Griffin will support the motion at second reading.

Mrs. Hairston would like to know where the partnership starts and stops with the municipalities as it relates to the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan. She will abstain from voting at second reading.

Mr. Newton asked whether or not Planning staff believes Light Industrial is the appropriate zoning for this area? Mr. Criscitiello replied, "No." The municipalities have been asked for their input on the proposed PUD. Hopefully, we will hear back from them prior to consideration of third and final reading.

Mr. Glaze remarked if the County had wanted to change the zoning classification, it should have acted a long time ago. He will oppose the motion at second reading.

Mr. Newton remarked that at every stage of the County review process regarding this PUD, he has recommended against this application. The Planning Commission believes that this application is a misuse of the PUD ordinance. Planning staff believes the PUD is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. If Council really believes that Light Industrial is bad, then let's do what we said at first reading, i.e., send it back to the Planning Commission for them to review. In 1997 this might have been the prevailing thought by the general public that Light Industrial would have been appropriate in that area. Since the population increases, the change in demographics, and the change that has occurred around that area, it is unknown whether many Council members would decide that that would be an appropriate place for Light Industrial in southern Beaufort County. If we don't think that is right, then let's send it back to the Planning Commission rather than Council coming up with arbitrary arguments about why we believe this ought to go forward and proceed in this fashion. If we don't like what is zoned Light Industrial, fix it. We can fix it by sending it back to the Planning Commission, whether it is this parcel or all the rest of the parcels, and tell them that we are concerned about the zoning in this area and that they ought to take a look at it.

Mr. Brafman does not recall any property being downzoned after the applicant has submitted his application for use. This is not good policy. If we want to downzone property, downzone it. Don't wait until an applicant comes forward with an application which many people feel is an inappropriate use for the property. Pragmatically, downzoning will work in this case without a lawsuit. The County has many years to downsize this property. Council has not heard any assertion that this is not an appropriate use for the property. Maybe it isn't, but that is the way it has been zoned. The timing is not appropriate for thinking of downzoning that entire Barrell Landing area.

Mr. McBride supported the proposal on first reading and will support it at second reading. This is an issue of fairness, not necessarily a legal issue. It is a question of fairness to the individual who has gone to great extent to work with Staff, to do everything feasible to make it a non-intrusive use, and even going above and beyond what the County would normally require to make this project more pleasing and compatible to the area. If this were considered an inappropriate use, it should have been brought forward some time ago, not when we receive an application for a particular project.

Mr. Generales asked how this proposed application will impact this area.

Mr. Criscitiello replied that a car dealership, *per se*, adjacent to a County park, is a very, very uncomplimentary type of use. This particular use will demand a codes enforcement component that will go forward for years to come. Consequently, when you are dealing with a use that will have a very high codes enforcement component, this means that there will be an administrative demand on staff to make sure that what goes into law today, will, in fact, be followed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year. You can design something very well, as this project is being designed, but it still is what it is.

Mr. Dawson stated he abstained from voting at first reading approval. He was prepared today to vote against the PUD because he favored the Light Industrial zoning classification. But, after hearing all the arguments presented today, the fact that Staff is advising Council that Light Industrial is zoned inappropriately, and the Planning Staff and Planning Commission both recommend denial of the PUD, where does this leave the applicant? It is not right for Council to downzone the property. That is not fair to the applicant. He has now decided that it is in the best interest of Council to vote in favor of the PUD.

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mrs. Griffin, Mr. McBride, and Mr. Stewart. OPPOSED – Mr. Glaze and Mr. Newton\*. ABSTAINED – Mrs. Hairston. ABSENT – Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

The Chairman announced that a public hearing on this issue would be held on Monday, August 28, 2006, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Administration Building, Beaufort.

**LADY'S ISLAND ZONING MAP AMENDMENT TO INCLUDE R201-18-7C (0.49 ACRE), R201-18-7D (0.85 ACRE) AND R201-18-573 (0.74 ACRE) WITHIN THE LADY'S ISLAND REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

Mr. Criscitiello, Planning Director, explained the Redevelopment District is an Overlay District and the proposal is to include R201-18-7C (0.49 acre), R201-18-7D (0.85 acre) and R201-18-573 (0.74 acre) within the Lady's Island Redevelopment District. The amendment is to allow for an opportunity for redevelopment/flexibility in terms of what is allowed. Density is essentially not an issue. The property is controlled by other design criteria such as setbacks, etc. This does provide for residential use of the property. It was originally proposed for inclusion in the

Professional Office District. The Planning Commission and Lady's Island Community Preservation Subcommittee both felt it would be better to remain in the Community Preservation District proper and to give more flexibility in regards to the design standards of the Overlay District. Basically, we are keeping the Underlay District in place, and we are allowing the redevelopment standards to be applied to it as well.

It was moved by Mr. Brafman, as Land Management Committee Vice Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on second reading a Lady's Island Zoning Map amendment to include R201-18-7C (0.49 acre), R201-18-7D (0.85 acre), and R201-18-573 (0.74 acre) within the Lady's Island Redevelopment District. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

The Chairman announced that a public hearing on this issue would be held on Monday, August 28, 2006, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers

**TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS ORDINANCE/ZDSO, APPENDIX B, SECTION 5, LANDSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES (ADDS STANDARDS PROHIBITING EARTHEN BERMS AND NOISE ABATEMENT WALLS IN THE U.S. HIGHWAY 21 CORRIDOR BETWEEN CHOWAN CREEK AND HARBOR RIVER)**

Mr. Criscitiello, Planning Director, explained the proposed text amendment is an effort by the County and SCDOT to anticipate what can be expected in terms of landscape design as it applies to US Highway 21 from Chowan Creek to Harbor River. The amendment essentially prohibits earthen berms and noise abatement walls. SCDOT is okay with the proposed amendment. The St. Helena Island Community Preservation Subcommittee and Corners Community both have weighed in and have expressed their support of this amendment. The Planning Commission and the Planning Department are also in accord with this amendment.

Mr. Stewart remarked that as beach traffic to Hunting Island and traffic along this corridor continues to progress, Council ought to reasonably anticipate at some point in the foreseeable future there will be an effort to zone commercial the property remaining along much of this stretch of highway. One of the reasons to justify that, at that time, will be the amount of noise coming from that highway. For those of you who are seeking to protect St. Helena Island by not allowing these noise suppressing devices to be used, Mr. Stewart raised a word of caution that one may find that the noise suppressing barrier may be perfect rather than some of the alternatives to come before this Council in the not-too-distant future.

Mr. McBride supports the text amendment. Nothing is set in stone. If such conditions change in the future, then, of course, it will be brought before Council.

It was moved by Mr. Brafman, as Land Management Committee Vice Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on second reading text amendments to the Zoning and



Development Standards Ordinance/ZDSO, Appendix B, Section 5, Landscape Design Guidelines (adds standards prohibiting earthen berms and noise abatement walls in the U.S. Highway 21 Corridor between Chowan Creek and Harbor River). The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. ABSTAINED – Mrs. Hairston. ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

The Chairman announced that a public hearing on this issue would be held on Monday, August 28, 2006, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

**PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL PARK DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN BEAUFORT COUNTY AND THE GREATER BEAUFORT-HILTON HEAD ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP, INC.**

It was moved by Mr. Brafman, as Development Agreement Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on first reading a proposed Industrial Park Development Agreement between Beaufort County and the Greater Beaufort/Hilton Head Economic Development Partnership, Inc. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. ABSTAINED – Mrs. Hairston. ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**AN ORDINANCE TO ACCEPT THE TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY TO THE BEAUFORT COUNTY BOARD OF REGISTRATION AND ELECTIONS TO CONDUCT THE TOWN OF BLUFFTON MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS**

It was moved by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mr. McBride, that Council approve on first reading an ordinance to accept the transfer of authority to the Beaufort County Board of Registration and Elections to conduct the Town of Bluffton Municipal Elections. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. ABSTAINED – Mrs. Hairston. ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**AN ORDINANCE TO CORRECT THE BEAUFORT COUNTY ZONING MAP FOR LADY'S ISLAND PARCEL R200 011 000 0041 0000 (7.20 ACRES), FROM RURAL TO LADY'S ISLAND COMMUNITY PRESERVATION DISTRICT**

Mr. Tony Criscitiello, Planning Director, explained that this property was zoned Rural and the applicant pointed out to County staff, the Lady's Island Community Preservation District, and Planning Commission that it could logically be argued that this property should have been mapped Community Preservation. All concurred. A map amendment to correct a mistake is the issue at hand.

The Chairman opened a public hearing at 6:15 p.m. for the purpose of receiving information from the public regarding an ordinance to correct the Beaufort County Zoning Map for a 7.20 acre parcel on Lady's Island from Rural (R) to Lady's Island Community Preservation (CP) District. After calling three times for public comment and receiving none, the Chairman declared the hearing closed at 6:16 p.m.

It was moved by Mr. Brafman Harten, as Land Management Committee Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on third and reading a map correction for a 7.20 acre parcel on Lady's Island from Rural (R) to Lady's Island Community Preservation (CP) District. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed.

\*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS ORDINANCE, ARTICLE V, SECTIONS 106-1357(c) AND 106-1363, AND TABLE 106-1556 (LIGHTING STANDARDS FOR COMMERCIAL COMMUNICATION TOWERS)**

Mr. Newton passed the gavel to Mr. McBride, as Parliamentarian.

Mr. Newton read his letter to Mr. Skeet Von Harten, Vice Chairman, dated June 26, 2006, "Please allow this correspondence to serve as notice that I will be recusing myself from Council's deliberation of the above-referenced matter on today's agenda. While not required by law, because my firm serves as legal counsel for Hargray Communications Group, Inc., I intend to abstain from Council's deliberation to avoid even an appearance of impropriety. In accordance with *South Carolina Code of Laws*, Section 8-13-700(B)4, please cause this statement to be printed in the minutes of all Council meetings at which the matter is considered. I will continue to excuse myself from all votes and deliberations on this matter."

Mr. Newton left the room prior to the public hearing, discussion, and vote on the proposed text amendment to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance, Article V, Sections 106-1357(c) and 106-1363, and Table 106-1556 (Lighting Standards for Commercial Communication Towers).

Mr. Criscitiello, Planning Director, stated this issue involves a text amendment to occur in two places in the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance. One is in Section 106-1357(c), Limited Use Standards, Lighting Commercial Communication Towers, and then in Table 106-1556, Lot and Building Standard. What we are talking about today is that all towers 150 feet and taller shall be lighted. Unless otherwise required by the FAA, all lighting shall be white strobe lights during the day and red strobe lights at night. All communication towers existing prior to the adoption of this amendment shall have nine months from the effective date of this amendment to comply with this section. The genesis of this application was result of input from the Mosquito Control Department.

Mr. McBride, as Parliamentarian, opened a public hearing at 6:18 p.m. for the purpose of receiving information from the public regarding text amendments to the Zoning and

Development Standards Ordinance, Article V, Sections 106-1357(c) and 106-1363, and Table 106-1556 (Lighting Standards for Commercial Communication Towers). After calling once for public comment, Mr. McBride, as Parliamentarian, recognized Mr. Tommy O'Brien, a Burton resident, who stated the possibility exists to continue dropping the height requirement until we are lighting the tops of the pine trees. FAA requires 200 feet. Why does Beaufort County have to make the law more stringent? Just leave it as is. Why do we have to light a 150-foot tower?

Mr. Jonathan Yates, legal counsel for PCIA, stated PCIA is a trade organization representing various wireless carriers and tower builders. PCIA has worked long a hard with Beaufort County on this lighting ordinance. Mr. Yates has been involved in cell towers in Beaufort County for almost ten years. Council passed Telecommunication Towers Ordinance on November 10, 1997, requiring a height much lower than Colleton, Hampton, Jasper, Charleston counties, and any other county in the state, because Beaufort County did not want lights. Beaufort County is one of the prettiest counties in the state with its rivers and marshes. Why ruin it. Are we concerned about safety? Absolutely. The pilots in question, Mosquito Control Department, have told PCIA they know where those cell towers are located. PCIA offered them in January 2006 to upgrade their on-board navigation system to have warnings come on when they approach one of our towers. That offer was rejected because they already have the finest navigation and GPS system available in the country today. Is there are problem? PCIA does not think so. FAA requires County pilots to know about every known hazard. Every time PCIA applies for a tower in Beaufort County, we are required to file with the GIS Department the exact coordinates of the site.

Mr. Clinton Papenfuss, representing PCIA and whose job is aircraft safety, stated there are 196 towers that are of concern in this County. In reality there are 3,139 towers in Beaufort County. PCIA divided the towers into two categories those between 171 feet above mean sea level and 242 feet above mean sea level, based on the mean sea level of Beaufort County. Some of these towers are going to be exempted from lighting if they are located in the power grid. By taking out the tower pillions, we end up with 217 towers in building, steeples and anything else that exists 150 feet, leaving 2,918 structures that may or may not have to be lit. When a pilot is flying and he sees a flashing light on a tower, he is saying that that tower is 200' or higher and needs to stay away from it. When the pilot flying in Beaufort County, he is being told it is at 150 feet. If that light goes out, there is no means for us to let that pilot know, because the FAA will not accept a Notice-to-Airman on a tower where lighting was not required. That is why the FAA is the standard for aviation standards in the United States of America. FAA has set that standard at 200 feet, except in close proximity to airports and then it is on a case-by-case basis. Beaufort County does need this law.

Ms. Elizabeth Bell, representing American Tower Corporation that owns and has built several towers in Beaufort County, stated that every one of our applications for a tower, the statement was made that we were not going to light it. We told the Zoning Board we were not going to light it. If a resident came to a particular meeting to hear about the application, they heard that it was not going to be lit because it was only 150 feet tall and FAA did not require it.

Mr. Jonathan Sedgwick, representing Hargray Communications Group, Inc., stated that Hargray has a tower located inside Colleton River Plantation. The residents of Colleton River will not be happy with a lighted communication tower. Hargray promised those residents when the tower was under construction that it was not required by the FAA to light the tower. Hargray, too, is concerned about pilot safety. A plane's GPS system blinks when a pilot gets within a certain radius of a tower. How is that any worse than having the tower lit? Residents will not see the flashing light in the plane, but will see the flashing light on a tower.

Mr. Harry Flynt, representing American Tower, stated if a pilot knows that a lit tower is at 200 feet, but when flying in Beaufort County is unaware that a lit tower is at 150 feet, it may throw his judgment off. He, too, has stood before Beaufort County residents and assured them that a tower would not be lit because of the ordinance in effect. As a resident of Beaufort County, he does not want to see any excess lighting. He knows there are tall towers that have to be lit, and he can accept that. If a tower really does not need to be lit, he would prefer it not be lit.

After calling twice more for public comment and receiving none, the Chairman declared the hearing closed at 6:37 p.m.

It was moved by Mr. Brafman, as Land Management Committee Vice Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on third and final reading text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance, Article V, Sections 106-1357(c) and 106-1363, and Table 106-1556 (Lighting Standards for Commercial Communication Towers).

Mr. Brafman inquired as to the proponent of lighting towers.

Mr. Criscitiello, Planning Director, replied the issue was staff-inspired. It was a result of communication between two departments, Planning and Mosquito Control. The issue dealt with an event that took place some time in the past where a tower was up and the pilot had a near-miss. One near-miss is too many. Staff thought it was time to revisit the question, knowing full well the issue of lighting towers in Beaufort County is a sensitive issue, siding on the side of safety.

Mr. Brafman inquired if the FAA had a requirement for lighting towers and, if so, what height is that?

Mr. Papenfuss, with PCIA, replied FAA requires lighting on any structure that exceeds 200 feet AGL and any tower that exceeds the horizontal conical imaginary surface or any instrument approach surface into an airport. Those surfaces normally for the horizontal conical go out 1,400 from the airport. Any of those surfaces would require lighting. Other than that it is 200 feet and above.

Mr. Brafman stated the most important factor in the lighting of towers is uniformity. Whatever is generally accepted or required seems there should not be any deviation from that particular height.

It was moved by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Mrs. Hairston, that Council send this issue back to the Land Management Committee for some additional discussion before it comes back to Council for consideration on third and final reading approval. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride and Mr. Stewart. ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. Mr. Newton\* left the room. The motion passed.  
\*Serving *de facto*. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

The Chairman re-entered the room.

The Parliamentarian returned the gavel to the Chairman in order to continue the meeting.

**TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS  
ORDINANCE ARTICLE III, ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES, DIVISION 2,  
PROVISIONS GENERALLY APPLICABLE TO REVIEWS AND ACTIONS**

Mr. Criscitiello, Planning Director, explained the proposed text amendments take the language of the development approval document and formalize it into language of the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance to give it the force of law.

The Chairman opened a public hearing at 6:48 p.m. for the purpose of receiving information from the public regarding text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance Article III, Administrative Procedures, Division 2, Provisions Generally Applicable to Reviews and Actions. After calling three times for public comment and receiving none, the Chairman declared the hearing closed at 6:49 p.m.

**Main motion.**

It was moved by Mr. Brafman, as Land Management Committee Vice Chairman (no second required), that Council approve on third and final reading text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance Article III, Administrative Procedures, Division 2, provisions generally applicable to reviews and actions.

**Motion to amend by addition.**

It was moved by Mr. Generales, seconded by Mr. McBride, that Council amend the text in Section 106-372(b) as follows: Paragraph 1, "All tree aeration systems, natural resource, archeological and tree protection barriers, and silt fencing must be constructed prior to any other site work approved under the development permit. Upon their completion, the applicant must request an inspection by the County prior to receiving an authorization to proceed with other construction activities; Paragraph 4, "Certificates of Occupancy shall not be issued until a Final Certificate of Compliance has been granted. Neither the developer nor agents shall receive a final certificate of compliance inspection until all site work has been completed; and Paragraph 7, All bonding shall be in the form of cash, certified check, irrevocable bank letter of credit, or surety bond as approved by the County. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart.

ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**Vote on the amended motion, which is now the main motion, and includes the motion to amend by addition.**

Council amend the text in Section 106-372(b) as follows: Paragraph 1, “All tree aeration systems, natural resource, archeological and tree protection barriers, and silt fencing must be constructed prior to any other site work approved under the development permit. Upon their completion, the applicant must request an inspection by the County prior to receiving an authorization to proceed with other construction activities; Paragraph 4, “Certificates of Occupancy shall not be issued until a Final Certificate of Compliance has been granted. Neither the developer nor agents shall receive a final certificate of compliance inspection until all site work has been completed; and Paragraph 7, All bonding shall be in the form of cash, certified check, irrevocable bank letter of credit, or surety bond as approved by the County. The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. The motion passed. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS  
ORDINANCE ARTICLE VII, DIVISION 4, OPEN SPACE USES AND STANDARDS,  
SECTION 106-1876 (USES IN OPEN SPACE) AND ADD A NEW SECTION 106-1917  
(RESIDENTIAL ACCESSORY USES)**

Mr. Criscitiello, Planning Director, explained the proposed text amendment was staff-generated. There is no input from anybody whatsoever. The reason for the proposed amendment, as it happens all the time when the Development Review Team (DRT) reviews applications weekly, sometimes DRT sees an application where someone proposes something that is, in our opinion, *de minimis* in terms of its impact, and yet DRT cannot permit it because of the way the ordinance is written. In this particular case the original language restrained the homeowner from putting things such as an observation deck, fence or play apparatus for their children. The residential lot may contain, under this provision, none solid-type fences, playground equipment, benches, picnic tables, observation decks (not exceeding 100 total square feet), pathways and other similar outdoor recreation uses within the river buffer provided that the ground surface remains permeable. The proposal is that in the River Buffer, Table 106-1876, Uses in Open Space, and Section 106-1917, Residential Accessory Uses, “A residential lot may contain non-solid type fences, playground equipment, benches, picnic tables, observation decks not exceeding 100 total square feet, pathways, or other similar outdoor recreation uses within the river buffer provided the ground surface remains permeable.” County staff has had an opportunity to compare this to other standards in the County, at the municipal level, and our findings are as follows. The Town of Bluffton’s River Protection Overlay District allows playground equipment, benches, picnic tables, or other similar outdoor furniture related to recreational or incidental residential use provided the ground surface remains permeable. The Town of Hilton Head Island does not allow such uses in its river buffer, but it is important to note that the river buffer for residential uses in Hilton Head Island is only 20-feet wide compared to the County’s 50-foot wide buffer. The City of Beaufort allows in its Critical Area Buffer paths, steps, decks, gazebos, yard sculpture and

furniture, decks and erosion control devices (not stormwater ponds). The Town of Port Royal has no river buffer requirement.

The Chairman opened a public hearing at 6:52 p.m. for the purpose of receiving information from the public regarding text amendments to the Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance Article VII, Division 4, Open Space Uses and Standards, Section 106-1876 (Uses in Open Space), and add a new Section 106-1917 (Residential Accessory Uses). After calling once for public comment, the Chairman recognized Mr. Tommy O'Brien, a Burton resident, who stated a wood fence is not going to hurt the buffer, block the view, or harm the wildlife. Neither will a little deck. However, we might be treading on somewhat dangerous because someone else might do something a little more intrusive on the land later on. Council needs to be careful about how far we go with this amendment. Next, there will be people wanting to build swimming pools in that area. Keep in mind that once the door is open, you cannot close it.

Mr. Dennis Graves, a St. Helena Island resident, expressed opposition to the proposed text amendment because it is greatly expansive and overly broad. Section 106-1846 deals with open spaces, including river buffers, which is what this proposed text amendment addresses. It has served the County for many years. Some will tell you the proposed amendment is intended to clarify exactly what uses are permitted in these sensitive areas and possibly expand upon them as well. Reading the existing ordinance, Mr. Graves finds the ordinance very specific. It does allow in the Table certain uses in various open spaces, including river buffers. He understands the term, "any use not listed shall be considered prohibited." This new section seeks to neuter the intent of this law by greatly expanding this list regarding residential lots, and, more specifically, what is permitted in the 50-foot river buffer. It provides, as Howard Cosell would say, "A plethora of new ways for a homeowner, if he/she is so inclined, to legally bush hog some of the entire river buffer in the name of fences and recreation." These buffers are sensitive to wildlife habitat, stormwater runoff, and they should not be compromised in this way. He asked Council to oppose the proposed text amendment or, at least, table it as it is not well-thought out and is inconsistent with the spirit of your open space ordinance.

Mrs. Sally Murphy, a Sheldon resident and a biologist speaking as a private citizen, stated the 50-foot vegetative buffer, as defined in the existing ordinance, provides protection in two ways. First, the stems and stalks of the grasses and shrubs actually slows down the speed of the water and allows it to soak in. Second, the root systems actually absorb the contaminants that we don't want in our waterways. Because of our flat topography here, in the Lowcountry, we don't get a lot of runoff from the surface. What happens is the water soaks into a couple of feet below the surface and then it travels laterally out to the waterways. Because of this the deep root systems are what are very important. Trees do a better job than shrubs. Shrubs do a better job than grass lawns. But, all are important. Anything that replaces the vegetation will reduce the effect of the buffer. A fence post is not a tree. A swing set is not a shrub. A pathway is not a lawn. The final part of this that is especially worrisome is other recreational uses so long as they are permeable. This proposed text amendment will allow someone to build a tennis court in the buffer because a clay court is permeable. It is not about what is permeable, it is about plants. She urged Council not to open this Pandora's Box. Please don't pass this ordinance.

Mrs. Tara McGrath, Director of the Beaufort Office for the SC Coastal Conservation League, expressed concern about the ambiguous language in the amendment. Recreational uses are ill-defined in the proposed amendment. It is also not defined at all the existing Zoning and Development Standards Ordinance. There is enormous concern that this amendment could lead to uses that this Council did not anticipate, did not intend, because of the ambiguity in that language. With all due respect to the Planning Department and Planning Commission, both entities that have reviewed this amendment, the County's expert body, the Stormwater Management Utility Board (hereinafter "Board"), has not had the opportunity to review this amendment in their official capacity. Mr. Donald Smith's, Board Chairman, letter dated August 11, 2006, to Chairman Newton, was written at his own initiative to try to review what this legislation might mean for Beaufort County. It would behoove Council to table this issue at this point and ask the Board, charged with protecting water quality in Beaufort County and with the expertise to do that, to review this amendment and take a hard look at what potential environmental impacts it could have on Beaufort County. This amendment begs the question, "Why have vegetative buffers if they are not going to require vegetation?"

Ms. Laura Von Harten, a Beaufort City resident, stated there are many people living in Beaufort County who do not have water views. Council should leave the vegetative buffer in place.

Mrs. Elizabeth Lee, a Gary's Hill resident, stated the vagueness of the language is of concern. The idea that tomorrow we would be pass this and everybody could put a fence up in the buffer area all around Beaufort County is a little daunting. There seems to be a hurry to adopt this ordinance. She encouraged Council to take some time to study the ramifications of the amendment.

After calling twice more for public comment and receiving none, the Chairman declared the hearing closed at 7:05 p.m.

Mr. Criscitiello informed Council that he had presented the proposed text amendment to the Stormwater Management Utility Board. At the meeting there did not seem to be a great overriding concern about the issues being raised. In regard to the open-endedness to this, the Development Review Team (hereinafter "DRT") is accorded some latitude throughout the ordinance so it is not unusual to give the DRT some ability to make discretionary judgments based on the fitness of an application and what it is doing to serve the general purpose of the ordinance. Planning staff remains in support of this amendment. It provides for a way homeowners can use their property, but not in a way that would aggressively affect the buffer.

Motion to table.

It was moved by Mr. Brafman, seconded by Mr. Glaze, that Council table third and final reading consideration until Council has another expert opinion on (i) what effect plant life has to do with keeping the waterways clean and (ii) when plant life is replaced with manmade structures, what adverse effect does that have on the proposed amendment.



Mr. Brafman, as marker of the motion, and Mr. Glaze, as seconder of the motion, agreed to withdraw the motion to table.

Mr. Newton stated the County has spent a lot of years dealing with Highway Corridor Overlay Plans, aesthetics, and buffers. However, the County has never developed a River Corridor Overlay that is multi-jurisdictional. Whether or not this text amendment passes, the fact is somebody may annex into the City of Beaufort or Town of Bluffton because they want to build an observation deck in their 50-foot river buffer. If you are riding from the water, you may see a fence in the Town of Bluffton and there is not one in the unincorporated area. Then you see a fence in the Town of Hilton Head Island. You might find a playground in the City of Beaufort and a jungle-gym in the Town of Port Royal. This seems a bit scattered. The science question behind the protection of waterways ought to transcend those jurisdictional boundaries. Maybe it is appropriate to try to spend a little time developing a River Corridor Overlay throughout the County and try to get all jurisdictions on board. We might be able to work with all the municipalities to bring them all to one standard so that the vegetation in those buffers is preserved. Mr. Newton supports a consistency of standards throughout the County.

The Chairman, without Council objection, referred the issue back to the Land Management Committee for additional study.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Finance Committee**

#### **School District FY 2006-2007 Budget**

Mr. Generales, as Finance Committee, reported that during today's Finance Committee meeting, members heard from Mrs. Phyllis White, Assistant Superintendent of Finance, an explanation from the School District perspective (a unanimous vote of the School Board) seeking a tax swap of essentially two mils from debt service to two mils for operating. Mrs. White distributed Committee members' copies of the FY 2007 EFA distribution on all State funding as well as three models: the budget as it currently exists, the budget if it is reduced, and the budget if a two mil swap is granted. If the two mill swap was approved, it would have to be taken from debt and added to the operating budget.

The School District is already being lumped in with the other districts throughout the state as attempting to "bulk up their operating expenses" through the increase that is the result of the state's reduction in funding. There is a strong belief, and, of course, this is all speculative, that the School District is going to be in serious trouble in the not-too-distant future as the District focuses on FY 2009. Beaufort County's percentage of state support has now dropped to 1.08%, obviously the lowest. Charleston School District comes in second at 36.29%. Every other school district in the entire state is above 50%. Greenville School District is at 68.37% as compared to Beaufort County is 1.08%.

Land Management Committee

**Northern Corridor Review Board**

William Harris

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. Mr. Harris, representing architect, garnered the six votes required to serve as a member of the Northern Corridor Review Board. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

**Planning Commission**

Mary Legree

The vote was: FOR – Mr. Brafman, Mr. Dawson, Mr. Generales, Mr. Glaze, Mrs. Griffin, Mrs. Hairston, Mr. McBride, Mr. Newton\* and Mr. Stewart. ABSENT - Mr. Von Harten. Ms. Legree, representing Comprehensive Plan planning area, St. Helena Township, garnered the six votes required to serve as a member of the Planning Board. \*Serving de facto. Council District 3 is vacant. Council District 4 is vacant.

Bernice Wright

Since Ms. Legree received a unanimous vote of Council to serve as a member of the Planning Commission, there were no additional votes of Council taken.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no requests to speak during public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Council adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY

By: Wm. Weston J. Newton  
Wm. Weston J. Newton, Chairman

ATTEST:

Suzanne M. Rainey  
Suzanne M. Rainey, Clerk to Council

Ratified: August 28, 2006

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ORDINANCE 2006/15

AN ORDINANCE ENACTED PURSUANT TO S.C. CODE ANN. §4-37-30 ET SEQ. TO IMPOSE A ONE PERCENT (1%) TRANSPORTATION SALES AND USE TAX FOR NOT MORE THAN SIX (6) YEARS, IF APPROVED BY REFERENDUM; TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS NOT TO EXCEED \$152,000,000 IF APPROVED BY REFERENDUM, TO DESCRIBE THE TRANSPORTATION-RELATED PROJECTS AND ESTIMATED CAPITAL COSTS OF THE PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED IN WHOLE OR IN PART FROM THE PROCEEDS OF THE TAX; TO ORDER A COUNTY-WIDE REFERENDUM ON THE QUESTION OF IMPOSING THE TAX AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS; TO PROSCRIBE THE CONTENTS OF THE BALLOT QUESTIONS; AND PROVIDE FOR ALL OTHER THINGS NECESSARY TO SUBMIT THE AFORESAID QUESTIONS TO THE ELECTORATE.

Adopted By

THE COUNTY COUNCIL

OF

BEAUFORT COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

THE 14th DAY OF AUGUST, 2006

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Certified True Copy  
Clerk to Council  
Beaufort County, SC  
By: Suzanne M. Rainey  
Suzanne M. Rainey  
Date: August 31, 2006

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**Appendix B: Form of the Ballot Question; Local Question Number 2B:**

A Referendum to Authorize an Issue of General Obligation Bonds Not to Exceed \$152,000,000  
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## ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE ENACTED PURSUANT TO S.C. CODE ANN. §4-37-30 ET SEQ. TO IMPOSE A ONE PERCENT (1%) TRANSPORTATION SALES AND USE TAX FOR NOT MORE THAN SIX (6) YEARS, IF APPROVED BY REFERENDUM; TO AUTHORIZE THE ISSUE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS NOT TO EXCEED \$152,000,000 IF APPROVED BY REFERENDUM, TO DESCRIBE THE TRANSPORTATION-RELATED PROJECTS AND ESTIMATED CAPITAL COSTS OF THE PROJECTS TO BE FUNDED IN WHOLE OR IN PART FROM THE PROCEEDS OF THE TAX; TO ORDER A COUNTY-WIDE REFERENDUM ON THE QUESTION OF IMPOSING THE TAX AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS; TO PROSCRIBE THE CONTENTS OF THE BALLOT QUESTIONS; AND PROVIDE FOR ALL OTHER THINGS NECESSARY TO SUBMIT THE AFORESAID QUESTIONS TO THE ELECTORATE.

WHEREAS, the Beaufort County Council (the "*County Governing Body*") finds the existing transportation infrastructure within the County of Beaufort and the cities and towns situated within the County (the "*municipalities*") are inadequate to support the current and future transportation-related needs of the County and municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the County Governing Body finds that a one percent (1%) Transportation Sales and Use Tax and issue of general obligation bonds, if any, is the most equitable, affordable, efficient and expedient means of providing necessary financing to support, advance, develop and implement the transportation-related projects specified herein (the "*Projects*"); and

WHEREAS, the County Governing Body finds that a one percent (1%) Transportation Sales and Use Tax and the issue of general obligation bonds, if any, will enable the County to undertake, execute and complete, in whole or in part, the transportation-related Projects specified herein having determined that each Project is a necessary and a proper public purpose designated and designed to promote, support and contribute to the health, welfare and safety of the County's and municipalities' residents, citizens, visitors and businesses and promote, develop and enhance economic development within the County and municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the County Governing Body, with the concurrence of the municipalities, desires to place on the November 7, 2006, General Election ballot a referendum question, which if approved by a majority of the qualified voters of Beaufort County, would authorize the imposition and levy of a one percent (1%) Transportation Sales and Use Tax for not more than Six (6) years and authorize, upon referendum approval, an issue of not to exceed \$152,000,000 in general obligation bonds all of which will be designated and directed exclusively to paying for, either directly or through payment of debt service on general obligation bonds, the reasonable and necessary expenses incidental to the Projects specified herein.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED AND ORDAINED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY, AND IT IS ORDAINED BY THE AUTHORITY OF SAID COUNCIL THAT:**

**Section 1. Recitals and legislative findings**

As an incident to the adoption of this ordinance, the Beaufort County Council of Beaufort County, South Carolina (the "Council") makes the following findings:

**Section 1.1.** The South Carolina General Assembly enacted Title 4, Chapter 37, Section 30, Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, as amended (the "Code"), (hereinafter the "*Transportation Sales and Use Tax*") which empowers the County Governing Body to levy and impose a one percent (1%) sales and use tax by ordinance, subject to referendum, within the county and municipalities for a project or projects, for a specified period of time, to collect a limited amount of money and use the tax revenue to pay directly and, or, pay the debt service on bonds, if any, issued by the county, subject to referendum, to pay the cost of the projects authorized by this ordinance.

**Section 1.2.** The County Governing Body finds the that a *Transportation Sales and Use Tax* imposed solely for the purpose provided herein to pay directly and, or, through payment of debt service upon issue of general obligation bonds, if any, and subject to a referendum, to pay the reasonable and necessary expenses incidental to the purchase, acquisition, construction, repair, alteration and improvement of transportation projects as more fully described in Section 2.3 including, without limitation, the costs and expenses of studies, land title and mortgage title policies, architectural, engineering and construction management services, legal, accounting, organizational, marketing or other special services related to the financing of the projects and issuance of bonds, if any, financial or underwriting fees and expenses incurred in connection with issuing bonds, if any, rating agencies' fees, initial trustee and paying agent fees, recording and filing fees, and any and all other necessary and incidental expenses related to execution of the projects set forth in Section 2.3 (the "Projects") all of which serve a necessary and proper public and corporate purpose of the County and its municipalities, enhances the safety, efficiency and aesthetics of the public infrastructure of the County and municipalities thereby promoting the public health, welfare and safety, desirable living conditions and economic development of the County and municipalities and addresses the transportation related infrastructure needs of the County and municipalities now and in the future.

**Section 1.3.** The South Carolina General Assembly enacted Title 4, Chapter 37, Section 30(A)(3), Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, and authorized that in addition, the referendum may contain a question on the authorization of general obligation bonds under the exemption provided in Section 14(6), Article X of the Constitution of South Carolina, 1895, so that revenues derived from the imposition of the sales and use tax may be pledged to the repayment of bonds. If the referendum on the question relating to the issuance of general obligation bonds is approved, the county may issue bonds in an amount sufficient to fund the expenses of the project or projects.

**Section 1.4.** Article X, Section 14 of the Constitution of the State of South Carolina, 1895, as amended (the "Constitution"), provides that Counties of the State shall have the power to incur bonded indebtedness in such manner and upon such terms and conditions as the General Assembly may have heretofore or may hereafter prescribe.

**Section 1.5.** Article X, Section 14, subsection (6) of the Constitution provides that if general obligation debt is authorized by a majority vote of the qualified electors of the County voting in a referendum authorized by law, there shall be no conditions or restrictions limiting the incurring of such indebtedness except (i) those restrictions and limitations imposed in the authorization to incur such

indebtedness; (ii) such general obligation debt shall be issued within five years of the date of such referendum; and (iii) general obligation debt may be incurred only for a purpose which is a public purpose and which is a corporate purpose of the County and such debt shall mature within 40 years from the time such indebtedness shall be incurred.

**Section 1.6.** The provisions of Title 11, Chapter 27, Section 40, Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, as amended (the "Code"), empower the County Council to order any such referendum as is required by Article X of the Constitution, to prescribe the notice thereof and to conduct or cause to be conducted such referendum in the manner prescribed by Title 7 Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976.

**Section 1.7.** The amount of general obligation bonds required for such purposes exceeds the County's present constitutional debt limitation unless the question of issuing such bonds is submitted to and approved by the qualified electors of the County.

**Section 1.8.** In order to comply with 42 U.S.C. § 1973c, Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, the County Council must seek pre-clearance from the United States Department of Justice, Voting Rights Division, for conducting the referendum. The request for pre-clearance must be received by the Department of Justice more than 60 days prior to the referendum.

**Section 2. Imposition of a One Percent Transportation Sales and Use Tax; Authorization for Bond Issuance, if any; Duration of Tax; Projects and Project Descriptions**

**Section 2.1.** A Transportation Sales and Use Tax, as authorized by Title 4, Chapter 37, Section 30, Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, as amended, is hereby imposed within Beaufort County and the municipalities, subject to favorable vote of a majority of the qualified electors voting in the General Election held in Beaufort County on November 7, 2006.

A referendum authorizing the imposition of a Transportation Sales and Use Tax is authorized to contain a question to authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$152,000,000.00 under the exemption provided in Section 14(6), Article X of the Constitution of South Carolina, 1895, so that revenues derived from the imposition of the sales and use tax may be pledged to the repayment of the bonds.

**Section 2.2.** The Transportation Sales and Use Tax authorized by this Ordinance shall be expended for the purposes set forth in Section 1.2 of this Ordinance.

**Section 2.3.** The transportation-related Projects for which the proceeds of the tax will be used include highways, roads, streets, bridges, mass transit systems, greenbelts, and other transportation-related projects facilities including, but not limited to, drainage facilities relating to the highways, roads, streets, bridges, and other transportation-related projects; jointly-operated projects, of the type specified in this Section 2.3 of this Ordinance by the County and South Carolina Department of Transportation; and, or, projects specified in this Section 2.3 of this Ordinance operated by the county or jointly-operated projects of the county and other governmental entities.

The Projects and a description of the projects for which the proceeds of the tax are to be used are as follows:



<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Project Description</b>	<b>Estimated Capital Cost</b>
Bluffton Parkway – Phase 5 (US 278 Alternate)	New Road Construction from Buckwalter Parkway to Mackays Creek	\$50,000,000
US 278 Improvements	From Sea Pines Circle to SC 170	\$28,000,000
SC 170 Widening	From Bluffton Parkway to Tide Watch Dr.	\$6,000,000
US 17 Widening	From US 21 to Colleton County Line	\$5,000,000
US 21 (Boundary Street) Improvements	From Broad River Road to Palmetto Street	\$9,500,000
Boundary Street Parallel Road	New Road Construction From SC 170 to Palmetto Street	\$4,200,000
SC 802 (Ribaut Road) Improvements	From Lenora Drive to Lady’s Island Drive	\$600,000
US 21/SC 802 (Lady’s Island Drive) Widening	From Ribaut Road to Sea Island Parkway	\$35,500,000
Planning & Engineering for a Northern Beaufort ByPass	From Grays Hill to Lady’s Island	\$6,000,000
SC 802 (Savannah Highway) Widening	From SC 170 to Parris Island Gateway	\$7,200,000
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$152,000,000</b>

**Section 2.4.** The anticipated tax year will end six (6) years from the date of imposition, to wit: 2013; provided, however, the tax terminates on the earlier of the final day of the maximum time specified for the imposition; or the end of the calendar month during which the Department of Revenue determines that the tax has raised revenues sufficient to provide the greater of either the cost of the projects as approved in the referendum or the cost to amortize all debts related to the approved projects.

**Section 2.5.** Amounts collected in excess of the required proceeds first must be applied, if necessary, to complete each project for which the tax was imposed. Any additional revenue collected above the specified amount must be applied to the reduction of debt principal of the County on transportation infrastructure debts only.

**Section 2.6.** The tax levied pursuant to this section must be administered and collected by the Department of Revenue in the same manner that other sales and use taxes are collected. The department may prescribe the amounts which may be added to the sales price because of the tax.

**Section 2.7.** The tax authorized by this Ordinance is in addition to all other local sales and use taxes and applies to the gross proceeds of sales in the applicable jurisdiction which are subject to the tax imposed by Chapter 36 of Title 12 and the enforcement provisions of Chapter 54 of Title 12. The gross proceeds of the sale of items subject to a maximum tax in Chapter 36 of Title 12 are exempt from the tax imposed by this section. The gross proceeds of the sale of food lawfully purchased with United States Department of Agriculture food stamps are exempt from the tax imposed by this section. The tax imposed

by this section also applies to tangible personal property subject to the use tax in Article 13, Chapter 36 of Title 12.

**Section 2.8.** Taxpayers required to remit taxes pursuant to Article 13, Chapter 36 of Title 12 must identify the county in which the tangible personal property purchase at retail is stored, used, or consumed in this State.

**Section 2.9.** Utilities are required to report sales in the county in which consumption of the tangible personal property occurs.

**Section 2.10.** A taxpayer subject to the tax imposed by Section 12-36-920, who owns or manages rental units in more than one county shall report separately in his sales tax return the total gross proceeds from business done in each county.

**Section 2.11.** The gross proceeds of sales of tangible personal property delivered after the imposition date of the tax levied pursuant to this section in a county, either pursuant to the terms of a construction contract executed before the imposition date, or a written bid submitted before the imposition date, culminating in a construction contract entered into before or after the imposition date, are exempt from the special local sales and use tax provided in this section if a verified copy of the contract is filed with the Department of Revenue within six months after the imposition of the special local sales and use tax.

**Section 2.12.** Notwithstanding the imposition date of the special local sales and use tax authorized pursuant to this section, with respect to services that are billed regularly on a monthly basis, the special local sales and use tax is imposed beginning on the first day of the billing period beginning on or after the imposition date.

The revenues of the tax collected in each county pursuant to this section must be remitted to the State Treasurer and credited to a fund separate and distinct from the general fund of the State. After deducting the amount of refunds made and costs to the Department of Revenue of administering the tax, not to exceed one percent of the revenues, the State Treasurer shall distribute the revenues and all interest earned on the revenues while on deposit with him quarterly to the county in which the tax is imposed, and these revenues and interest earnings must be used only for the purpose stated in the imposition ordinance. The State Treasurer may correct misallocations by adjusting later distributions, but these adjustments must be made in the same fiscal year as the misallocations. However, allocations made as a result of city or county code errors must be corrected prospectively.

**Section 2.13.** The Department of Revenue shall furnish data to the State Treasurer and to the counties receiving revenues for the purpose of calculating distributions and estimating revenues. The information which must be supplied to counties upon request includes, but is not limited to, gross receipts, net taxable sales, and tax liability by taxpayers. Information about a specific taxpayer is considered confidential and is governed by the provisions of Section 12-54- 240. A person violating this section is subject to the penalties provided in Section 12-54-240.

### **Section 3. Order to Hold Referendum and Duties of Election Commission**

**Section 3.1.** Upon receipt of this Ordinance, the county election commission shall conduct a referendum on the question of imposing the optional special sales and use tax in Beaufort County. A referendum for this purpose must be held at the time of the general election conducted on November 7, 2006. The election commission shall publish the date and purpose of the referendum once a week for four consecutive weeks immediately preceding the date of the referendum in a newspaper of general circulation in the jurisdiction. A public hearing must be conducted at least fourteen days before the

referendum after publication of a notice setting forth the date, time, and location of the public hearing. The notice must be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the county at least fourteen days before the date fixed for the public hearing.

**Section 3.2.** Pursuant to Title 7, Chapter 13, Section 355, the Referendum question shall be submitted to the Beaufort County Board of Elections and Voter Registration to be placed on the ballot no later than 12:00 noon on August fifteenth or, if August fifteenth falls on Saturday or Sunday, not later than 12:00 noon on the following business day.

**Section 3.3.** All qualified electors desiring to vote in favor of imposing the tax for a particular purpose shall vote "yes" and all qualified electors opposed to levying the tax for a particular purpose shall vote "no". If a majority of the votes cast are in favor of imposing the tax for the Projects, then the tax is imposed as provided herein; otherwise, the tax is not imposed. The election commission shall conduct the referendum pursuant to the election laws of this State, mutatis mutandis, and shall certify the result no later than November thirtieth after the date of the referendum to the Beaufort County Council and to the Department of Revenue. Included in the certification must be the maximum cost of the projects to be funded in whole or in part from proceeds of the tax, the maximum time specified for the imposition of the tax, and the principal amount of bonds, if any, to be supported by the tax receiving a favorable vote. Expenses of the referendum must be paid by the jurisdiction conducting the referendum.

**Section 3.4.** If the tax is approved in the referendum, the tax is imposed effective the first day of May following the date of the referendum. If the certification is not made timely to the Department of Revenue, the imposition is postponed for twelve months.

#### **Section 4. Implementation of Project Plan**

**Section 4.1.** The Project Plan and Description as set forth in Section 2, having been approved by the Beaufort County Council, shall be implemented by the Beaufort County Administrator. The Beaufort County Administrator shall develop a comprehensive schedule to implement the Project Plan. The Administrator shall submit to the County Council, prior to implementing the Project Plan, a schedule and the County Council must approve the schedule prior to its implementation. At a minimum, the schedule must identify and list the projects as identified in Section 2.3, with an estimated start and completion date and the total amount of funds needed to complete the project.

**Section 4.2.** If the Referendum on the question relating to the imposition and levy of a one percent (1%) Sales and Use Tax is approved and if the referendum on the question relating to the issuance of general obligation bonds is approved, the County Administrator and his or her designees are authorized to implement the execution of the Projects subject to a comprehensive schedule to execute the Projects. Before implementing a Project Plan, the Administrator will submit the schedule to the Beaufort County Council for review and approval.

The Beaufort County Council recognizes that the order of Project implementation may vary due to unforeseen circumstances; acts of God including environmental conditions, weather and unforeseen and unanticipated conditions necessitating a change to the order of Project implementation and completion. Accordingly, the Beaufort County Council retains the right and privilege to alter, adjust, schedule and reschedule the order in which any particular Project will be undertaken and executed without the necessity of amending or repealing all of the Projects provided in this Ordinance at Section 2.3..

## **Section 5. Voting, Polling Places and Hours of Election**

**Section 5.1.** The voting precincts in the County for the Referendum shall be those designated pursuant to Section 7-7-110 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, as amended. The polling places for each of such precincts shall be designated by the Beaufort County Board of Elections and Voter Registration (the "Elections Board").

The polls shall be opened at 7:00 a.m. and closed at 7:00 p.m. on the date fixed for the Referendum and shall be held open during said hours without intermission or adjournment.

**Section 5.2.** The Referendum shall be conducted using either voting machines or paper ballots as provided by State law. Upon approval by the Elections Board, the form of ballots to be used in the Referendum and the instructions to voters appearing thereon shall be in substantially the form set forth in Appendix A and B with such other changes as may be deemed necessary by the appropriate state and local officials upon concurrence of the Chairman of the County Council.

**Section 5.3.** Every person offering to vote must be at least 18 years of age on the date of the Referendum, must reside in the County and must be duly registered on the books of registration for Beaufort County as an elector in the precinct in which he or she resides and offers to vote on or before the date on which said books of registration are closed for the Referendum, and must present his or her registration certificate or valid South Carolina driver's license or other form of identification containing a photograph issued by the South Carolina Department of Public Safety, if not licensed to drive. Any registered elector who meets the requirements set forth in the preceding sentence and who has moved his or her place of residence within the County after the date on which said books of registration are closed for the Referendum, but before the date of the Referendum, shall be entitled to vote in his or her previous precinct of residence in the Referendum.

## **Section 6. Notice of Referendum**

**Section 6.1.** A Notice of Referendum substantially in the form set forth in Appendix C, shall be published in compliance with the provisions of Sections 7-13-35 and 4-15-50 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, as amended, not less than 60 days prior to the Referendum, not later than two weeks after such first notice is published, and once not less than 15 days prior to the occasion set for the holding of the Referendum.

The Elections Board is authorized to change any of the locations of polling places for the Referendum as deemed necessary or advisable. Appropriate changes are to be made to the Notice of Referendum.

## **Section 7. Voter Registration and Elections Board**

**Section 7.1.** A certified copy of this Ordinance shall be filed with the Elections Board accompanied by written notice from the Chairman of the County Council establishing the date for the Referendum as November 7, 2006. The Elections Board is hereby requested as follows:

- (a) To join in the action of the County in providing for the Notice of Referendum in substantially the form contained herein;
- (b) To prescribe the form of a ballot to be used in the Referendum;
- (c) To arrange for polling places for each precinct, or any part of a precinct within the County;
- (d) To appoint Managers of Election;
- (e) To provide a sufficient number of ballots or voting machines, as the case may be, for the Referendum;

- (f) To conduct the Referendum, receive the returns thereof, canvass such returns, declare the results thereof, and certify such results to the County Council; and
- (g) To take other steps and prepare such other means as shall be necessary or required by law in order to properly conduct the Referendum.

**Section 8. Pre-Clearance Application**

Request for pre-clearance of the Referendum pursuant to the Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act shall be submitted on behalf of the County in a timely fashion by counsel.

**Section 9. Applicability and Effective Date**


This Ordinance shall become effective upon third and final reading by the County.

**Section 10. Severability**

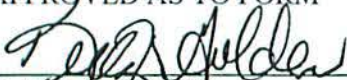
If any part of this Ordinance is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be unconstitutional, illegal, or invalid for any reason, it shall be construed to have been the legislative intent of the County Council of Beaufort County, South Carolina, to pass this Ordinance without such unconstitutional, illegal or invalid provision, and the remainder of this Ordinance shall be deemed and held to be constitutional, lawful and valid as if such portion had not been included. If this Ordinance or any provision thereof is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be inapplicable to any person, group of persons, property, kind of property, circumstances or set of circumstances, such holding shall not affect the applicability thereof to any other persons, property or circumstances.

**APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY,  
SOUTH CAROLINA ON THIS 14th DAY OF AUGUST, 2006.**

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Wm. Weston. J. Newton, Chairman

APPROVED AS TO FORM

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelly J. Golden, Esquire  
Beaufort County Staff Attorney

(SEAL)

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Suzanne M. Rainey, Clerk to Council

First Reading:	June 12, 2006
Second Reading:	July 24, 2006
Public Hearing:	July 24, 2006
Third and Final Reading:	August 14, 2006

APPENDIX A

FORM OF BALLOT  
OFFICIAL BALLOT – REFERENDUM  
LOCAL QUESTION NUMBER 2A  
AUTHORIZATION TO IMPOSE A ONE PERCENT (1%)  
TRANSPORTATION SALES AND USE TAX  
TO FINANCE THE TRANSPORTATION-RELATED PROJECTS DESCRIBED IN THE  
QUESTION 2A

Precinct \_\_\_\_\_

No. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Initials of Issuing Officer

Local Question 2A

I approve a special transportation sales and use tax in the amount of one percent (1%) to be imposed in Beaufort County for not more than six (6) years, or until a total of \$152,000,000 in resulting revenue has been collected, whichever comes first. The sales tax proceeds will be used for the following projects as described and for which an estimated capital cost is stated.

Bluffton Parkway – Phase 5 (US 278 Alternate) New Road Construction from Buckwalter Parkway to Mackays Creek .....	\$50,000,000
US 278 Improvements From Sea Pines Circle to SC 170 .....	\$28,000,000
SC 170 Widening From Bluffton Parkway to Tide Watch Dr.....	\$6,000,000
US 17 Widening From US 21 to Colleton County Line .....	\$5,000,000
US 21 (Boundary Street) Improvements From Broad River Road to Palmetto Street .....	\$9,500,000
Boundary Street Parallel Road New Road Construction from SC 170 to Palmetto Street .....	\$4,200,000
SC 802 (Ribaut Road) Improvements From Lenora Drive to Lady's Island Drive .....	\$600,000
US 21/SC 802 (Lady's Island Drive) Widening From Ribaut Road to Sea Island Parkway .....	\$35,500,000
Planning & Engineering for a Northern Beaufort ByPass From Grays Hill to Lady's Island .....	\$6,000,000

SC 802 (Savannah Highway)  
Widening - From SC 170 to Parris Island Gateway .....\$7,200,000

Total: .....\$152,000,000

Yes, in favor of the question           [ ]

No, opposed to the question           [ ]

If you are in favor of the question, place a check or cross-mark in the square after the words "Yes, in favor of the question"; if you are opposed to the question, place a check or cross-mark in the square after the words "No, opposed to the question."

**APPENDIX B  
FORM OF BALLOT  
OFFICIAL BALLOT – REFERENDUM  
LOCAL QUESTION NUMBER 2B  
AUTHORIZATION TO IMPOSE A ONE PERCENT (1%)  
TRANSPORTATION SALES AND USE TAX  
TO FINANCE THE TRANSPORTATION-RELATED PROJECTS DESCRIBED IN THE  
QUESTION 2A**

Precinct \_\_\_\_\_  
No. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Initials of Issuing Officer

Local Question 2B

I approve the issuance of not exceeding \$152,000,000 of general obligation bonds of Beaufort County, maturing over a period not to exceed seven (7) years to fund the Transportation - Related projects identified in Beaufort County Local Referendum Question 2A.

Yes, in favor of the question           

No, opposed to the question           

If you are in favor of the question, place a check or cross-mark in the square after the words "Yes, in favor of the question"; if you are opposed to the question, place a check or cross-mark in the square after the words "No, opposed to the question."





7

WILLIAM WESTON J. NEWTON  
CHAIRMAN

W. R. "SKEET" VON HARTEN  
VICE CHAIRMAN

COUNCIL MEMBERS

FANK BRAFMAN  
GERALD DAWSON  
MARK D. GENERALES  
HERBERT N. GLAZE  
MARGARET E. GRIFFIN  
STARLETTA HAIRSTON  
PETER LAMB  
WILLIAM L. McBRIDE  
RICHARD H. STEWART

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY  
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
100 RIBAUT ROAD  
SUITE 270  
POST OFFICE DRAWER 1228  
BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA 29901-1228  
TELEPHONE: (843) 470-5380 FAX: (843) 470-5383  
[kgolden@bcgov.net](mailto:kgolden@bcgov.net)

GARY T. KUBIC  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

KELLY J. GOLDEN  
STAFF ATTORNEY

SUZANNE M. RAINEY  
CLERK TO COUNCIL

August 15, 2006

Mrs. Agnes Garvin, Executive Director  
Beaufort County Board of Elections and Voter Registration  
P.O. Drawer 1228  
Beaufort, SC 29901-1228

RE: Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation \$50 Million Ordinance  
\$152 Million Penny Sales Tax Ordinance

Dear Mrs. Garvin:

Attached please find certified copies of both ordinances regarding the above mentioned, filed pursuant to S.C. Code 7-13-355, which states the referendum question shall be submitted to the Beaufort County Board of Elections and Voter Registration to be placed on the ballot no later than 12:00 noon on August fifteenth, or if August fifteenth falls on Saturday or Sunday, not later than 12:00 noon on the following business day.

Please send back a clocked copy of each ordinance for my files.

Should you have any questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact me.

With kindest regards,



Kelly J. Golden

KJG/sdb

enc.: Ordinance 2006/3  
Ordinance 2006/15

cc: Gary Kubic, Administrator w/o enc.  
Members, Beaufort County Council w/o enc.

RECEIVED  
BEAUFORT COUNTY  
BOARD OF ELECTIONS  
2006 AUG 15 A 9:58  
VOTER REGISTRATION

8

ouncil

Bill Rauch, Mayor  
Frank Glover, Mayor Pro Tem  
Bernie Ann Beer  
Gary B. Fordham  
George H. O'Kelley, Jr.

# City of Beaufort

302 Carteret Street  
Post Office Box 1167  
Beaufort, South Carolina 29901

JUL 24 2006

Scott F. Dadson  
City Manager

William B. Harvey, III  
City Attorney

Beverly W. Gay  
City Clerk

July 21, 2006

Mr. Gary Kubic, County Administrator  
Post Office Drawer 1228  
Beaufort, SC 29901

Re: Sales Tax Referendum Project List.

Dear Gary:

The City Council of the City of Beaufort met in Special Session yesterday to discuss, amongst other things, the Sales Tax Referendum Project List. The City Council is supportive of this list and its inclusion on the upcoming Ballot. The Council's only concerns at this point and time are inclusion of a sunset provision to the Sales Tax Ballot.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to call on me at 525-7070.

Sincerely,



Scott F. Dadson, City Manager  
City of Beaufort

Cc: Mayor and City Council

HENRY "HANK" JOHNSTON  
*Mayor*

JACOB W. PRESTON  
*Mayor Pro Tempore*

W.D. WORKMAN III  
*Town Manager*



*Council Members*  
LISA SULKA  
LUCILLE MITCHELL  
FRED HAMILTON JR.  
SANDRA LUNCEFORD  
*Town Clerk*

August 11, 2006

Wm. Weston J. Newton, Chairman  
County Council of Beaufort County  
Post Office Drawer 1228  
Beaufort, SC 29900

Re: 2006 Penny Sales Tax Referendum

On behalf of the members of Bluffton Town Council, I am writing to inform you that, at the August 9 Council meeting, Council concurred with holding the Transportation Sales Tax Referendum in November rather than waiting eighteen (18) months.

Please do not hesitate in calling me at 706-4580 if you have any questions concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

Hank Johnston  
Mayor  
Town of Bluffton

# TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

One Town Center Court, Hilton Head Island, S.C. 29928

(843) 341-4600 Fax (843) 842-7728

<http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov>

Thomas D. Peeples  
Mayor

Kenneth S. Heitzke  
Mayor Pro Tem

Council Members

Willie (Bill) Ferguson  
Lewis A. Laughlin  
J. (Bill) Mottel  
John Safay  
George W. Williams, Jr.

Stephen G. Riley  
Town Manager

August 10, 2006

Wm. Weston J. Newton  
Chairman  
County Council of Beaufort County  
P. O. Drawer 1228  
Beaufort, SC 29901-1228

Dear Weston:

Pursuant to County Council's request, Town Council, at its August 1, 2006 meeting, voted 5-0 to place the proposed Beaufort County transportation sales tax referendum on the November 2006 ballot for consideration by the electorate.

Thank you for your assistance with this matter and if you any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Thomas D. Peeples*

Thomas D. Peeples, Mayor  
Town of Hilton Head Island

cc: Town Council  
Stephen G. Riley, AICP, Town Manager  
C.O. Hoelle, Jr., Director of Public Projects & Facilities/Deputy Town Manager

## Sue Rainey

---

**From:** Cheryl Harris  
**Sent:** Friday, August 11, 2006 10:21 AM  
**To:** Sue Rainey; Gary Kubic  
**Cc:** 'Brenda Perkins'; Weston Newton  
**Subject:** Penny Sales Tax Referendum

mya Payne, of the Town of Port Royal, called the office this morning stating that the Port Royal Town Council, its August 9<sup>th</sup> meeting, voted to support the Penny Sales Tax Referendum.

Thank you.



9

## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Stacy Bradshaw  
**Sent:** Friday, September 01, 2006 12:55 PM  
**To:** Stacy Bradshaw  
**Subject:** FW: From The Island Packet Online: County officials to answer tax questions

County officials to answer tax questions

Published: Wednesday, August 30th, 2006

If you've got a question about a proposed 1 percent sales-tax increase that would pay for \$152 million worth of Beaufort County road projects, county officials want you to put it in writing.

County officials will appear on 'Talk of the Town' on WHHI-TV in October to answer the questions. The five people who e-mail the most relevant questions will be asked to appear on the program, which will be filmed at 2 p.m. Oct. 13.

The questions will be answered by county administrator Gary Kubic; county traffic engineer Colin Kinton; and sales-tax supporters Paula Harper Bethea of the McNair Law Firm and Bill Miles, president of the Hilton Head/Bluffton Chamber of Commerce.

Questions can be e-mailed to [hart28@davtv.com](mailto:hart28@davtv.com). The show will air at 8 p.m. Monday through Friday during the week of Oct. 16.

The question of whether the sales tax should be raised to pay for road projects will appear on ballots in the Nov. 7 general election.

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## Mount Pleasant mayor says road funding critical

### Lawmakers should heed his advice

Published Thursday August 31 2006

Residents of Beaufort County and the city of Mount Pleasant have a common dislike of congested highways. More than a few people in both places continue to ask why local taxpayers are being asked to pony up the money to pay for highway infrastructure that for years was a state function.

The answer, of course, is that the S.C. Department of Transportation says it doesn't have the money. In fact, the recent decision by the State Infrastructure Bank to loan the S.C. Department of Transportation \$93 million to widen a 6-mile section of U.S. 17 instead of a grant to complete the \$221 million, 22-mile project is indicative of the billions of dollars of underfinanced needs. The Beaufort County Council recently decided to include \$5 million in a \$152 million November referendum to help offset a \$19 million deficit for the U.S. 17 project. The council had to choose between the U.S. 17 project and a bus project to help eliminate traffic on U.S. 278.

Mount Pleasant Mayor Harry M. Hallman Jr. blames the state's highway problems on the legislature that has failed to properly fund the maintenance of the state's highway systems and the need for expansion of the system.

The legislature allocates \$510 million a year for road maintenance funds, but DOT Executive Director Elizabeth Mabry has called for a 10-year plan that would increase funding to \$1 billion a year.

Funding problems have been apparent for years. The State infrastructure Bank was formed as a result of inadequate funds. Soon after the infrastructure bank was opened, money ran out, and the bank came back with stipulations that counties that wanted money would have to contribute about 25 percent of a project's costs. Beaufort County participated in the widening of S.C. 170 in order to complete the project based on need rather than the availability of state funds.

Hallman wrote in *The Post and Courier* of Charleston last week that the legislature should create a bipartisan committee to examine a comprehensive funding plan for the nation's fourth-largest state-supported system. He also said the problem lingers because legislators fear voter backlash over a tax increase, presumably the gas tax, more than they fear anger at a failing road system.

Many in South Carolina share the sentiment that increasing the 16-cent-per-gallon gasoline tax is the right thing to do. Other states have enacted higher gas taxes to pay for infrastructure.

Tremendous growth in population, as well as in the number of tourists, over the past decade has had a significant impact on traffic congestion. The county grew by almost 40 percent in the 1990s, recording a population of 120,937 in the 2000 census. Projections are that this pace will continue.

While dollars are scarce, lawmakers must look to ways of funding the need.

Hallman may get some help in his plea from a Legislative Audit Council review that should be completed this fall. Let's hope legislators read it before they return to Columbia in January. Infrastructure funding is at a critical juncture in South Carolina.

Shirley Bradshaw

---

**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Friday, August 25, 2006 9:31 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Officials to answer questions on TV

## Officials to answer questions on TV

Published Friday, August 25, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

If you've got a question about a proposed 1 percent sales-tax increase that would pay for \$152 million worth of Beaufort County road projects, county officials want you to put it in writing.

County officials will appear on "Talk of the Town" on WHHI-TV in October to answer the questions. The five people who e-mail the most relevant questions will be asked to appear on the program, which will be filmed at 2 p.m. Oct. 13.

The questions will be answered by county administrator Gary Kubic; county traffic engineer Colin Kinton; and sales-tax importers Paula Harper Bethea of the McNair Law Firm and Bill Miles, president of the Hilton Head/Bluffton Chamber of Commerce.

Questions can be e-mailed to [hart28@davtc.com](mailto:hart28@davtc.com). The show will air at 8 p.m. Monday through Friday during the week of Oct. 16.

The question of whether the sales tax should be raised to pay for road projects will appear on ballots in the Nov. 7 general election.

Suzanne Larson, Public Information Officer  
Beaufort County  
Work: (843) 470-2810  
Cell: (843) 812-1072  
Fax: (843) 470-2812  
[pio@bcgov.net](mailto:pio@bcgov.net)

*Stand in the light, plant your feet and tell the truth.*  
-- James Cagney

Stacy Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Friday, August 25, 2006 10:09 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BT: Aug. 25, 2006: Joe Croley Column

He says ...

## Sixteen lanes across Bluffton? For shame

When life is fair, before I make a decision on which way to vote on the capital sales tax referendum in November, someone will tell me why we are allocating part of it to build a total of 16 east-west lanes between Buck Island Road and the Buckwalter Parkway (phase 5B), and how we propose to merge traffic coming to and from the extension of the Bluffton Parkway (phase 5A), where it will intersect with U.S. 278 and the bridges.

Short of a reasonable explanation that shows why 16 lanes are needed and traffic flow at the bridges won't become a parking area, I will vote "no." A few times a year I drive around Washington, D.C., on the I-495 beltway. That, to me, is the busiest road on the East Coast. It has 12 lanes at its widest point, but normally it is eight lanes.

We need 16 lanes to go through what is currently mostly undeveloped land? Who decided this—developers, paving contractors, site preparation companies?

Where is this monumental need all of a sudden coming from, new homes on Buck Island? I don't think so.

The county says its purpose is to improve the capacity and efficiency of area roadways by providing a more direct route along the Bluffton Parkway.

I can only assume we are admitting the so-called curved piece, which isn't even completed yet, is inefficient—thus rendering it a waste of taxpayers' money or a way to showcase commercial property to the benefit of the selected few—and really not needed.

Stop this boondoggle before it gets started and further destroys what is left of The Traditions of Old Carolina when they try to create an intersection off of Buck Island Road going in two different directions. Someone should be embarrassed even proposing this pork-barrel project. Or is there no shame left?

Next, they propose to build an additional four lanes from Burnt Church to the bridge area. Sounds good. But how are these lanes going to merge with the six lanes coming from U.S. 278 and how is the resulting traffic going to get off and on a fourlane bridge?

Are we going to have the old standby traffic light, or are we going to build a roundabout?

The Hilton Garden Inn must be salivating at the thought of either of these alternatives, since it will drive their occupancy rate up with commuters hoping to get an early start in the morning through that merge and intersection.

Reminds me of once having to stay overnight in a motel in Cedar Island, N.C., waiting for the first ferry to Ocracoke Island.

There needs to be a more comprehensive plan put forth showing overpasses, merge lanes and an expanded bridge before this makes any sense and gives people a hope for traffic congestion relief or a more meaningful evacuation alternative.

In the meantime, build the frontage roads, provide northsouth interconnectivity, fix the intersections and change the referendum question accordingly.

You can contact me at [Whenlifeisfair@hargray.com](mailto:Whenlifeisfair@hargray.com)



WHEN LIFE IS FAIR

Joe Croley

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Suzanne Larson, Public Information Officer  
Beaufort County  
Desk: (843) 470-2810  
Cell: (843) 812-1072  
Fax: (843) 470-2812  
[pio@bcgov.net](mailto:pio@bcgov.net)

Stacy Bradshaw

---

**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 23, 2006 3:25 PM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Bluffton Parkway Extension stirs emotions

## Bluffton Parkway Extension stirs emotions

By GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*

Published Wednesday, August 23, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) -> [Add Comment](#)

At times it was difficult to sense what was hotter, the emotions of residents concerned their property could be bulldozed to make way for future phases of Bluffton Parkway or the temperature in the Bluffton Library meeting room where they gathered Tuesday to find out more about the project.



Photo: Bluffton resident Vivian Saritelli points towards the end of the proposed Bluffton Parkway Extension map while Heritage Lakes resident Ellen Trice examines an area of the map Tuesday night during a public information meeting held at the Bluffton library.

Harmony Motter/*The Island Packet*

[Enlarge Image](#)

[Buy This Photo](#)

More than 250 people took turns viewing mural-sized aerial photographs detailing where the parkway might go when the county extends it east of Burnt Church Road and straightens out the road between Buck Island Road and Buckwalter Parkway.

Some fanned themselves with the information sheets handed out by officials while waiting their turn to squeeze their way in front of the photographs. Once residents got up close, many didn't like what they saw.

"We wanted a nice quiet neighborhood to retire in and this will totally ruin what we're looking for," said Betty Parks, a Heritage Lakes resident who lives near the area being eyed for the parkway.

One man, unhappy with the plans, cursed out an engineer with Florence and Hutcheson, the Columbia-based firm Bluffton County hired to find a path for the parkway's extension. At well over



Photo: Beaufort County traffic transportation engineer Colin Kinton speaks with the public Tuesday evening regarding the proposed Bluffton Parkway Extension.

*Harmony Motter/The Island Packet*

[- Enlarge Image](#)

[- Buy This Photo](#)

6 feet tall, the firm's vice president, David Beaty, towered over the angry resident, but remained calm as the man threatened to cut off his head.

"When you start looking at plans that affect people's homes and properties, emotions are going to run high," said Larry Rockwell, a Heritage Lakes resident who didn't see that exchange.

Many residents complained that staff with Florence and Hutcheson were unable to answer their specific questions about the parkway, but county traffic engineer Colin Kinton said Tuesday's meeting was designed to get comments from residents. County officials will be able to answer more specific questions once the exact alignment is drawn, he said.

The engineering firm plans to take the feedback from comment cards into consideration as it draws up its specific proposal for where the parkway should go. Those drawings should be finished in about nine months, Kinton said.

The firm has to find a stretch of land that's 125 feet wide to put the parkway. Engineers are studying a 600-foot-wide corridor to find the route that minimizes impacts to homeowners and businesses.

Some residents waited for a seat to open at a long table so they could scrawl their thoughts about the county's preliminary plans. But Parks planned to take her comment card home so she could take her time filling it out.

"I'm a little upset and mad tonight," said Parks, who paid for a newspaper advertisement encouraging her neighbors to attend the hearing.

Other residents attempted to scout out Beaufort County Council members to share their concerns. One resident brought a print-out of the council members' pictures so he could identify them if they were there, but the only one he saw was chairman Weston Newton.

Newton said he hopes the parkway's proposed route will be narrowed down a little before November, when voters will consider a 1 percent sales tax increase that would pay for \$152 million worth of road improvement projects, including the expansion of Bluffton Parkway.

"One of the premises we look at is, is it capable of being done without displacing residents?" Newton said.

As they left the meeting, a few of the residents said they were going home to sip a glass or two of wine to unwind.

Contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

tacy Bradshaw

---

**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 23, 2006 3:42 PM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BG: Port Royal backs penny sales tax

## Port Royal backs penny sales tax

Published Wed, Aug 23, 2006

by GREG JONES

The Beaufort Gazette

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

Port Royal officials are publicly backing a 1 cent sales tax referendum that would pay for a number of road projects within the town if approved by voters in November.

The Town Council has endorsed the transportation sales tax referendum, which would raise \$152 million for countywide projects if approved.

Projects included in the referendum for Port Royal are:

- \$600,000 to improve S.C. 802 from Lenora Drive to Lady's Island Drive;
- \$7.2 million to widen S.C. 802 from S.C. 170 to Parris Island Gateway; and
- \$35 million to build a parallel bridge next to the J.E. McTeer Bridge over the Beaufort River and expand Lady's Island Drive.

Town Councilman Vernon DeLoach said traffic isn't getting any better in Port Royal and that the road improvements are critical to the town's growth.

"We have a lot of cars on the road, and it's not getting any better," he said.

County Councilman William McBride, who represents St. Helena Island, said the improvements will make roads safer.

"We need to improve the roads, and this is the only source we have to do it because the state doesn't have the money," he said.

But a shortfall in state funding to pay for road projects didn't convince county voters to approve sales taxes in 2002 or 2004.

Mayor Sam Murray said the longer the county waits on these projects, the worse the traffic will get.

"Transportation is a regional problem, and it doesn't just limit itself to the town of Port Royal," he said. "The amount of cars we have in the county will increase, and the cost for (maintaining) roads will get worse unless we do something."

Contact Greg Jones at 986-5539 or [gjones@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:gjones@beaufortgazette.com). To comment: [beaufortgazette.com](http://beaufortgazette.com).

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*Stand in the light, plant your feet and tell the truth.*  
-- James Cagney



## County approves \$266 million in road projects

### Land Management Committee leaves \$78 million of projects unfunded

Published Tuesday August 22 2006

By BRANDON HONIG

The Beaufort Gazette

More than \$266 million in road projects received a go-ahead from the Beaufort County Council's Land Management Committee on Monday, though nearly \$78 million of the items on the list remain without a funding source.

The more than \$188 million that could be allocated for the projects comes from state and federal funding, county road impact fees and a proposed 1 cent sales tax that will be put to voters in November.

The remaining money likely would come from road impact fees, officials said.

The projects include two elements from the Boundary Street Master Plan. Under the proposal, \$12.25 million would be spent to improve driving conditions on Boundary Street between its intersections with Robert Smalls Parkway and Ribaut Road, and \$8.75 million would be spent to build a road parallel to Boundary Street directly to its north.

County Transportation Engineer Colin Kinton said traffic volume on Boundary is growing steadily and nearing its capacity. The proposals reviewed Monday would address that volume through access management and diverting traffic to the new parallel road. Both Boundary Street projects would be paid for through the county road impact fees and the proposed sales tax.

Other projects included widening sections of U.S. 21, U.S. 17 and S.C. 802, creating a connector for U.S. 21 and S.C. 802 on Lady's Island and installing a system whereby emergency vehicles could manipulate traffic lights.

In other business, the committee rejected the residents of Eagle's Pointe's request that they no longer be required to pay for quarterly water tests to ensure their homes, roads and golf courses aren't polluting the Okatie River. Under an agreement with the developer that established the community, the tests have been conducted every three months for the past nine years but have not turned up anything abnormal.

Earlier this month the Beaufort County Planning Commission recommended the quarterly testing be abandoned in favor of cheaper monthly testing, but the Land Management Committee said it lacks the authority to enforce a recommendation of monthly testing unless the community agrees to it.

The committee also approved, with reservations, a proposal to require lights on all objects taller than 150 feet. Currently, only towers that are 200 feet or taller require lights, which are white during the day and red at night.

Mosquito Control Division officials said their pilots fly at altitudes between 150 and 200 feet in order to optimize the effectiveness of the chemicals they spray.

Opponents of the 150-foot mandate point out that many residents who agreed to have 150-foot towers in their neighborhoods were told the towers would not be lit.

Members of the committee outlined several questions they would like county officials to address before the full County Council votes on this measure, including the possibility of painting the towers instead of lighting them, the availability of other chemicals that might be effective from 200 feet and the extent of the county's liability if a pilot is injured in a collision with a tower that has burned out lights.

Additionally the committee recommended approval of an amendment that would alter the river buffer in Beaufort County. On most lots, residential homes are not permitted within 50 feet of the critical line. The proposed amendment would maintain that stipulation but allow residential lots to contain pathways, non-solid-type fences, playground equipment, benches, picnic tables or observation decks not exceeding 100 total square feet between 20 and 50 feet of the critical line.

All committee recommendations must later be approved by the County Council.

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Friday, August 18, 2006 9:01 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: LEtter: Info needed for sales tax vote

**Info needed for sales tax vote**

Published Friday, August 18, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Re: The Packet:

Bluffton County Council is preparing to offer up the 1 percent sales tax to pay for roads.

Now, in good faith, is a citizen supposed to vote "yes" in the election for an extension of the Bluffton Parkway when the route is still not determined? In order to extend Bluffton Parkway from Burnt Church Road to the foot of the bridges, the road will end up going through some expensive real estate. The Santee Cooper power lines? Heritage Lakes? Lowe's? Bluffton Head National?

How does the council even consider approving this referendum list without knowing the cost to procure the land for this extension? It would be nice to actually see the route, and the expense involved in obtaining the land, before the citizens are asked to vote on the subject.

Hopefully, the task force studying this portion of the Bluffton Parkway extension will have the route determined and the expense involved prior to the next election.

Barah Rodier

Bluffton

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— James Cagney

8/18/2006

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 16, 2006 9:22 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BG:Editorial: The County Council ignores its planners

## The County Council ignores its planners Rezoning should be part of regional plan

Published Wed, Aug 16, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

The Beaufort County Council liberally dishes out advice to Port Royal, Beaufort and Bluffton about decisions that have an impact on traffic, traffic safety and adherence to the tenets of the good planning, but in two votes recently it has thumbed its nose at common sense.

Monday the council voted 6-2 (the second of three votes of approval) to rezone 7 acres of land along U.S. 278 and S.C. 170 to allow a car dealership to be built. A final vote might occur on Aug. 28. The land now is zoned light industrial, which would allow a truck or RV dealership, but council Chairman Weston Newton thinks the land has the wrong designation.

Newton wants the council to return the issue to the planning staff to see if it has recommendations for a zoning designation more compatible for with the area. Newton and Councilman Herbert Glaze cast votes against the rezoning.

A majority of the council says that the car dealer, Gordon Faulkner, has made concessions -- bigger buffers and avoiding the garish promotional displays that sometimes arrive with dealership -- but what will be done to mitigate dangerous traffic situations?

The council's vote, too, ignores the recommendations of the staff and Planning Council, which rejected the zoning 4-2.

The county has invested major dollars in property to retain this bucolic area as parks. Taxpayers spent \$7.1 million for 117 acres on the Okatie River across U.S. 278 and \$1.2 million for 31 acres at Barrel Landing. A park master plan connects the two sites with a trail under the bridge.

However, one of the biggest problems is the long-term safety of people. Rezoning for a car dealership will lead to additional changes and a commercial strip that would be unsafe because of a potential lack of traffic signals.

Before the council takes a final vote on this rezoning, it should think about the ramifications this change might have with voters, who will be asked to decide a \$152 million bond referendum in November.

The county should make decisions part of the regional planning process. Anything less will have the council with its hand out again for money to solve traffic problems.

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-- James Cagney

tacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**ent:** Tuesday, August 15, 2006 2:50 PM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**subject:** IP: Question to raise county sales tax for road projects goes to voters

## Question to raise county sales tax for road projects goes to voters

ublished Tuesday, August 15, 2006

Comments (0) → [Add Comment](#)

It's official. Beaufort County voters will be asked to decide in a November referendum whether to raise the county sales tax to pay for \$152 million worth of road projects.

The County Council voted 9-0 Monday to put the question on November ballots. If approved, the sales tax would increase by 1 percent for six years or until \$152 million is raised, whichever happens first.

Councilman Gerald Dawson abstained because he felt like more money should go toward the U.S. 17 widening project. Councilman Skeet Von Harten was not present.

Before the vote, Councilman Mark Generales asked the council to consider shifting \$6 million away from planning and engineering work for a northern Beaufort bypass, which would determine the best route for a third bridge to Lady's Island. Instead, he suggested the money be used to build bike paths throughout the county. The council did not support the effort.

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Stacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2006 8:44 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP: Public meetings schedule

## Public meetings schedule

Published Monday, August 14, 2006

Comments (0) → [Add Comment](#)

For the week of Aug. 14-18.

Town of Hilton Head Island

Today

Pre-application Review Meeting

When/Where: 10 a.m., conference room 4, Town Hall.

Agenda: Proposed project for the construction of 10,172 square-foot commercial structure at 85 Capital Drive.

On the Web: [www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov).

Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee

When/Where: 10 a.m., council chambers, Town Hall.

Agenda: Swearing in and reappointment of new members; election of chairman and vice chairman; set dates for applications, workshops and hearings.

On the Web: [www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov).

Beaufort County

Today

Economic Development Committee

When/Where: 2 p.m., county council chambers, county administration building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort.

Agenda: Includes resolution updating county council's support of creating a corridor commerce park.

On the Web: [www.bcgov.net](http://www.bcgov.net).

Finance Committee

When/Where: 2:30 p.m., county council chambers, county administration building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort.

Agenda: Discussion of the Beaufort County School District's fund balance and report on business licenses.

On the Web: [www.bcgov.net](http://www.bcgov.net).

County Council

When/Where: 4 p.m., county council chambers, county administration building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort.

Agenda: Includes update on amended road, library and park impact fees for southern Beaufort County, final reading on an ordinance to put a \$152 million sales tax question on ballots during November referendum, second reading of rezoning for Barrel Landing Chevrolet.

On the Web: [www.bcgov.net](http://www.bcgov.net).

Southern Beaufort County Subcommittee of the Planning Commission

When/Where: 5:30 p.m., Bluffton library, 120 Palmetto Way.

Agenda: Consideration of a rezoning of 41.87 acres in greater Bluffton to planned unit development to make way for a mixed-use development to be known as The Village at Hilton Head National.

On the Web: [www.bcgov.net](http://www.bcgov.net).

Tuesday

Public Services Committee

When/Where: 4 p.m., county council chambers, county administration building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort.

Agenda: Summary report on stormwater utility projects; briefing on status of special purpose districts; consideration of contracts for Chechessee River boat landing improvements; and supervision of the Bluffton/Buckwalter Parkway construction.

On the Web: [www.bcgov.net](http://www.bcgov.net).

Instruction Adjustments and Appeals Board  
When/Where: 5 p.m., county council chambers, county administration building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort.

Agenda: Available on request.

On the Web: [www.bcgov.net](http://www.bcgov.net).

Board of Education  
When/Where: 6 p.m., county council chambers, county administration building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort.

Agenda: Includes a closed-door session from 5 to 6:05 p.m. to discuss land acquisition, contractual administrative matters and confidential legal matters; as well public discussion of a north county demographic analysis; establishment of an internal service fund; laboratory renovations at Beaufort High School; computers for Battery Creek High School; a proposed band-uniform donation to Hurricane Katrina victims; debt related to the Hilton Head High School baseball stadium; and a presentation by district safety officer Chris Barrow.

On the Web: [www.beaufort.k12.sc.us](http://www.beaufort.k12.sc.us).

Wednesday

Development Review Team

07/17/06

When/Where: 11:15 a.m., executive conference room, county administration building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort.

Agenda: Available on request.

On the Web: [www.bcgov.net](http://www.bcgov.net).

#### Affordable Housing Governing Council

When/Where: 5:30 p.m., Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority, 6 Snake Road, Okatie.

Agenda: Committee presentation on affordable housing funding request from the Lowcountry Housing and Redevelopment Corporation.

On the Web: [www.bcgov.net](http://www.bcgov.net).

Thursday

#### Beaufort-Jasper Academy for Career Excellence Board of Education

When/Where: 5 p.m., auditorium, Beaufort-Jasper Academy for Career Excellence, 80 Lowcountry Drive, Ridgeland.

Agenda: Available on request.

On the Web: [www.bjace.org](http://www.bjace.org).

#### Town of Bluffton

Tuesday

#### Development Review Committee

When/Where: 10 a.m., Bluffton Town Hall, 20 Bridge St.

Agenda: Reviews of Lawton Station, Hampton Lake and New Riverside.

On the Web: [www.townofbluffton.com](http://www.townofbluffton.com).

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*Stand in the light, plant your feet and tell the truth.*  
-- James Cagney

tacy Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Wednesday, August 09, 2006 8:22 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP: Paying for better roads

## Paying for better roads

### County to solidify project list for voters

GINNY SKALSKI  
The Island Packet  
Published Wednesday, August 9, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Street lights would illuminate U.S. 278 intersections, a drive down the William Hilton Parkway would be less bumpy and Buck Island Road could accommodate more traffic under the latest sales-tax project list being considered by the Beaufort County Council.



Photo: The ramp that lets drivers merge from U.S. 278 to S.C. 170 would be configured to accommodate additional lanes on both of the highways under one of the projects that could be paid for with a sales-tax increase.  
*Harmony Motter/The Island Packet*

[Enlarge Image](#)  
[Buy This Photo](#)

The list has been altered several times since June, when the council first considered what projects should be paid for if voters approve a sales-tax increase of 1 percent in a November referendum.

But the latest list isn't expected to change before Monday, when the council is scheduled to give it its final approval before turning the question over to voters, said county administrator Gary Kubic.

Out from the list are plans to build three frontage roads along U.S. 278. Instead, a pending increase in southern Beaufort County's road-impact fees is expected to cover the costs of building those roads, said county traffic engineer Colin Sinton.

As a result, county officials recently added other road improvements to the list, including intersection lighting on U.S. 278, the repaving of William Hilton Parkway and the widening of Buck Island Road.



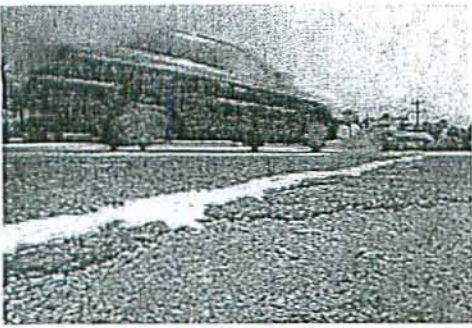


Photo: Traffic roars past the cracked and sagging shoulder of William Hilton Parkway near Shelter Cove Lane on Tuesday. Part of the proposed sales-tax increase for transportation improvements would go toward repaving the stretch of road from Squire Pope Road to Sea Pines Circle.

Jay Karr/*The Island Packet*

[Enlarge Image](#)

[Buy This Photo](#)

If voters approve the plan, the county would collect the sales tax for six years or until it takes in \$150.6 million, whichever comes first.

In all, about \$83 million worth of road improvements would be made in southern Beaufort County. The rest would go toward northern Beaufort County road projects.

This is the county's third attempt since 2002 to seek road upgrades by asking voters to raise the sales tax. Although two similar referendums failed in recent years, supporters hope the area's escalating traffic woes will help convince voters to approve the tax increase.

"Each election has a new set of circumstances," said Kubic.

In 2004, voters narrowly rejected a sales-tax increase for roads and other facilities. The effort failed by 140 votes out of more than 53,000 cast.

Rose Hill resident Paul Coe is among those who voted against the 1 percent increase in 2004. He plans to vote the same way in November because he thinks the county did not do enough planning to prevent the traffic problems the area is experiencing.

"I would have preferred they planned for this," said Coe, who commutes to Windmill Harbour's marina for work. "That's what governments are supposed to do.

"To me it's not the money, it's the principle."

Former Hilton Head town councilman Bruce Fairchild was among the residents who pushed for the sales-tax increase in 2004 as a member of the county's sales-tax commission. He's hopeful that the area's growing traffic problems will convince voters to support the measure this time.

"It should be very apparent to people that the problems have only gotten worse and that if we don't do it now there's no other solution to our traffic problems on the horizon," Fairchild said.

Contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

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tacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, August 07, 2006 10:17 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Editorial: Rezoning rationale shows flaw in council thinking

## Rezoning rationale shows flaw in council thinking

### County should make such decisions part of regional plan

Published Saturday, August 5, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

When one of the strongest arguments for a rezoning is that it's the lesser of two evils, then we need to step back and try again.

That seemed to be the major rationale for rezoning property on Barrel Landing Road from light industrial to a planned unit development. The change allowed a car dealership to go on the site near the intersection of U.S. 278 and S.C. 170, something not allowed under the light industrial designation.

Beaufort County Council voted 5-3, with two members abstaining, for the change on the property next to the county's Barrel Landing open space. One of the arguments for the change was that the light industrial use allowed a truck dealership, which would be more problematic than a car dealership with some agreed-to restrictions.

Is this the best we can do? Why are we rezoning property outside the context of the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan? One of its main components going forward is for the county and the towns of Hilton Head Island and Bluffton to come up with a joint land use plan for areas still uncommitted on development.

Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton is right. If the light industrial zoning is wrong for that site, then rezone it, but do so in the context of figuring out what's best for the area and the county's commitment to protecting the sensitive headwaters of the Okatie River. Don't rezone it to a use that is slightly less bad than the existing zoning. We need better planning leadership than that.

We spent \$1.2 million for the 31-acre Barrel Landing property and spent \$7.1 million for 117 acres on the Okatie River on the other side of U.S. 278. A master plan for a park there connects the two sites with a trail underneath the bridge on 278.

We spent \$220,000 on the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan. Let's follow it.

It makes you wonder if County Council secretly wants its road sales tax referendum to fail in November. This may not be the make-or-break decision for voting against the sales tax that the nearby Graves property rezoning was for many voters in 2004. But added to other decisions, such as rezoning an island on the Whale Branch River against the advice of planning staff and the county Planning Commission, it could tip the scales.

There are still two votes to go on this rezoning and two council members who abstained from voting at the July 24 meeting. There's still time to do this right.

County Council members need to demonstrate they're taking a big picture view and not the path of least resistance.

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8/7/2006

Stacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Tuesday, August 01, 2006 10:15 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BG: Editorial: Infrastructure funding is at a critical juncture

## Infrastructure funding is at a critical juncture It's time to think about gas-tax increase

Published Tue, Aug 1, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

The battle for infrastructure dollars is likely to increase in intensity before state and county needs are met. It indicates that Beaufort and other tourist destination counties are being caught in the squeeze, but it offers fodder for the next legislative session.

A recent decision by the State Infrastructure Bank to loan the S.C. Department of Transportation \$93 million to widen a 6-mile section of U.S. 17 instead of a grant to complete the \$221 million, 22-mile project is indicative of the billions of dollars of underfinanced needs. Bolstering that is Beaufort County's decision to include \$5 million of a proposed \$152 million November referendum to help offset the \$19 million deficit for the U.S. 17 project. The council had choose between the U.S. 17 project and a bus project to help eliminate traffic on U.S. 278.

Soon after the infrastructure bank was opened, money ran out, and the bank came back with stipulations that counties that wanted money would have to contribute about 25 percent of a project's costs. Beaufort County participated in the widening of S.C. 170 in order to complete the project based on need rather than the availability of state funds.

The Department of Transportation Web site reports that South Carolina has the fourth-largest state-maintained road system in the country but less money available per mile for maintenance than any other state. South Carolina has more than \$3 billion in road and bridge needs, and 22 percent of the 8,300 are obsolete or deficient.

SCDOT Director of Administration Michael Covington has said over the past few years that the state would need a \$300 million annual increase in maintenance funds to move from last to 49th in care of roads. Adjusted for growth and inflation the state would have allocated \$801 million a year in 1991 instead of the \$510 million this year, he told The Times and Democrat of Orangeburg last month. DOT Executive Director Elizabeth Mabry has called for a 10-year plan that would increase funding to \$1 billion a year.

This is an indication that lawmakers should examine other avenues to finance infrastructure, including increasing the gasoline tax removing the artificial ceiling on the automobile sales tax, initiating local-option gas taxes in tourism communities and indexing other highway user fees. These are but a few ways to raise necessary highway funds without a general tax increase.

Sen. Scott Richardson, R-Hilton Head Island, over the years has been a proponent of increasing the gasoline tax. His caveat has been: "Do we have the political will to do it?"

Many in South Carolina share the sentiment that increasing the 16-cent-per-gallon gasoline tax is the right thing to do. Among those have been the chambers of commerce in Beaufort and neighboring counties. Other states have enacted higher gas taxes to pay for infrastructure. Washington State in early July instituted the second of four gas-tax hikes by 2015 that over 16 years should raise \$8.5 billion to finance road construction, according to the American Public Transportation Association.

As has been said here before, Beaufort, Horry, Charleston, York and several other counties are major tourist attractions in addition to being fast-growing areas. Beaufort County was the fastest-growing South Carolina county, according to the 2000 census. The coastal plain is expected to grow by about 500,000 people in the next 20 years. Overall, South Carolina's population is expected to grow by a million people, according to the Strom Thurmond Institute.

Tremendous growth in population, as well as in the number of tourists, over the past decade has had a significant impact on traffic congestion. The county grew by almost 40 percent in the 1990s, recording a population of 120,937 in the 2000 census. Projections are that this pace will continue.

When dollars are scarce, lawmakers must look to ways of funding the need. Infrastructure funding is at a critical juncture in South Carolina.

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-- James Cagney

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2006 9:52 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Public meetings

## Public meetings

Published Monday, July 31, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

for the week of July 31 to Aug. 4.

Town of Hilton Head Island

Today

Public Application Review

**Time/Where:** 10 a.m., conference room 4, Town Hall.

**Agenda:** Includes expansion of a day-care center at 10 Oak Park; redevelopment and widening of a boardwalk at Hilton Head Resort; redevelopment of the Holiday Inn Oceanfront for multifamily residential use; upgrading the pool deck at landscaping at Hilton Head Marriott in Palmetto Dunes.

**For the Web:** [www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov).

Tuesday

Town Council

**Time/Where:** 4 p.m., council chambers, Town Hall.

**Agenda:** Includes revisions to the moderate-income housing program; a resolution to adopt the Southern Beaufort County Long-Term Plan; conceptual plan of Compass Rose Park and the efforts of the Sea Pines Company and the Community Foundation to enhance the park with artwork recognizing the 50th anniversary of Sea Pines; endorsement of the proposed Beaufort County transportation sales tax referendum on the November ballot; final approval for changes to business-use law for rentals properties.

**For the Web:** [www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov).

Beaufort County

Thursday

Board of Education

**Time/Where:** 4 p.m., Beaufort County Council Chambers, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort.

**Agenda:** Includes a closed-door session from 4 to 6 p.m. to discuss student appeals and receive legal advice on contractual matters, followed by public discussion of a Grounds Maintenance Service appropriation request, television production equipment for Beaufort High School, the establishment of an internal service fund, the adoption of an

7/31/2006

asset protection policy and the district's International Baccalaureate program.

**On the Web:** [www.beaufort.k12.sc.us](http://www.beaufort.k12.sc.us).

Town of Bluffton

Wednesday

Hospitality Tax Committee

**When/Where:** 3 p.m., Bluffton Town Hall, 20 Bridge St.

**Agenda:** Review of funding requests made by the Bluffton Historical Preservation Society, Bluffton Eagles Community Action Committee and Bluffton Old Town Merchants Society.

**On the Web:** [www.townofbluffton.com](http://www.townofbluffton.com).

Historic Preservation Commission

**When/Where:** 6 p.m., Bluffton Town Hall, 20 Bridge St.

**Agenda:** Conceptual reviews of three Calhoun Street Promenade buildings.

**On the Web:** [www.townofbluffton.com](http://www.townofbluffton.com).

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-- James Cagney

tacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2006 9:50 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Letter: Zoning vote not best for public

## Zoning vote not best for public

Published Monday, July 31, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

to the Packet:

Where is the common sense and fiduciary responsibility to the citizenry to serve and protect the safety and well-being of the community?

On July 24, after voting to discard the proposed U.S. 278 bus program (reduce auto traffic and offer public transportation), the Beaufort County Council voted to approve a zoning violation to allow a planned unit development for a new Chevrolet dealership at Barrel Landing near McGarvey's Corner.

The area, designated as "light industrial" by statute, prohibits this type of construction. However, with a "wink and a nod," ambiguous promises, et al., prompted the exception over law.

Where is the accountability when actions taken are counter to public interests and tacit commitments to further reduce congestion?

Opposing council members suggested a zoning change that would not change the spots on the leopard. Regrettably, one can only imagine that south of the Broad River continues racing to a megalopolis state of mind.

Lesse Iverson

Wilmington Head Island

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Friday, July 28, 2006 4:32 PM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BG: State to accept loan for U.S. 17 widening project

## State to accept loan for U.S. 17 widening project Transportation Department looking for ways to pay back borrowing

Published Fri, Jul 28, 2006

By GREG HAMBRICK  
The Beaufort Gazette

 [Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

The State Department of Transportation will use a \$93 million loan to widen a dangerous, 6-mile stretch of U.S. 17 through Beaufort County but still doesn't have the money to pay it back.

The state renewed plans for the \$221 million widening of 22 miles of U.S. 17 following a March 2004 Navy bus accident that killed three sailors near Big Estate Road. Thirty-four people have died since 1997 on the two-lane stretch from Gardens Corner to Jacksonboro in Colleton County.

The state had pinned its hopes on a \$138 million aid application that was rejected this month by the State Infrastructure Bank, a state program that provides financing for large road projects. Instead, the bank board offered a \$93 million loan to widen the 6 miles through Beaufort that the Transportation Department considers the most dangerous stretch.

"What we haven't got worked out is how we're going to pay for it," said John Hardee, Beaufort's Transportation Commission representative.

The department has \$74 million for the project, \$19 million short of the money needed to pay back the loan. The commission has scoured department sources, but limited federal dollars has made spending tight this year.

"The money is allocated to other areas," Hardee said Thursday following a commission meeting. "If we took that money, every one of those (projects) would be affected."

The department also is hoping to secure additional money to purchase the right of way necessary for widening the full 22 miles before work on the first phase begins, Hardee said, potentially through another Infrastructure Bank application or through the legislature.

But there's strong opposition in the Statehouse to paying for Transportation Department needs out of the general fund, Sen. Scott Richardson, R-Hilton Head Island, said Thursday.

With a lack of money for many worthwhile highway needs statewide, Richardson said money for U.S. 17 would open the door to a laundry list of road projects looking for legislative aid.

"Our better chance is to get to some realistic number on what the gas tax should be," he said.

As prices at the pump climb, Richardson said he expects a struggle in raising the state's 16-cent gas tax, which is one of the lowest in the Southeast.

"The legislature has got to deal with this and say, look, this is how we fund our highways," he said.

After already providing \$2 million for the road widening last year through developer fees charged for road improvements, the Beaufort County Council also has added \$5 million for U.S. 17 to a project list for a 1 cent sales tax referendum to go before voters in November. Final approval of the list is expected next month.



Other money set aside for the widening project includes \$60 million the Transportation Department has agreed to put toward long-term borrowing, \$10 million from a federal earmark, \$200,000 from the Lowcountry Council of Governments and \$2 million not spent in the Transportation Department budget.

Contact Greg Hambrick at 986-5548 or [ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com). To comment: [beaufortgazette.com](http://beaufortgazette.com).

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— James Cagney

Stacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Friday, July 28, 2006 4:41 PM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BT: Thurs. 7/28/06: Editorial: LRTA makes best of bad situation

**We say ... LRTA makes best of bad situation** Tommy Heyward has a refreshingly thoughtful attitude about the fact that his organization has been overlooked by the Beaufort County Council.

As chairman of the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority, Heyward had every right to be outraged that the council voted to remove funding for the LRTA from the proposed sales tax referendum project list.

In fact, we were outraged. The council seems to be under the impression that it can pave its way out of the local traffic mess. That is impossible, of course.

There are simply too many cars on the road now, and more will be coming in the near future. So of course the referendum should include money for public transportation; it should include even more than the \$5 million that the council struck from the original list.

Rather than get angry about the council's flawed reasoning, however, Heyward and others at LRTA did something we all should do more often: they decided to make the best of an awkward situation.

While the LRTA awaits proper funding from the public, Heyward said the organization will use the time to "make sure we have a good, strong business plan in place so we can support what we want to do." As currently structured, the LRTA primarily transports people long distances to and from work in southern Beaufort County. The organization's plan is to make the service a legitimate option for other, shorter commutes, to get some traffic off U.S. 278.

That plan will require a detailed marketing campaign and different route structures. And that's exactly what the LRTA is spending its energy on, until it gets the money to make it all happen.

What a remarkable example they're setting. No finger-pointing, no whining, no ego-building – just an effort to make the best of an unfortunate situation.

Touché, LRTA.

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Lucy Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Thursday, July 27, 2006 9:51 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BT: Thurs. LRTA numbers

## LRTA says cuts might not be a bad thing

BY COLITA HUCKABY  
BLUFFTON TODAY

One might assume the people most upset about the Beaufort County Council's decision to remove their \$5 million piece from the proposed sale referendum project list would be the folks at the LRTA. You'd be wrong.

The money would have been spent on furthering the development of a U.S. 278 short-range bus system.

But Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority Chairman Tommy Heyward isn't upset that the council left the project off the funding list.

"I admit I was ticked when I first heard the project had been taken off the list but the more I thought about it, the more I thought it might be a good thing," Heyward said during the monthly meeting of the agency's board of directors Wednesday afternoon.

The \$5 million would have been a "one-shot deal," as Heyward described it.

"This gives us time to make sure we have a good, strong business plan in place so we can support what we want to do," the chairman said.

Almost a dozen speakers asked the council on Monday to support the public transit system. While individual members of the council echoed that support, none made the motion to put the item back on the \$152 million list they hope voters will support in November.

Lowcountry Council of Governments employee Ginnie Kozak, working with consultants from Jordan, Jones and Goulding, presented an initial draft of a U.S. 278 bus service system which follows earlier studies recommending a more intensive route system than the existing one.

The bus system currently serves primarily to bring workers from four other counties to work in southern Beaufort County.

The recommendations call for 17 stops along a 26.8-mile stretch from the Shelter Cove Mall on Hilton Head Island to the Coastal Carolina Medical Center in Hardeeville near the I 95 intersection.

According to the study, the route could serve 6,000 jobs and 3,000 homes directly and 1,000 additional jobs and 22,000 additional homes indirectly.

Estimated start-up and operational costs range from \$1.9 million for a limited-service system to \$6 million for a more elaborate system.

"The problem is, and is always going to be, money," said Heyward. "That's why we need a detailed business plan to outline how we can do this."

Kozak will continue to work with LRTA Director Rochelle Ferguson to develop plans.

The agency is already at work on a new marketing campaign to increase riders for the system, which began in 1978.

### LRTA numbers

In January, the LRTA's 25 buses logged 82,788 miles traveling the Lowcountry's highways, carrying 14,227 passengers one-

way.

In February, those numbers declined slightly, to 78,486 miles and 13,379 one-way passenger trips.

Overall, ridership increased 11 percent in the past eight months (as of February) over the previous fiscal year. In 2005, 209,000

people rode the bus, an increase of 37 percent over the year before.

### Who rides the bus

The Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority carries much of Hilton Head's workforce to work from their homes in Allendale, Hampton, Colleton, Jasper and Beaufort counties.

### Where the buses go

The farthest stops on the LRTA's routes are in the towns of Ruffin and Allendale which are 68 and 79 miles, respectively, from the LRTA's Bluffton base.

For more information or to check out the various bus schedules, go to [www.gotohhi.com/bus/](http://www.gotohhi.com/bus/)

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-- James Cagney


Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 26, 2006 11:53 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BG: Letter: Vote for candidates who help taxpayers

## Vote for candidates who help taxpayers

Published Wed, Jul 26, 2006

 [Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

The Developer's Handbook is an interesting manual:

- Find rural land with limited roads and infrastructure, and buy it cheap.
- Get roads and infrastructure built. Never pay for it yourself.
- Convince local/state officials that a crisis exists, and the taxpayers must quickly fund improvements.
- Obtain the densest zoning possible, fill up the development to the point that a real crisis does exist, and get the taxpayers to build more infrastructure, schools and roads.
- Buy the undeveloped land next door and start the process over again.

This time-tested method has worked for years all over America. It will continue to work as long as developers have complacent government officials and ignorant and apathetic taxpayers who believe it when they are told it is being done for their benefit. There are some places where people are beginning to wake up. They are requiring developers to have completed roads and infrastructure in place, as well as donated land for schools and hospitals before the first lot is sold.

We are told that Beaufort County needs hundreds of millions in new tax revenue to make up for the mistakes of the past. Let's not compound the problem by accepting business as usual. Vote for candidates who will pass strong regulations that require new developments to address environmental and traffic impact problems and pay their own way. We have a chance for change in the up-coming elections: ask the candidates how they stand on these issues. Vote for people who will work for you, not the developers.

Jim Dickson

St. Helena Island

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Stacy Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Tuesday, July 25, 2006 10:01 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BT: Tues. 7/25/0-6: Referendum

## NEWS Bus system still missing from ballot

Car dealership at McGarvey's Corner moves forward.

By LOLITA HUCKABY

STAFFTON TODAY

Nearly a dozen citizens asked the Beaufort County Council on Monday to reconsider a \$5 million sales tax allocation for increased public transportation.

Like the council members, while agreeing they supported public transportation, didn't do it.

Instead, they gave the second of three necessary votes of approval to a \$152 million sales tax referendum project list which includes nothing for public transportation.

The referendum will be on the Nov. 7 general election ballot.

"This list can still change but right now, this is where we are," Council Chairman Weston Newton said at the conclusion of the one-hour public hearing.

Newton said the entire list of 10 projects might not be supported by everyone, "but I can only ask you if you're satisfied with the roads the way they are today, and I don't think anyone will say they are," he said. "This is our chance to do something about them." The list of items originally contained \$5 million for public transit but it was removed by the county engineering staff in favor of funding for a U.S. 17 widening project.

The \$5 million would have been used to implement a Lowcountry Council of Governments study which called for more Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority buses and routes with more frequent stops.

County Councilman Dick Stewart of Beaufort spoke against including the public transportation dollars.

"I'm totally in support of public transportation but it has to be reliable, efficient and we have to know how it's going to be maintained after we get it started," Stewart said. "I'm not in favor of throwing some money at it. ... I want to make sure if we're going to have a public transportation system, we do it right." The council heard from several speakers concerned about a proposal to increase transportation, recreation and library impact fees in northern Beaufort County, although county planners haven't established what that increase will be.

The council also voted 5-3, with Starletta Hairston and Gerald Dawson abstaining, to give the first vote of approval to rezone seven acres at

Harrel Landing near McGarvey's Corner to support a car dealership. Voting against were Newton, Herbert Glaze and Skeet Von Harten.

The Planning Commission and Planning Department recommended against the rezoning even though the developer has agreed to a number of special conditions including an expanded riverfront buffer and a prohibition against outdoor speakers, bright lights and marketing banners.

"Unfortunately, your concerns (against the rezoning) come too late. This area has already gone commercial," Councilman Frank Brafman of

Hilton Head told the three citizens who spoke out against the rezoning. Two years ago, Brafman opposed the rezoning from rural to commercial of a parcel one mile east on U.S. 278. He called the situation "unfortunate, but that's the way it is."

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## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 25, 2006 9:30 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP & BG: U.S. 17 widening added, bus program dropped from road list

### U.S. 17 widening added, bus program dropped from road list

#### County Council pushes for sales tax increase to fund projects

BY GREG HAMBRICK, *The Beaufort Gazette*

Published Tuesday, July 25, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BLUFFTON -- The Beaufort County Council gave the second of three required approvals Monday for a \$152 million sales tax referendum expected to go before voters in November.

The plan does not include a proposed bus program on U.S. 278. Instead, the council is using \$5 million to fund part of the widening of U.S. 17.

The referendum to add 1 cent to the sales tax follows two attempts to raise money for roads and other capital needs that voters rejected in 2002 and 2004. County Council Chairman Weston Newton stressed that the sales tax increase is an alternative to raising property taxes. "We have limited ways in which we can raise money," he said.

The list was modified last week to add \$5 million for widening U.S. 17 after the state Department of Transportation noted it was \$19 million short in funding the six-mile stretch from Gardens Corner to the Combahee River. Though several residents asked the council to add back \$5 million for the bus program, the council did not act on the request.

Other projects on the list include improvements to U.S. 278 from Sea Pines Circle to S.C. 170, the Bluffton Parkway and S.C. 170.

Also Monday, council members were at odds on a proposed planned unit development for a car dealership at Barrel Landing near McGarvey's Corner. The proposed Chevrolet dealership is requesting the special zoning designation to allow car sales, which is prohibited in the light industrial area. The council voted 5-3 to approve the development because of developer concessions that council members feel will make the project less intrusive.

Newton, Vice Chairman Skeet Von Harten and Councilman Herbert Glaze opposed the measure, suggesting a better option would be to plan the use for the project regionally, possibly through rezoning.

The council also voted, 8-0, to sell the old jail property in downtown Beaufort to Hilton Head Island development firm Gumbo Limbo for \$511,000.

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Shirley Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Monday, July 24, 2006 10:24 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BT: Sun. 7/23/06: Is it worth another penny of sales tax?

## News Is it worth another penny of sales tax?

Speak out Monday on the roads referendum.

BY LOLITA HUCKABY  
BLUFFTONTODAY

When Beaufort County voters rejected a 1 percent sales tax referendum for transportation projects in 2004, county officials warned they'd be back. And they are, compiling a new list of projects to present to the voters this November. Again, they plan to ask voters to raise the sales tax to finance road projects.

"We don't have a lot of choice when it comes to financing road projects, aside from counting on the state and federal budgets for assistance," County Council Chairman Weston Newton said recently.

In 2004, the council appointed six citizens to compile a list of transportation projects to present to the public.

The list of 33 projects, to be funded with a \$122 million bond sale over five years, was rejected by 50.9 percent of those who voted— 141 votes out of passage.

This year, the council directed the engineering department to come up with a list of high priorities, using the top projects identified in the Capital Improvement Program for southern and northern Beaufort County.

The CIP list has been blessed by the Beaufort Area Transportation Group, which is made up of county and municipal elected representatives plus Sheriff P.J. Tanner, Beaufort County Transportation Committee Chairman Joe Harden and Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority Chairman Thomas Heyward. The list has also been approved by the county's four municipalities.

This Monday's County Council meeting in Bluffton, the council has scheduled a 6 p.m. public hearing where citizens will have an opportunity to comment on the list. The hearing will be in the large meeting room of the Bluffton Library, 120 Palmetto Way.

The council is then scheduled to give the second of three votes on whether to present the sales-tax choice to voters on the Nov. 7 general election ballot.

The ordinance calls for a 1 percent sales tax to support a bond of \$147 million to be raised over six years or less.

As of Tuesday, the council's Public Services Committee endorsed a list of projects now totaling \$150 million. To match that figure, a council majority would need to amend the ordinance. The proposed \$3 million increase reflects the latest review of available state, federal and impact-fee money for the projects on the list, said Colin Kinton, county traffic and transportation engineer.

The latest edition adds money to resurface U.S. 278/William Hilton Parkway through the town of Hilton Head Island and improve Squire Pope Road's intersection with the highway. The Hilton Head Island Town Council requested the additions.

No longer on the list is \$5 million for planning and operation of a countywide public transit system expanding upon Lowcountry Rural Transportation Authority operations.

Its place is \$5 million for the county's portion of the U.S. 17 widening project from Garden's Corner to the Colleton County line. The project is a top priority for the S.C. Department of Transportation but the state agency is currently facing a \$19 million shortfall for the work.

"Any sales tax increase is an uphill challenge for elected officials but the majority of complaints we receive from the public is related to our roads. This is our effort to do something about them," Newton said.

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Monday, July 24, 2006 10:15 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BT:Mon. 7/14/06: Editorial: We say ... County, voters need to listen to each other

## We say ... County, voters need to listen to each other

We're not sure the scattergun approach to fixing our county's road problems works.

After all, it's been tried twice before and failed both times. But county officials seem determined to do it again, although they're not doing it as much of it this time.

The county hopes to raise more money this fall with a new 1-cent sales tax than they estimated they'd need when the penny tax was last voted down in 2004.

Then, it was \$122 million for 33 projects. Today, officials say they'll need \$147 million for 10.

Road improvements are obviously needed. We don't know anyone who disagrees with that. But there has to be a reason the plan failed twice before.

We're betting there were actually two reasons: Voters didn't listen to county officials, and county officials didn't listen to voters.

Tonight's County Council meeting offers another chance for the county to explain its position and road-fixing list.

The county needs to proceed carefully.

There is much to be gained by speaking with, not at, residents.

Perhaps more importantly, tonight's meeting offers citizens a chance to tell their elected officials why they like—or detest, perhaps—parts of the plan.

The proposed road tax, as it's now constituted, includes 10 projects, a couple of which are in Bluffton.

Oddly, the county removed from its plan one thing that might really help decrease traffic on our roads—\$5 million for a countywide public transit system. If we're saying we're going whole-hog on this referendum, why not go whole-hog and leave it in?

The council's road referendum discussion begins at 6 p.m. tonight at the Bluffton Library; afterwards, the council is scheduled to give the referendum's road list the second of three needed votes to place it on the Nov. 7 general election ballot.

In November, you can only vote yes or no. Tonight, you can do more.

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Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, July 24, 2006 10:02 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BT: Mon. 7/24/06: Road referendum highlights today's County Council meeting

## Road referendum highlights today's County Council meeting

### BY LOLITA HUCKABY BLUFFTON TODAY

The proposed \$150 million sales tax referendum road list, possible increased impact fees and a rezoning for property near McGarvey's Corner highlights Beaufort County Council's agenda this afternoon. The County Council, which will meet at the Bluffton Library, hasn't met as a body since last month. The Public Service Committee, which met last week, blessed the list of 10 road projects to present to the full council for consideration. The latest draft, as prepared by the county engineering staff, includes \$5 million for the widening of U.S. 17 and \$6 million for a proposed \$6 million countywide mass public transit system. The council will also conduct a public hearing on a proposal to increase transportation, park and library impact fees in southern Beaufort County, although the exact amount of the increase is not known. The county already charges the fees county-wide but the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan identifies a \$232 million shortfall in infrastructure improvement funds. Increasing the fees, which were imposed in 1999, was recommended as one way to pay for the projects. The rezoning request comes from owners of 7.14 acres at McGarvey's Corner who want to build a Chevrolet dealership. The project requires a rezoning from Light Industrial to Planned Unit Development. The rezoning was recommended by the Council's Land Management Committee. The County Council's meeting begins at 4 p.m. with the public hearing on impact fees and the sales tax referendum list at 6 p.m.

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Monday, July 24, 2006 9:51 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BG: LEtter: Prosecute the council for misuse of taxes

## Prosecute the council for misuse of taxes

Published Sun, Jul 23, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

Last year the Beaufort County Council mandated a 1-cent entertainment tax to override the public vote against a road tax. The council now has mandated future road projects to include pay for experts to develop plans for a northern bypass, while planning the next 1-cent sales tax increase. The proposed northern bypass was planned by a group of experts. I have a picture of that plan given to me by a council member two years ago following a heated debate concerning passage of a planned unit development ordinance. The ordinance had no protection for existing neighborhoods. There is still no protection from development for existing neighborhoods.

The destruction of a neighborhood to develop the U.S. 21/S.C. 802 bypass is demonstrating what has been happening over time elsewhere in this county and what will follow if building a northern bypass is pursued. The U.S. 21 bypass will alter a neighborhood; a northern bypass will affect many neighborhoods -- just as every new development has done. Small islands will become bridge footings. Most likely Dataw Island will be preserved and served by the northern bypass, but not so for small neighborhoods standing in the way of bypass development. Brickyard Point will be devastated. Living things in the way of road development will be mowed down. Homeowners will not be excluded from this destruction, as the county's action in the U.S. 21 bypass proves, and as does the Beaufort mayor's flippant attitude toward the traffic concerns of the citizens of Sunset Bluff, citizens who are expected to sacrifice their safety on behalf of corporate development and city annexation plans.

Taxes in essence are a kind of insurance, the exchange of citizen dollars for the government's promise to preserve life, order and democracy. The government continues to squander tax dollars on experts who prove nothing except that the government will do as it chooses, even if that means practicing tyranny by using tax dollars to destroy my home, life and peace of mind or that of my neighbors.

I cannot trust a council that discovers after the fact that it has voted for a road project mandate that it did not understand or read before the vote was taken. The council members responsible for the U.S. 21 bypass should be prosecuted for thievery since they have wasted my money by using it to destroy my neighbors' peace.

Sally Drumm

Beaufort

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, July 24, 2006 8:49 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP & BG: Decision on U.S. 17 permits expected soon

## Decision on U.S. 17 permits expected soon

BY GREG HAMBRICK, *The Beaufort Gazette*  
Published Sunday, July 23, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BEAUFORT -- State transportation officials are expecting word this week on permits to widen a dangerous 22-mile stretch of U.S. 17 through the Lowcountry as they continue to struggle to find most of the financing for the \$221 million project.

The state renewed plans to widen the highway following a March 2004 Navy-bus crash that killed three sailors near Big state Road. Thirty-four people have died since 1997 on the two-lane stretch from Gardens Corner in Beaufort County to Jacksonboro in Colleton County.

The state Department of Transportation had pinned most hopes for funding on a \$138 million aid application with the state Infrastructure Bank, a state program that provides financing for large road projects. But the bank board voted last month to offer only a \$93 million loan that department officials say they can't pay back.

Last week, Beaufort County officials approved adding \$5 million for the widening project to a proposed 1 percent sales-tax referendum for road projects that will go before voters in November. The Beaufort County Council will give the second of three required votes on the list Monday. The money would go toward advancing a \$93 million first leg of the project, widening the six miles of U.S. 17 through Beaufort County.

U.S. 17 had been left off the county's planned referendum list in early discussions because of expectations the money could be found elsewhere. But the bank board's decision forced the Transportation Department to return to the county for help.

Existing money for the project still leaves department officials short \$19 million, not including the proposed referendum money from Beaufort County.

Project coordinator Wilson Elgin said the Transportation Department could use the available money to break the project into smaller pieces or to pay for early needs of the full project in hopes that additional money comes later. The department also may return to the State Infrastructure Bank board for reconsideration or with a different funding request.

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Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Friday, July 21, 2006 10:49 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Editorial: Keep U.S. 278 bus idea on sales tax project list

## Keep U.S. 278 bus idea on sales tax project list

### Service could be important part of getting cars off busy highway

Published Friday, July 21, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Beaufort County officials were thinking a bit outside the box (for around here) when they included \$6 million for fixed bus routes along U.S. 278 in a list of road projects.

Getting cars off the congested highway through public transportation is a good idea, and it recognizes that we can't just build our way out of this traffic mess.

So, it was disturbing to see county staff remove it from the list of projects to be paid for with a proposed 1 percent local sales tax. The idea lost out to giving more money to a project to widen a 22-mile stretch of U.S. 17 in northern Beaufort County, county engineer Colin Kinton said.

The bus service needs to get back on the list.

As envisioned, the service would offer 19 regularly scheduled stops along U.S. 278 from Jasper County to The Mall at Shelter Cove on Hilton Head Island. The County Council's Public Services Committee approved a \$147 million list that included the bus service in early June.

But when a revised list came up for a vote Tuesday, the bus service was gone. The committee approved the list 4-0, but three of the four members said after the meeting that they didn't realize the bus money was off the list when they voted.

An aside, but an important one: Is it too much to ask that officials read what they're voting on before they vote? Staff put the list in committee members' hands just before it came up in the meeting, but council members could have stopped to read it or they could have delayed voting. And staff should do a better job of getting important materials to council members before a vote.

We hope the council members noticed other things about the list, including that it now totals \$152 million for the projects, instead of \$147 million. The difference comes from a lot of numbers shifting among the projects in addition to dropping the bus service idea at \$6 million and adding the U.S. 17 funding at \$5 million.

The biggest swing comes with the group of projects associated with U.S. 278 improvements from Sea Pines Circle to S.C. 170. That estimate jumped from \$13 million to \$28 million and includes the addition of two projects on Hilton Head that had not been on the list before. Repaving William Hilton Parkway and improving the parkway's intersection with Squire Pope Road were estimated earlier to cost \$6.7 million.

Another big shift was the estimate for the Bluffton Parkway extension from Burnt Church Road toward the bridges to Hilton Head, which dropped from \$60 million to \$50 million.

The \$5 million allocated by staff for U.S. 17 is a pittance in the estimated \$221 million cost of the project. The State Infrastructure Bank recently offered a \$93 million loan to the state Department of Transportation for the project. The department had asked for a \$90 million grant and a \$48 million loan for the widening project, putting the department in a

pressure to come up with money for the project.

But we have to question putting sales tax money toward U.S. 17 now, especially at the expense of relief for U.S. 278. Recently released state traffic counts for 2005 show trips were up 19.7 percent -- from 19,300 in 2004 to 23,100 in 2005 -- on U.S. 278 from the Jasper County line to S.C. 170. Counts were up 17.5 percent-- from 34,800 in 2004 to 40,900 in 2005 -- on U.S. 278 from S.C. 170 to S.C. 46.

On U.S. 17, counts were down 2.6 percent -- from 11,700 in 2004 to 11,400 in 2005 -- from Gardens Corner to the Colleton County line.

I don't dispute the safety value of widening U.S. 17, but we're fairly confident the county can put in place a bus service faster than officials can find money to finish the U.S. 17 project. Councilman Mark Generales said he would move to return the bus service to the project list at County Council's meeting Monday, when a public hearing on the list is scheduled.

Let's keep rolling on the bus idea.

Kathleen Larson, Public Information Officer  
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*Stand in the light, plant your feet and tell the truth.*  
-- James Cagney

Stacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Friday, July 21, 2006 10:08 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BT: Fri. 7/21/06: oe Croley column

He says ...

## It pays to have low expectations

When life is fair, I will start making a living from winning sucker bets with the editor of this paper. He, being an optimist, will jump on a bet that less than 10 people show up to voice their opinions at the two public hearings to be held Monday in the Bluffton Library.

Although public hearings only occur after the County Council has already twice said "yes" to the issue at hand, and the chances of them changing their minds are minuscule, they, by law, have to have them.

Anyway, almost everyone in Beaufort County has an opinion on these subjects: Should the county increase impact and development fees, then impose a 1 percent capital sales tax for road and infrastructure improvements?

On the first issue, for southern Beaufort County increasing the fees is somewhat like telling the gorged fox as it comes out of your now barren hen house, that the next time he does this it will cost him.

Foxes, being natural predators, will just move on to the closest populated hen house (Jasper County). We are just about out of hens and land south of the Broad River.

Once the city of Beaufort and the towns of Port Royal and Yemassee finish annexing all the property they currently have their greedy little eyes on, there will not be much land where the increase in fees would even apply.

Nevertheless, go ahead and increase those fees if it clears your conscience.

Next up to bat, facing an 0-2 count, is the ever-popular local capital sales tax increase. As usual, the proposed projects are spread out all over the county map, probably once again in hopes of appeasing those feeling neglected because they haven't received their share of the pork pie.

Most of them are the same projects proposed in the last two defeated sales tax referendums. Why didn't they go after the root cause of them – uncontrolled development – and attempt to raise the development and impact fees after each defeat?

If nothing else, this current County Council has a wonderful sense of comedic timing. They just passed a budget increasing our property taxes, after we recently approved a school referendum to borrow about \$44 million caused by the above-mentioned foxes, and they want us to approve a rural and critical land referendum for \$50 million because we don't have any open space left. In addition, the promise of another school referendum looms for 2007.

So let's try it again with the capital sales tax, to make the taxpayers ante up for the lopsided development agreements of the past.

No wonder not one eligible incumbent was renominated.

In the meantime, this November ballot is sure to make me want to take the "over" percentage on the next bet with the editor for possible turnout. Since I doubt I will have to take off my shoes and socks to count over 10 at the meeting, you can contact me at

[Whenlifeisfair@hargray.com](mailto:Whenlifeisfair@hargray.com)

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acy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Friday, July 21, 2006 9:36 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BG: City OKs greener city hall

## City OKs greener city hall \$85 million changes are eco-friendly

Published Fri, Jul 21, 2006

JASON RYAN

Beaufort Gazette

Comments (0) [Add Comment](#)

Beaufort's new city hall and police department will be a friend to the environment, the City Council decided Thursday, voting 4-0 to install energy saving materials in the \$14.5 million complex to be built at the intersection of Ribaut Road and Boundary Street.

The council was convinced by architects that green features -- such as an irrigation system that uses recycled rainwater, thickened insulation and better heating and air systems -- would also save the city money on utility bills.

Hollis Architecture of Charleston suggested the improvements so the city hall and police department could achieve a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design designation from the U.S. Green Building Council.

But the council was only interested in the merits of the designation, not the designation itself and voted to forgo about \$20,000 of paperwork in order to receive the official certification.

"I don't care about putting a plaque on the wall, an 'atta boy,'" said Councilman Gary Fordham.

The approximately \$385,000 price tag for the design modifications would also call for less waste during construction and the use of eco-friendly carpets and paints.

Councilman Frank Glover was absent.

The council also gave informal approval to a list of road projects being considered for funding from a 1 percent county sales tax referendum this November.

Approved by voters, money raised by the sales tax would help pay for projects such as the widening of the J.E. McTeer Bridge, intersection changes on Boundary Street and planning and engineering for a proposed northern bypass bridge from Grays Hill to Lady's Island.

Contact Jason Ryan at 986-5532 or [jryan@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:jryan@beaufortgazette.com).

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-- James Cagney

## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 20, 2006 8:53 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BG: Briefs: Port at Port Royal, New Beaufort City Hall

### Redevelopment panel meeting

Published Thu, Jul 20, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

Port Royal Redevelopment Commission will meet at 5:30 p.m. today at Town Hall to discuss their recommendation to the Town Council about the conceptual plan approved by the S.C. State Ports Authority.

The conceptual plan will be used as a basis for a development agreement for the redevelopment of the Port of Port Royal.

### Beaufort council meets today

Published Thu, Jul 20, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

Beaufort City Council will meet at 5 p.m. today in City Hall at 302 Carteret St. to discuss energy and environmental design standards for a new city hall and police department and to discuss a list of proposed road improvements for a 1 percent sales tax referendum this November.

Details: 525-7070

Suzanne Larson, Public Information Officer  
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Lacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2006 8:46 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BG: Letter: Bypass is solution to traffic problem

## Bypass is solution to traffic problem

Published Wed, Jul 19, 2006

Comments (0) [Add Comment](#)

Local residents and the commuting public need obvious relief from the significant daily traffic problem at the S.C. 802/U.S. 21 intersection.

In months, S.C. Department of Transportation engineers repeatedly have told the county and its consultants that improving the intersection alone will not solve the problem. Current traffic patterns and already approved growth exceed that improvement as a single solution.

County consultants and the county's traffic engineer conducted the same research. They looked at the problem, projected the growth and the issue remains -- improving the intersection at Publix will not do the job. A bypass is needed in addition to the intersection improvements.

S.C. 802 will be widened to four lanes from U.S. 21 to Ribaut Road (with intersection improvements there) along with a new bridge if the one-cent sales tax referendum on the November ballot passes. These are the most significant projects on the referendum. The positive impact on the islands east of the Beaufort River are obvious.

That this neighborhood that is affected is upset is an understatement. All involved know how painful this process is. That is why the county has held special meetings to communicate to the very people who may be affected. None of this is "lip service" as The Gazette opined.

Only the U.S. 21/S.C. 802 intersection was improved, within a couple of years, the county and SCDOT would be criticized for not "planning" for the growth already approved and making the difficult decision to move forward with the bypass.

Mark Generales

County Council member

My's Island

Suzanne Larson, Public Information Officer

Beaufort County

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## Stacy Bradshaw

---

**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 19, 2006 8:24 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Bus routes not included in road plan

### Bus routes not included in road plan

BY GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*

Published Wednesday, July 19, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BEAUFORT -- When it came time to vote on a key project that eventually could improve traffic on U.S. 278, the Beaufort County Council's Public Services Committee missed the bus.

The panel voted 4-0 Tues-day to approve a revised list of road projects that could be paid for by increasing the sales tax. Missing from the list was a \$6 million plan to offer fixed bus routes along U.S. 278, which supporters say could remove hundreds of cars from the busy highway.

After the meeting, committee members were irritated when they found out the list they approved minutes earlier did not include the bus service. Councilman Mark Generales, who represents Lady's Island but commutes to work on Hilton Head Island, threw his agenda packet to the ground when he learned the project was omitted.

"We need to bring it up at council Monday," Generales said, referring to the County Council's next meeting scheduled for 4 p.m. Monday at the Bluffton library. A public hearing on the road-project list will be held beginning at 6 p.m.

"That's the disadvantage of getting something handed to you at the meeting," said Councilwoman Margaret Griffin, who didn't realize the bus service was taken off the list the committee just voted on.

The bus-service plan -- which would offer 19 regularly scheduled stops along U.S. 278 from Jasper County to The Mall at Shelter Cove -- was among the projects the Public Services Committee approved in early June. The plan would be paid for if voters approve a 1 percent increase in the sales tax in a November referendum.

The committee was scheduled to review the list again Tuesday, but members did not receive the revised list until the end of the meeting, when the item was up for discussion. After a few minutes of discussion, the committee voted to approve the new list, which only included vague descriptions of the road projects.

County traffic engineer Colin Kinton said in an interview after the meeting that the bus-service plan was removed so that the county could pitch in money to widen U.S. 17. That widening project -- which would extend from Gardens Corner in Beaufort County to Jacksonboro in Colleton County -- is in jeopardy after the State Infrastructure Bank, a resource designed to support large capital projects, recently denied a request to help pay for the project, offering only a partial loan.

But Generales, Griffin and Councilman Herbert Glaze said after the meeting they were unaware that the U.S. 17 widening project replaced the bus service on the list. Councilman Dick Stewart could not be reached for comment.

Generales said the bus service was so important that the council should consider removing planning and engineering work for a northern Beaufort bypass, which would determine the best route for a third bridge to Lady's Island.

"This is ridiculous," Generales said.

The revised project list also includes plans to repave William Hilton Parkway and improve the parkway's intersection with Squire Pope Road, which were added at the request of Hilton Head Island town officials.

can, the county hopes to collect \$152 million in sales-tax revenues if voters approve the increase. About \$84 million would go toward projects in southern Beaufort County, including extending the Bluffton Parkway from Burnt Church Road to U.S. 278 near the bridges to Hilton Head and continuing the widening of U.S. 278 from Simmonsville Road to C. 170.

Contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

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Stacy Bradshaw

---

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2006 6:41 PM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP: Online Blog: County referendum

**islandpacket.com**  
the island packet online

## islandpacket.com - The Island Packet Online

Hilton Head Island - Bluffton, SC

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

David Lauderdale Blog

### Citizens For Open Space

Submitted by [dlauderdale](#) on July 19, 2006 - 9:29am.



The following was sent to me via e-mail:

As you may know there will be a ballot referendum in November authorizing County Council to in effect continue the work of open space acquisition begun in 2000. The (now depleted) \$40m Bond Referendum resulted in the protection of over 10,000 acres of Beaufort County land.

At a recent meeting, it was proposed and agreed that citizen endorsement of our renewed effort would be advantageous. If you are willing to have your name used in conjunction with other supporters (and have not already done so), we would appreciate hearing from you. Your name might appear in a list on letterhead, in newspaper ads etc. depending on space etc. If you are agreeable to lending your name publicly in aid of this important effort kindly reply to

Lindsey.Brown(at)CNSGHiltonhead.com

Please spell out your name as you would like to have it appear.

Below are our vision and mission statements for your ready reference.

(If you need additional information you can email [gkathitide\(at\)islc.net](mailto:gkathitide(at)islc.net))

Thanking you in advance,

Your co-chairs:

Tom Taylor

Barry Connor

George Johnston

**CITIZENS FOR OPEN SPACE**

2006

Our Vision

Our vision for Beaufort County is a living, working community that cherishes its natural splendor, protects its environment, respectfully plans the use of its lands and preserves its unique heritage for the benefit of all citizens -- present and future.

Our Mission

Create and execute a program to generate voter support for the successful passage of the November 7 referendum that will

## Road projects list given OK

### Omission of bus service angers committee members

Published Wednesday July 19 2006

By GINNY SKALSKI  
The Island Packet

The Beaufort County Council's Public Services Committee voted 4-0 Tuesday to approve a revised list of road projects that could be paid for by increasing the sales tax.

Missing from the list was a \$6 million plan to offer fixed bus routes along U.S. 278, which supporters say could remove hundreds of cars from the busy highway.

After the meeting, committee members were irritated when they found out the list they approved minutes earlier did not include the bus service.

"We need to bring it up at council Monday," Councilman Mark Generales said, referring to the County Council's next meeting scheduled for 4 p.m. Monday at the Bluffton library. A public hearing on the road-project list is scheduled for 6 p.m.

Generales said the bus service was so important that the council should consider removing planning and engineering work for a northern Beaufort bypass, which would determine the best route for a third bridge to Lady's Island.

The bus service plan -- which would offer 19 regularly scheduled stops along U.S. 278 from Jasper County to The Mall at Shelter Cove -- was among the projects the Public Services Committee approved in early June. The plan would be paid for if voters approve a 1 percent increase in the sales tax in a November referendum.

"That's the disadvantage of getting something handed to you at the meeting," said Councilwoman Margaret Griffin, who didn't realize the bus service was taken off the list the committee just voted on.

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County traffic engineer Colin Kinton said in an interview after the meeting that the bus-service plan was removed so that the county could pitch in money to widen U.S. 17. That widening project -- which would extend from Gardens Corner in Beaufort County to Jacksonboro in Colleton County -- is in jeopardy after the State Infrastructure Bank, a resource designed to support large capital projects, recently denied a request to help pay for the project, offering only a partial loan.

But Generales, Griffin and Councilman Herbert Glaze said after the meeting they were unaware that the U.S. 17 widening project replaced the bus service on the list. Councilman Dick Stewart could not be reached for comment.

In all, the county hopes to collect \$152 million in sales-tax revenues if voters approve the increase. About \$84 million would go toward projects in southern Beaufort County, including extending the Bluffton Parkway from Burnt Church Road to U.S. 278 near the bridges to Hilton Head and continuing the widening of U.S. 278 from Simmonsville Road to S.C. 170.

Stacy Bradshaw

---

**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, July 17, 2006 10:08 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Letter: Give full picture on impact fees

## Give full picture on impact fees

Published Monday, July 17, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Go to the Packet:

The proposed 1 percent Beaufort County sales tax would have the best chance of passage if the voters believed that realistic development impact fees would be put in place to help offset the tremendous infrastructure costs.

It's all about fairness. Know-ledgeable voters have been complaining to County Council about inadequate impact fees going back to the first voter rejection of the sales tax four years ago. Now in the eleventh hour, County Council wants to hear from voters about impact fees. Instead of presenting a thought-out proposal, we're asked to give our opinion about impact fees without the benefit of any dollar amounts.

Mayor Kubic's reasoning for not presenting a complete package for seeking voter opinion is at best lame, and at worst, disingenuous.

The proposed 1 percent sales tax and the impact fees should be thought of as a package, with guarantees, i.e., if the sales tax passes, specific impact fees will be enacted, which fully recover the capital cost of new infrastructure. Otherwise the sales tax is a subsidy to the developers and doesn't deserve a yes vote.

Jim Furlong

Hilton Head Island

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, July 17, 2006 8:41 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP & BG: Hitch a ride

## Hitch a ride

### U.S. 278 may get bus route

BY GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*

Published Monday, July 17, 2006

 [→ Add Comment](#)

Tourists, workers and locals alike would be able to climb aboard a small bus and cruise to area shops, their jobs or run errands under a plan to offer fixed bus routes along U.S. 278.

Although the \$6 million proposal is in its early stages, it could gain momentum as soon as the Beaufort County Council comes up with a list of transportation projects to put before voters in November. The projects would be funded by a 1 percent increase in the sales tax, if voters agree.

The additional funding would allow the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority to increase the number of routes, starting with 19 regularly scheduled stops along U.S. 278, said Ginnie Kozak, the planning director for the Lowcountry Council of Governments, which is researching the effort.

The transportation authority traditionally buses riders from five counties to work at hotels, restaurants and golf courses on Hilton Head Island. But with \$6 million, it could buy more buses, install bus shelters and hire more drivers, Kozak said.

"The time has come for this service," Kozak said. "And whether it makes the final referendum list and whether the referendum is passed or not, we're going to try to work with (the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority) in every way possible to try to get this going."

For nearly 20 years, local government and transportation officials have studied ways to expand public transportation in southern Beaufort County. Something always seems to foil those plans -- usually a lack of cash, Kozak said.

Things look a little more promising this time, said Thomas G. Heyward, the transportation authority's chairman. For starters, there seems to be some political will, traffic is getting worse on U.S. 278, and rising gas prices have left commuters looking for ways to pinch pennies at the pump.

"When you know that the train is coming," Heyward said, "you don't wait until you can see the smokestack before you start building the track."

To find out how much it would cost to expand the bus service and the best way to do it, the Lowcountry Council of Governments hired Norcross, Ga.-based consultant Jordan, Jones & Goulding.

The firm suggested offering 19 stops along U.S. 278 from Coastal Carolina Medical Center in Hardeeville to The Mall at Shelter Cove on Hilton Head. By doing so, the bus system could serve 10,662 travelers a month on U.S. 278.

It recommends running the new route from 6 a.m. to midnight. Buses would stop at each bus shelter every hour, Kozak said. Once more people begin climbing aboard, and if more grants rolled in, she said more frequent stops could be added.

Eventually, the transportation authority plans to build a transfer station on or near U.S. 278. Riders could switch buses at

head to Beaufort or other destinations, Heyward said.

he way Heyward sees it, Hilton Head residents could catch a bus to the University of South Carolina Beaufort's south campus to take a class; tourists could ride from the island to the outlet malls or shops in old town Bluffton; and workers could leave their cars at home.

Heyward estimates it would take at least a year to implement the basic bus service if a sales-tax increase is approved. The increase, as it currently is being considered, would last for six years or until \$147 million is collected, whichever happens first.

It would cost less to offer the service after the first year, once buses and other equipment have been purchased, Kozak said. The service could be funded in subsequent years with state and federal grants, through stipends from local businesses and from bus fares, she said.

Hopefully we'll build a case that people will support," Heyward said. "And if we do, we'll provide the service."

Contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

adv



## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Friday, July 14, 2006 10:57 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Editorial: Get impact fees right if hope to pass sales tax

### Get impact fees right if hope to pass sales tax

#### Officials need to let projects, not politics, determine amounts

Published Friday, July 14, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

No doubt a public hearing with specific dollar amounts for proposed impact fees would be more meaningful for Beaufort County officials.

The council will hold a public hearing July 24 on impact fee increases, but won't see specific figures until August.

But that doesn't mean County Council can't and shouldn't hold other hearings later when the amounts are determined.

And it doesn't mean the council can't benefit from hearing July 24 what people think about the current level of fees.

The most important thing in this process is that any impact fee increases need to be more than just window dressing to help get a 1 percent sales tax to pay for road projects approved by voters. Project lists and their costs should determine the fees.

The question is not as simple as "are fees going up before I say yes to a sales tax?"

The questions to be answered from the voters' perspective are these: "Are fees going up enough and does the county need the 1 percent sales tax?"

The last question is particularly relevant given what happened after county voters narrowly rejected a sales tax for road projects in 2004.

Following that Bluffton officials went back to developers and got more money from them to help pay to extend Bluffton Parkway westward to S.C. 170, one of the major projects on the 2004 list. Through a series of negotiations, eight developers in the Buckwalter and Jones tracts agreed to pay \$900 per home and allow special tax districts in undeveloped areas. That resulted in Bluffton contributing nearly \$8 million for the project.

The county also put in place a 2.5 percent admissions tax to help pay for road projects, including Bluffton Parkway. County and municipal impact fees, including fees from Hilton Head Island, also are being used.

As the new sales tax project list stands now, the tax would be in place for six years and would be used to pay for about \$147 million in road projects countywide. In southern Beaufort County, the money would be used to pay to extend Bluffton Parkway eastward (\$50 million); to extend the widening of U.S. 278 and build frontage roads (\$38.7 million); and widen S.C. 170 (\$17.7 million). Town of Hilton Head Island officials are asking the county to add two projects: resurfacing William Hilton Parkway and reconfiguring the Squire Pope Road intersection at a total cost of about \$6.7 million.

Countywide, the referendum project construction costs, plus bonding, contingency and inflation costs, total an estimated \$204 million. The sales tax would raise about 72 percent of that amount. (That doesn't include the Hilton Head projects, and County Council has yet to sign off on the final list for the referendum). Those numbers could change before the

Referendum is set as the county gets better estimates on construction costs.

It's also important to understand that state law lays out rigorous requirements for determining impact fee amounts. Those requirements start with the project list and estimated costs. Impact fees can't pay for existing problems.

County and town officials have come up with a complex funding plan for its road projects list that looks to eight different funding sources at the local state and federal levels in addition to a local sales tax. Impact fees are a critical part of that plan. They need to hit the right mark if officials hope to get a sales tax passed. This isn't about compromising with developers.

Officials struck out with voters on a sales tax the last two times. They need to make sure the pitch is right in November.

## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, July 17, 2006 8:41 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP & BG: Hitch a ride

### Hitch a ride

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BY GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*  
Published Monday, July 17, 2006  
🔒 → [Add Comment](#)

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Things look a little more promising this time, said Thomas G. Heyward, the transportation authority's chairman. For starters, there seems to be some political will, traffic is getting worse on U.S. 278, and rising gas prices have left commuters looking for ways to pinch pennies at the pump.

"When you know that the train is coming," Heyward said, "you don't wait until you can see the smokestack before you start building the track."

To find out how much it would cost to expand the bus service and the best way to do it, the Lowcountry Council of Governments hired Norcross, Ga.-based consultant Jordan, Jones & Goulding.

The firm suggested offering 19 stops along U.S. 278 from Coastal Carolina Medical Center in Hardeeville to The Mall at Shelter Cove on Hilton Head. By doing so, the bus system could serve 10,662 travelers a month on U.S. 278.

It recommends running the new route from 6 a.m. to midnight. Buses would stop at each bus shelter every hour, Kozak said. Once more people begin climbing aboard, and if more grants rolled in, she said more frequent stops could be added.

Eventually, the transportation authority plans to build a transfer station on or near U.S. 278. Riders could switch buses at

and to Beaufort or other destinations, Heyward said.

the way Heyward sees it, Hilton Head residents could catch a bus to the University of South Carolina Beaufort's south campus to take a class; tourists could ride from the island to the outlet malls or shops in old town Bluffton; and workers could leave their cars at home.

Heyward estimates it would take at least a year to implement the basic bus service if a sales-tax increase is approved. The increase, as it currently is being considered, would last for six years or until \$147 million is collected, whichever happens first.

It would cost less to offer the service after the first year, once buses and other equipment have been purchased, Kozak said. The service could be funded in subsequent years with state and federal grants, through stipends from local businesses and from bus fares, she said.

Hopefully we'll build a case that people will support," Heyward said. "And if we do, we'll provide the service."

Contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

adv

## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Friday, July 14, 2006 11:02 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BG: Editorial: Traffic survey a chance to sound off to politicians

### Traffic survey a chance to sound off to politicians But make the case differently

Published Fri, Jul 14, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

Never let it be said that people around here are reluctant to weigh in on traffic problems.

So a survey put together by the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office and distributed by other media outlets should generate a fair number of responses. It is a good conversation starter to find out what impact badly congested U.S. 278 has on our daily lives.

But an unscientific survey with anecdotal information (how many people can really tell you how much gasoline they burn idling in traffic?) is not a strong tool for convincing state and federal lawmakers we need more money for roads.

The Sheriff's Office is working with the Technical College of the Lowcountry and local media to try to put a price tag on the time wasted in traffic. Through July 23, people can fill out the 12-question survey.

Sheriff P.J. Tanner said, "We send a lot of money to Washington, and we send a lot of money to Columbia. I know our legislators are doing the best they can, but they need more ammunition, and I think the study is something that can be utilized in that argument."

Tanner also said results could help voters make an informed decision if Beaufort County moves forward with a plan to ask voters to approve a 1 percent sales-tax increase to pay for road improvements in November.

Accident rates, traffic counts and the knowledge that we have to move tens of thousands of people out of this area in the event of a hurricane evacuation are the best arguments to make to state and federal officials.

And the 1 percent sales tax to pay for road projects across the county is a lot more complex than just traffic problems on U.S. 278. The overall funding for the projects is a mix that would include road impact fees, admission tax collections as well as state and federal money, in addition to the sales tax revenue.

The information generated from the survey will not be statistically valid enough to extrapolate an accurate picture of the costs the congested road inflicts on our pocketbooks.

But the survey will allow some people to vent, and it will give politicians some idea of the emotional toll inflicted by an inadequate road system.

And, who knows, one or more good solutions may be out there in the comment section of the survey.

It can't hurt to ask.

-- The Island Packet

tacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Friday, July 14, 2006 10:57 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP: Editorial: Get impact fees right if hope to pass sales tax

## Get impact fees right if hope to pass sales tax

### Officials need to let projects, not politics, determine amounts

Published Friday, July 14, 2006  
0 Comments (0) → [Add Comment](#)

No doubt a public hearing with specific dollar amounts for proposed impact fees would be more meaningful for Beaufort County officials.

The council will hold a public hearing July 24 on impact fee increases, but won't see specific figures until August.

But that doesn't mean County Council can't and shouldn't hold other hearings later when the amounts are determined.

And it doesn't mean the council can't benefit from hearing July 24 what people think about the current level of fees.

The most important thing in this process is that any impact fee increases need to be more than just window dressing to help get a 1 percent sales tax to pay for road projects approved by voters. Project lists and their costs should determine the fees.

The question is not as simple as "are fees going up before I say yes to a sales tax?"

The questions to be answered from the voters' perspective are these: "Are fees going up enough and does the county need the 1 percent sales tax?"

The last question is particularly relevant given what happened after county voters narrowly rejected a sales tax for road projects in 2004.

Following that Bluffton officials went back to developers and got more money from them to help pay to extend Bluffton Parkway westward to S.C. 170, one of the major projects on the 2004 list. Through a series of negotiations, eight developers in the Buckwalter and Jones tracts agreed to pay \$900 per home and allow special tax districts in undeveloped areas. That resulted in Bluffton contributing nearly \$8 million for the project.

The county also put in place a 2.5 percent admissions tax to help pay for road projects, including Bluffton Parkway. County and municipal impact fees, including fees from Hilton Head Island, also are being used.

As the new sales tax project list stands now, the tax would be in place for six years and would be used to pay for about \$1.47 billion in road projects countywide. In southern Beaufort County, the money would be used to pay to extend Bluffton Parkway eastward (\$50 million); to extend the widening of U.S. 278 and build frontage roads (\$38.7 million); and widen S.C. 170 (\$17.7 million). Town of Hilton Head Island officials are asking the county to add two projects: resurfacing William Hilton Parkway and reconfiguring the Squire Pope Road intersection at a total cost of about \$6.7 million.

Countywide, the referendum project construction costs, plus bonding, contingency and inflation costs, total an estimated \$204 million. The sales tax would raise about 72 percent of that amount. (That doesn't include the Hilton Head projects, and County Council has yet to sign off on the final list for the referendum). Those numbers could change before the

referendum is set as the county gets better estimates on construction costs.

It's also important to understand that state law lays out rigorous requirements for determining impact fee amounts. Those requirements start with the project list and estimated costs. Impact fees can't pay for existing problems.

County and town officials have come up with a complex funding plan for its road projects list that looks to eight different funding sources at the local state and federal levels in addition to a local sales tax. Impact fees are a critical part of that and need to hit the right mark if officials hope to get a sales tax passed. This isn't about compromising with developers.

Officials struck out with voters on a sales tax the last two times. They need to make sure the pitch is right in November.

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Friday, July 14, 2006 10:47 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP: Island wants split of road taxes

## Island wants split of road taxes

By GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*  
Published Friday, July 14, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Beaufort County voters are going to approve a sales-tax increase for road improvements, then Hilton Head Island officials say they should get a cut.

### Web Extras

[For a complete list of southern Beaufort County road projects the county council is considering asking voters to fund with a sales tax increase, click here.](#)

### Improvements

The town of Hilton Head Island wants these two projects added to Beaufort County's list of road improvements that can be paid for with money from a sales tax increase.



Photo:  
*The Island Packet*  
[Enlarge Image](#)  
[Buy This Photo](#)

So far none of the town's roads has made the potential list.

Deputy town manager Chuck Hoelle said the town plans to take two proposals to Beaufort County Council: repaving William Hilton Parkway and improving the parkway's intersection with Squire Pope Road. The projects total \$6.7 million.

County Council is considering asking voters to increase the sales tax by 1 percent to raise \$147 million for road improvements. The southern Beaufort County projects already on the list focus on widening highways to increase the number of vehicles they can serve while reducing congestion on U.S. 278. A series of frontage roads is designed to improve safety by getting more drivers off U.S. 278.

Under the proposal, William Hilton Parkway would be repaved from Squire Pope Road to Sea Pines Circle. Drainage improvements also would be made. Altogether it would cost about \$4.7 million, said traffic and transportation engineer Merrin Shoemaker.

The town also wants to extend the parkway's six-lane section about 1,000 feet through its intersection with Squire Pope



Road, Shoemaker said. That means an extra lane would travel through the traffic signal there, which Shoemaker says would greatly improve the road's capacity.

Additionally, Squire Pope Road would be realigned with the parkway at a 90-degree angle, eliminating an awkward intersection. That would make it easier for drivers to turn on and off the road, Shoemaker said. The intersection improvements would cost about \$2 million.

"The intersection is over capacity and creating too much delay," he said.

The County Council has not approved the list of 21 road projects that the sales-tax increase would pay for in southern and northern Beaufort County. Councilman Peter Lamb, chairman of the Public Services Committee that signed off on the project list, said he's open to adding the Hilton Head projects. The only catch is: Which projects would get bumped from the list?

As it stands, the council wants voters to approve a sales tax that would last six years or until \$147 million is collected, whichever happens first. County Council Chairman Weston Newton said the council is deciding whether it wants the tax to be collected for that long. If it doesn't, other road projects also would have to be removed.

Contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

Tracy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Thursday, July 13, 2006 8:53 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP: Editorial:Traffic survey a chance to sound off to politicians

## Traffic survey a chance to sound off to politicians

### But vehicle counts, accident rates better way to make case for roads

Published Thursday, July 13, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Never let it be said that people around here are reluctant to weigh in on traffic problems.

A survey put together by the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office and distributed by this newspaper and other media outlets should generate a fair number of responses. It is a good conversation starter to find out what impact badly congested U.S. 278 has on our daily lives.

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Tanner also said results could help voters make an informed decision if Beaufort County moves forward with a plan to ask voters to approve a 1 percent sales-tax increase to pay for road improvements in November.

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And the 1 percent sales tax to pay for road projects across the county is a lot more complex than just traffic problems on U.S. 278. The overall funding for the projects is a mix that also includes road impact fees and admission tax collections, as well as state and federal money.

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And, who knows, one or more good solutions might be out there in the comment section of the survey.

It can't hurt to ask.

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 12, 2006 9:06 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BT: Wed. 7/12/06: Editorial: US 17 funding

We say ...

## U.S. 278 not the only highway woe

While we in Southern Beaufort County have our love-hate relationship with U.S. 278, there's another major road in the northern part of the county that needs our lobbying attention as well.

U.S. 17 is a major link to Charleston, whether you're from Fripp Island or Hilton Head Island. Unless you're willing to take a round-about route out to Interstate 95 and then I-26 back into Charleston, adding about two hours to your trip, you're going to be on U.S. 17, one of the deadliest roads in the Southeast.

Since 1997, 34 people have died on the two-lane stretch of U.S. 17 from Garden's Corner in Beaufort County to Jacksonboro in Colleton County. We add U.S. 17 to our list of highway woes because the state is having an equally difficult time finding money to widen that 22-mile stretch, just as funding has been a major delay factor in the widening of U.S. 278 and completion of the Bluffton Parkway.

State highway officials have applied to the State Infrastructure Bank for \$138 million to complete the U.S. 17 widening, but the SIB has offered only a loan which the highway department says it can't afford.

State officials working with local governments are trying to cobble together a budget for the estimated \$122 million project but there are only so many dollars to go around.

Beaufort County voters will go to the polls again in November to consider a 1 percent sales tax for a \$147 million road improvement list. Top on the list is completion of the Bluffton Parkway to the Hilton Head bridges plus intersection improvements and frontage roads along U.S. 278. The U.S. 17 project isn't on the referendum list.

We're not saying U.S. 17 should be on the list as the County Council knew all the road projects couldn't be included and some compromises to create geopolitical balance were necessary.

But anything we can do to influence a decision at the state level to fund the U.S. 17 project, we should do. And in the meantime, come November, voters will get to "put their money where their mouth is," if they believe road construction is an answer to our traveling prayers.

tacy Bradshaw

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**Sent:** Wednesday, July 12, 2006 9:06 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BT: Wed. 7/12/06: Editorial: US 17 funding

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Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 11, 2006 10:44 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Increasing impact fees

## Increasing impact fees

### County Council presents proposal without knowing specific amount of fee hike

BY GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*

Published Tuesday, July 11, 2006

 [Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Residents will be asked to comment on a plan to increase the impact fees Beaufort County charges developers before all the facts about the hike are available.

County officials say the fee increases, which are expected to be substantial and likely will lead to higher housing prices, are needed to pay for roads, libraries and parks. They have set a public hearing at the Beaufort County Council's July 24 meeting even though they won't know exactly how much the fees will go up until August.

Having a public hearing before all the details are ready doesn't make sense to some local officials who sat on the committee that oversaw the creation of the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan, which recommended the increases.

"Just to say, 'Here's a blank number. Yeah, we're going to have impact fee (increases), but we don't know what it is, give us your comments.' It's kind of strange as far as I'm concerned," said Hilton Head Island Town Councilman Ken Heitzke.

County administrator Gary Kubic defended the early hearing, saying it will allow the County Council to find out how residents feel about the proposal.

"It's always more effective to bring the issues of what projects we're looking at before the public so that the educational process has a greater period of time to be considered, absorbed and commented upon," Kubic said.

The public hearing on impact fees will be on the same night as the hearing for a county proposal to increase the sales tax to pay for road projects. Kubic said it's necessary for the hearings to take place soon so the county can meet deadlines to put the sales-tax question to voters in November. Residents will want to know whether impact fees are going up before they vote in the referendum, he said.

Impact fees are charged to developers and generally are passed on to home buyers to cover the costs of services, such as roads, parks and libraries. The fees currently charged by the county do not adequately cover the actual costs it incurs to provide those services.

The county hired Clarion Associates, the same consultant that produced the southern regional plan, to figure out how much it should raise the impact fees. The no-bid \$47,000 contract was approved last month by the council's Land Management Committee and calls on Clarion to come up with the new fees by August.

When Clarion prepared the draft southern regional plan, it suggested raising impact fees to offset growth costs and offered general information on how much increased fees could generate for the county. It said raising road impact fees to \$1,600 per single-family home could generate \$72 million for the county, while raising the fee for parks to \$840 could bring in an additional \$10 million over 15 years.

Those suggestions were left out of the plan's final draft because they were not based on specific information about

...auion County, Kubie said. The County Council will find out the proposed impact-fee increase before it casts its final  
...e on the increase next month.

...uffton resident Doug Robertson, who represented property owners on the southern regional plan steering committee,  
...ghed when he heard the public hearing was scheduled before the proposed fee schedule was ready.

...don't go into a store and say, 'OK I'll take that, tell me how much it is later,' " Robertson said.

...contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to  
[islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

Stacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Tuesday, July 11, 2006 10:03 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP: What is the traffic costing you?

## What is the traffic costing you?

### Sound off in survey about your frustrations on U.S. 278

BY GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*  
Published Tuesday, July 11, 2006  
🗨 [Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

If traffic on U.S. 278 has ever forced you to miss a doctor's appointment, made you late picking up the kids from day care or caused you to be tardy for an important meeting, then Beaufort County Sheriff P.J. Tanner wants to hear about it.

But don't go tracking him down to give him an earful. Instead, Tanner wants it in writing.

The Sheriff's Office is working with the Technical College of the Lowcountry and local media -- including *The Island Packet* -- to put a price tag on the time you've wasted in traffic.

Drivers can fill out a 12-question survey today through July 23 detailing how traffic on U.S. 278 affects their lives. The survey will run in *The Island Packet* and at [www.islandpacket.com/traffic](http://www.islandpacket.com/traffic).

The information will be analyzed by James Daniels, a math teacher at TCL, who will try to determine how much time and money is lost in traffic, Tanner said.

The unscientific survey results will be forwarded to elected officials so they can use the data to make the case for more transportation dollars, Tanner said. He hopes to have the results ready Aug. 14.

"We send a lot of money to Washington, and we send a lot of money to Columbia," Tanner said, who added that he would like to see more of that money returned for road projects. "I know our legislators are doing the best they can, but they need more ammunition, and I think the study is something that can be utilized in that argument."

The results also could help voters make an informed decision if Beaufort County moves forward with a plan to ask voters to approve a 1 percent sales-tax increase to pay for road improvements in a November referendum, Tanner said.

Daniels said he will review the results to see whether he can identify any patterns such as times when people avoid driving the highway. He also hopes to determine how much gas is wasted while waiting in traffic.

In late March, Tanner met with local media to see if they would be willing to publish the survey. Since then, the Sheriff's Office has formed the questions, and media representatives have helped whittle down the list. The partnership includes *The Packet*, the *Beaufort Gazette*, *Bluffton Today*, WTOC, WSAV and Adventure Radio Group.

Stacy Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Monday, July 10, 2006 11:50 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BT: Mon. 7/10/06:

This article will not copy correctly from the online Bluffton Today. I apologize for the confusion, but I thought it was worth sending anyway as you may wish to read the correct text at [www.blufftontoday.com](http://www.blufftontoday.com).

Suzanne Larson

## HAVE YOUR SAY. PEOPLE ARE LISTENING.

The sheriff's office, TCL and Bluffton Today partner to give residents a say on U.S. 278's mounting problems.

You're fed up with the traffic along U.S. 278. We all are. You've complained to everybody and anybody who would listen, and often to those who really didn't want to.

And yet U.S. 278's traffic woes continue. In fact, they're getting worse.

What to do?

Here's your chance to have a voice: The Southern Beaufort County Traffic Survey.

Twelve questions have been crafted to glean the most pertinent information from U.S. 278 commuters.

That information will then be turned over to math-minded folks at the Technical College of the Lowcountry to be analyzed and extrapolated.

By asking drivers how early they have to leave home to get to Hilton Head Island to battle the traffic and keep their intended schedules, statisticians will be able to get a feel for how much more time people are spending in their vehicles, and possibly the costs associated with all those wasted hours.

"This is really not a traffic survey as much as it is an impact survey," said Beaufort County Sheriff P.J. Tanner. "It's a study of the day-to-day traveler of U.S. 278." TCL is just one of eight partners the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office has brought together since April to create the survey. The sheriff's office came up with the survey. TCL will take over when everything's finished. The remaining partners consist of local media outlets, including this newspaper.

By mid-August, the information TCL's experts glean from the survey is scheduled to be published and then distributed to local, state and federal legislators and various county officials in hopes of informing them of commuters in southern Beaufort said.

"A lot of times we're forgotten about," the sheriff said. "(U.S. Rep.) Joe W. (U.S. Sen.) Jim DeMint don't drive (U.S.) 2 days like we do." Simply put, they just don't understand. People have rearranged their lives stuck in traffic.

"That's the only reason we don't gridlock everyday because people own (schedules)," he said.

Local representatives—like Sen.

and state Reps. Bill Herbkersman and — could have their arguments for money directed to improving the local system augmented by the information the next few weeks, Tanner added.

The information could also come said, should another 1-cent sales tax presented later this year for voters' choice. "This will help the citizens make a decision about the roads and how they improve," he said.

That "everyone" includes people in service industry, the parent who can't get up from daycare on time, and the person who has to take his medicine at a certain time can't — all because they're stuck in traffic, he said.

Surveys are available starting today on Today's Web site and in this issue of (see page 16). Copies of the survey are on the BCSO's Web site, [www.bcsco.com](http://www.bcsco.com). (Including various municipal representatives improving the lives of the County, Tanner said here, "Wilson and (U.S. 278, ... not everyday," he said.

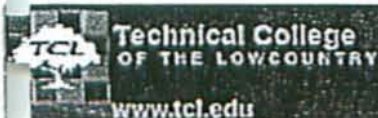
To avoid being forgotten, we're creating their Scott Richardson and Richard Chalk having more state of the Lowcountry's transformation in hand, Tanner said. referendum be consideration.

An informed decision impact everyone," who work in the don't pick her child or person who needs me each day but in traffic, Tanner said. on Bluffton of the newspaper can also be found online.

A lot of times we're forgotten about down here. (U.S. Rep.) Joe W. (U.S. Sen.)

Jim DeMint don't drive (U.S.) 278, ... not everyday like Wilson and I do.

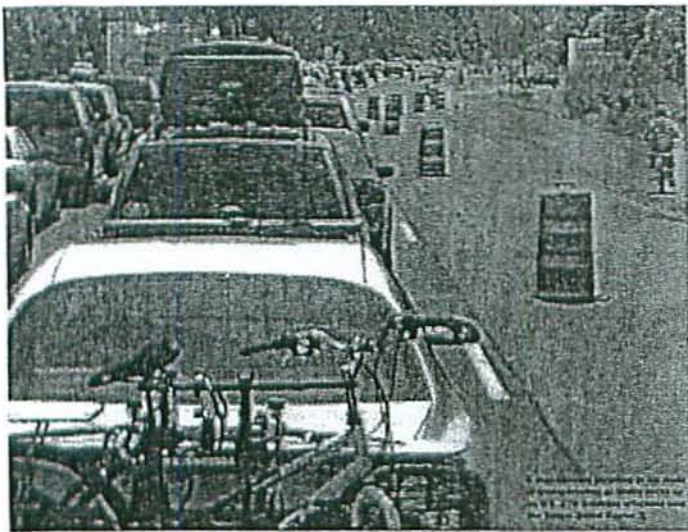
Beaufort County Sheriff P.J. Tanner



New Choices. New Options.  
New River.

For information call 843.525.8211





Aman chooses bicycling as his mode of transportation as traffic backs up on U.S. 278 Saturday afternoon near the Tanger Outlet Center 2.

#### HERE'S HOW TO PARTICIPATE

Tell legislators how U.S. 278 impacts your life by filling out the Southern Beaufort County Traffic Survey, on page **16** of today's paper, before July 23.

Just fill out one survey per household, please.

Tear the survey out of Bluffton Today, fill it out and either mail it to P.O. Box 486, Bluffton, S.C., 29910 or drop it off at the newspaper's office at 52

Persimmon St. If you prefer, you may point your Internet to [www.blufftontoday.com](http://www.blufftontoday.com) and answer the survey's 12 questions online.

The survey came to fruition through a partnership of the following organizations: The Beaufort County Sheriff's Office, the Technical College of the Lowcountry, Bluffton Today, the Island Packet, the Beaufort Gazette, WTOC, WSAV and Adventure Radio Group.

tacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**ent:** Monday, July 10, 2006 10:11 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Editorial: Keep pressure up to fund U.S. 17 widening project

## Keep pressure up to fund U.S. 17 widening project

Project's mounting costs means support more crucial now

Published Saturday, July 8, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Wilson Elgin is right. U.S. 17 was a big loser, the Department of Transportation project manager said Wednesday after the State Infrastructure Bank refused to grant \$138 million in much-needed funding to widen a 22-mile stretch of the dangerous road.

The Transportation Department asked for a \$90 million grant and a \$48 million loan toward the \$221 million project. Instead, the Infrastructure Bank, which prioritizes and finances major road projects in the state, offered a \$93 million loan. The decision left \$300 million available for other projects in the state.

The bank gave Horry County \$40 million for the final leg of the Carolina Bays Parkway south of Myrtle Beach and the widening of Highway 707, the Associated Press reported. That money is contingent on Horry County voters approving a 1 percent local sales tax for road projects this fall. Charleston County will receive \$99 million to buy land to extend Interstate 526, also called the Mark Clark Expressway, from West Ashley over Johns Island to James Island. Voters there already have approved a half-cent sales tax for roads.

But the U.S. 17 offer of a loan means little if you don't have the means to pay it back.

The mostly two-lane road between Gardens Corner and Jacksonboro has been the site of 34 traffic fatalities in nine years, making the highway one of the most deadly in South Carolina. The crash of a bus carrying Navy sailors in 2004 spurred a groundswell of political support for a road-widening project. Three sailors died and dozens were injured in the head-on crash.

But was it all just rhetoric? Where are they now? U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson, U.S. Sen. Jim DeMint and Gov. Mark Sanford were among the heavyweights pushing for the road's funding. They joined a bevy of Lowcountry residents and politicians including the Beaufort County Council and the legislative delegations of Beaufort and Charleston counties, in their support.

Should we be surprised? For more than 15 years, residents and leaders have been clamoring for a fix for U.S. 17 with no success.

But there is some good news. Fatalities on that stretch have decreased since last year. A speed-limit drop of 5 mph and an increased law enforcement presence apparently have made a difference. But for how long?

Census figures from 1990 to 2000 show that Beaufort County's population has grown by 40 percent. Projections show that by 2025, the county population will be nearing 200,000. Combine those numbers with the estimate of more than 1 million people living in the Lowcountry by 2025, and the need increases for a safe four-lane thoroughfare and hurricane evacuation route.

The state's Transportation Commission will meet next week to look for more ways to help pay for the project, but the pressure needs to be reapplied to see this project through. Far too many lives depend on it.

**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2006 10:27 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BT: Sun. 7/2/06: Town Council next to consider southern Beaufort County document.

## NEWS Commission endorses regional planning

Town Council next to consider southern Beaufort County document.

BY RICHARD BROOKS

BLUFFTON TODAY

Political boundaries often impede good planning in a rapidly growing region.

Bluffton officials this week lauded the merits of the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan.

"Our challenges do not stop at a particular political boundary," said Emmett McCracken. "Water doesn't stop flowing at the county line."

McCracken chaired the regional plan steering committee and noted that the final draft includes Jasper County and the city of Hardeeville as "full-fledged voting members." The Bluffton Planning Commission endorsed the regional plan Wednesday and recommended that the Town Council adopt it.

The inclusion of Jasper and Hardeeville along with Beaufort County, Bluffton and Hilton Head Island "underscores the importance of regionalism," McCracken said.

Bluffton Planning Commission Chairman Don Blair, also a member of the regional plan steering committee, said the changes he's seen since coming to the Lowcountry in 1972 illustrate the need for a long-range, cooperative vision.

"Nothing is more important than regional planning. The committee was trying to develop one single vision for the region," Blair said.

There were four jurisdictions south of the Broad River with completely different concerns 30 years ago, he said.

"Hilton Head didn't pay any attention to Bluffton. Beaufort County wasn't responsive to Hilton Head and cared even less about Jasper County," Blair said.

The regional plan steering committee approved the draft Feb. 17 and sent it on to the various elected governments for review and adoption.

McCracken, former Bluffton mayor and former County Council chairman, has called the regional plan a "melding" of four background reports prepared by local government staffs: natural assets, land use trends, transportation and fiscal constraints.

The transportation report garnered the most attention because it's the most obvious problem facing the region.

Transportation needs over the next 15 years are estimated at more than \$250 million just to keep the area road system at the existing level of efficiency, according to the regional plan.

About \$95 million in revenue can be expected from the S.C. Department of Transportation and local road impact fees, according to the plan.

That leaves an estimated shortfall of more than \$158 million.

The plan recommends — in addition to existing impact fees — a capital projects sales tax, a real estate transfer fee and a local option gas tax to fill the funding gap.

Also recommended to reduce the amount of "vehicle miles traveled" are public transportation, ferry systems, multi-use pathways and more efficient roadways.

McCracken, like Blair, said the regional plan looks good on paper but the various governments need to find a way to make it work.

Blair advocates creation of some formal authority to enforce the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan.

But other members of the steering committee are leery of the effects of another tier of government oversight on future development.

Carion Associates, a consulting firm hired by Beaufort County, prepared the draft with help from local government staff.

Work began recently on a similar document for the area north of the Broad River.

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, July 03, 2006 10:02 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BG: County eyes sales tax for roads

## County eyes sales tax for roads Engineers list \$150M in projects

Published Sun, Jul 2, 2006

By GREG HAMBRICK

The Beaufort Gazette

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

Coming off two consecutive defeats of sales tax referendums in 2002 and 2004, county officials hope that a penny focusing exclusively on road projects will mean success in November.

County engineers have crafted a more than \$150 million list of road projects that could be paid for if voters approve a 1 cent increase to the county's sales tax in November. The County Council is expected to give final approval for the list in August.

Supporters concede that there were failings in the past. For the 2002 list, the County Council excluded municipal leaders' input. In 2004, a lengthy 33-project referendum narrowly was defeated at the polls with some voters concerned about a lack of developer fees for roads in northern Beaufort County and insufficient collections south of the Broad River.

"Looking at the past, it does not bode well for a penny sales tax," said County Council Chairman Weston Newton. "At the same time, it would be irresponsible of us not to ask the question."

The list for the new referendum includes road widening on Lady's Island and in Shell Point and improvements to Boundary Street, continued U.S. 278 improvements and a Bluffton Parkway expansion.

If approved, the additional penny would be added for six years to the 5 cents collected by the state. In June, another penny is expected to be added to the sales tax statewide for property tax relief and, under the same legislation, a third penny could be added for additional property tax relief by the county.

To address past criticisms, the county has met with municipal leaders to establish road priorities and identify funding sources. Results were shaped into priority lists for northern and southern Beaufort County.

"It's reflective of the needs of the northern part of the county to relieve congestion," said Beaufort Mayor Bill Rauch on Thursday of the northern project list.

The county also has been scouring other sources for money to show voters that a sales tax hike is a last resort.

"We have no other way to pay for these roads," Newton said.

Developer fees for road improvements were implemented north of the Broad River in October 2004, and the County Council likely will hike the fees in southern Beaufort County by the end of the summer. The fees are charged based on the type of development and its expected stress on surrounding roads.

The county also has applied a 2.5 percent admissions fee charged for services such as movie theaters and golf courses. Local officials also have lobbied successfully for federal and state dollars for U.S. 278 and U.S. 17 improvements.

In northern Beaufort County, grants and fees are expected to pay for nearly two-thirds of the \$337 million in identified road needs for the next two decades.

Rauch said some people might have the perception that road improvements are a state responsibility.

"That's happened is the state went out of business," he said of the limited state dollars now left for road improvements. "To say it's not a local responsibility -- that's putting your head in the sand."

the list

Officials have tried to judiciously split the penny spending between northern and southern Beaufort County. South of the Broad River, the money is going to three projects, including \$7.8 million toward widening S.C. 170, \$50 million for U.S. 278 and \$25 million to expand the Bluffton Parkway.

The other seven projects are in northern Beaufort County and include \$7.2 million widening plans for Savannah Highway and more than \$35 million for Lady's Island Drive widening and a parallel bridge to the J.E. McTeer crossing the Beaufort River.

Boundary Street improvements also are included on the proposed list, including a proposed parallel street north of the existing street.

Projects haven't been given a particular priority, said county traffic engineer Colin Kinton, but those already in development, including Bluffton Parkway and Boundary Street designs, likely will be acted upon first.

Several of the projects on the list had been included in a \$121 million capital projects referendum that was narrowly defeated by voters in 2004 and a list of projects that also failed in 2002. Newton said he's hopeful that focusing on short-term road needs agreed to by municipal and county leaders could mean success this year.

On the new list, money also is planned for engineering work for the proposed northern bypass to determine the best route for a new bridge to Lady's Island. Past proposals have focused on a route from Gray's Hill to northern Lady's Island.

For money for the bypass is expected to further feasibility studies and begin design plans on route alternatives, Kinton said. Once determined, money also could go toward permitting and environmental studies.

The list also includes \$5 million for a countywide transit service, including planning for routes and service, bus purchases or leasing, marketing and other potential amenities to make the system user-friendly, said Ginnie Kozak, a planner with the regional Lowcountry Council of Government.

Contact Greg Hambrick at 986-5548 or [ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com). To comment: [beaufortgazette.com](http://beaufortgazette.com).

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 28, 2006 9:12 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Work to extend Bluffton Parkway eastward could begin in fall 2008

## Work to extend Bluffton Parkway eastward could begin in fall 2008

Published Wednesday, June 28, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BEAUFORT -- Construction on the extension of the Bluffton Parkway toward Hilton Head Island could begin in fall 2008 if Beaufort County can find the money to pay for it, an engineering consultant told the County Council on Monday.

The county plans to extend the parkway about three miles from Burnt Church Road to Fording Island Road Extension, where the road will link with U.S. 278. That same project includes straightening the parkway between Buck Island Road and Buckwalter Parkway.

The county is paying \$1.2 million to Columbia-based Florence & Hutcheson Inc. to plan and design the extension. The firm's vice president David Beaty told the council the construction plans will be complete by spring 2008.

Beaty said it's too early to say whether the Bluffton Parkway's intersection with U.S. 278 will be controlled by a traffic signal or by an interchange.

Florence & Hutcheson are scheduled to present preliminary plans in August at public meetings to hear resident concerns, Beaty said. Public hearings also will be held in spring 2007.

Meanwhile, the county has set a public hearing to discuss a potential sales-tax increase to pay for \$147 million in road improvements, including the Bluffton Parkway extension. Residents can sound off at 6 p.m. July 24 at the Bluffton library, 120 Palmetto Way.

Eracy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 27, 2006 8:58 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Letter: Road sales tax bad idea, again

**oad sales tax bad idea, again**

ublished Tuesday, June 27, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

o the Packet:

ve we go again. Putting the twice-defeated road sales tax on the ballot again is an insult to the voters who have said "no" to this ill-advised proposition time and again. This is not baseball where you get three strikes, you know.

l local politicians and developers have let growth get out of hand and now they want us residents to bail them out with regressive sales tax on the necessities of life. Roads should be financed with user taxes, such as gasoline taxes, licenses and fees, and development impact fees.

on Scott

ton Head Island

Hilton Head Island

**Tax cigarettes for road work**

Published Friday, June 23, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

To the Packet:

Why is it that every time politicians want to pay for road projects they always look to increase the sales tax?

What the heck, it's only a penny, right? Well what's wrong with increasing the tax on cigarettes. Has "Big Tobacco" got their hands in the pockets of our politicians?

Why can't South Carolina come out of the dark ages and increase the tax from the paltry pennies it is now to the 80 cents or 90 cents that a lot of states have now?

We could fund school expansion and road projects with the money. One might argue that the price increase would cause cigarette sales to drop off. Oh my, what a shame that would be. The price increase might even discourage our youth from starting to smoke since maybe they can't afford the price of a pack of butts.

Bill Mulligan

Bluffton

**Long-term impact must be weighed**

Published Friday, June 23, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

To the Packet:

You want adequate roads, you object to paying gas taxes and some politicians and oil company executives are suggesting a \$100 dollar rebate and a moratorium on gas taxes.

Nonsense. It only is necessary to look at the world demand for fuel and see that (cheer up) it only will get worse and the price only can go up.

The word that the administration has downplayed is conservation.

It necessary is for the well-being and future of our country for its citizens to be well educated, but there seems to be an objection to paying property taxes.

The wise founders of this country of ours established that owning property and property rights were essential to its independence and that these rights were necessary for the continuance of a strong representative government.

Education is best governed at the local level, where the dependence of the structure of an educational system lies.

Owning property and the responsibilities that go with it were to guarantee that these rights would be carried out responsibly. To divorce this responsibility from local control and to invest it in state and federal control is obviously wrong.



aking educational funding support from property taxes and tying it to sales tax is just plain un-American and  
democratic in this democratic republic.

What are you and the officials you have elected thinking about the country's future?

M. Swanson

ffton

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Friday, June 23, 2006 10:19 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BT: Fri. June 23: Joe Croley column: Council not listening & VOX

Joe Croley - He says ...

## Council not listening

When life is fair, current members of the County Council will remember that Ronald Reagan ensured his election with four words in 1980: "There you go again." Once again, council members have chosen to present the same old proposal for a regressive capital sales tax increase to fund road and infrastructure problems that continue to worsen under their watch.

You know what they call doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results – insanity. This may not be that bad, but they should show some innovation at least. I know what we will hear: Well, these problems are the result of a previous council allowing uncontrolled and poorly funded construction to occur mainly south of the Broad.

Please spare me the same old rhetoric. The Wilbur Smith study back in 2000 recommended doing much of the same things included on the council's top 10 list. It certainly hasn't gotten any better in the past four years, but the best they can do is advance the same tired referendum that has been defeated twice already.

You can change the specifics but you can't change the fact that people want something that doesn't just pile more taxes on top of an already stretched-to-the-limit sales tax.

Granted, the state Legislature is doing its part in this pileup, by increasing the sales tax another 1 percent under the guise of property tax reform, but that is a whole other problem.

Try the Local Option Sales Tax (LOST), which hasn't been done yet. It may not supply as much money as quickly as the sales tax proposed, but it would give some level of tax relief, allow some flexibility to change priorities as we go along and show the people there are alternatives.

Certainly, our problems seven years ago are not the exact same they are now, but the capital sales tax will not allow any adjustment. Didn't the June 13 vote show people aren't buying what you're trying to sell, council?

Unfortunately, I suspect this particular referendum is doomed to failure once again and we will have to wait yet another year to address our road problems. Hopefully, by this tunnel-vision thinking, the council has not doomed the rural and critical lands referendum intended to preserve land throughout the county, purely through guilt by association.

You would think this council would want to go out in a blaze of glory by proposing and having the people pass something that supplies the funding to fix the myriad of problems development has caused. But, sadly, I guess Albert Einstein was right once again when he said, "The problems that exist in the world today cannot be solved by the level of thinking that created them." I use that phrase too often it seems.

In the meantime, I hope the 2007 County Council adopts the Patti LaBelle song of "A New Attitude" as its theme song ... although I am not sure I want to hear any of them sing it.

You can contact me at [Whenlifeisfair@hargray.com](mailto:Whenlifeisfair@hargray.com)

You say ...

## Vox (815-0869)

"This is in response to the letter to the editor Thursday about the Old Carolina rezoning. As a bystander to the proceedings and a resident of the town, I was pleased with the decision the Town Council made. They made a tough decision in a messy situation. Both town staff and the town attorney pointed out that the development of the property had a vested right because the county had already approved the development prior to the land being annexed into the town. The attorney also pointed out that the town would likely be on the losing end of a lawsuit if the property was not rezoned to be consistent the county approved development. The residents of that community as well voted 104 to 11 for approval of the project. The Town Council is charged with looking out for the interests of the town and its citizens. In this case I feel they did that. The council approved a project that the residents of that community overwhelmingly voted 'yes' for and kept the town from being involved in a law suit with the developer over an already-approved project."

ancy Bradshaw

**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, June 19, 2006 8:42 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Road work ahead

## Road work ahead

### Potential sales tax would pay for \$147M of road projects

GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*

Published Monday, June 19, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Take a dash of road projects from southern Beaufort County, a pinch of projects from north of the Broad River, mix them together and see if you've concocted something palatable to voters.

That's the recipe county officials seem to be following as they decide whether to ask voters to increase the sales tax by 1 percent to pay for \$147 million of road improvements.

Last week, the County Council's Public Services Committee identified 21 projects in southern and northern Beaufort County that could be funded by a sales-tax increase. If the council votes to move the plan forward, voters would consider an increase in a November referendum.

The projects in southern Beaufort County focus on widening highways to increase the number of vehicles they can serve, while also reducing congestion on U.S. 278. A series of frontage roads is designed to improve safety by getting more drivers off U.S. 278.

Most of the projects would be funded through a combination of impact fees, federal and state dollars, and the potential sales tax. Under the plan, the county would collect the sales tax for six years or until it takes in \$147 million, whichever comes first. The county plans to have the projects done by the time the tax expires, said county transportation engineer Tim Kinton.

E-mail your thoughts about a potential sales-tax increase to pay for road improvements to [traffic@islandpacket.com](mailto:traffic@islandpacket.com).

In all, the County Council's Public Services Committee identified \$73 million of southern Beaufort County road projects that could be paid for by a 1 percent sales-tax increase.

Proposed improvements:

#### Bluffton Parkway phase 5

Extends the Bluffton Parkway from Burnt Church Road through a yet-to-be determined path that would link the parkway to U.S. 278 just before the bridges to Hilton Head Island. It also straightens the parkway between Buck Island Road and the Buckwalter Parkway.

#### S.C. 170 widening

Widens S.C. 170 from two to four lanes from S.C. 46 to the Bluffton Parkway. The parkway doesn't extend that far yet but is under construction.

#### S. 278 widening, phase 3

Picks up the widening of the highway where the current widening project stops. Widens the highway from four to six lanes from Simmonsville Road to S.C. 170.

#### **U.S. 278 frontage road (Buckwalter Commercial)**

Builds a road just west of Buckwalter Parkway that runs parallel to U.S. 278, giving access to the yet-to-be built Buckwalter Business Park. Most of the project is being funded with impact fees.

#### **U.S. 278 frontage road (St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church)**

Drivers would be able to cross U.S. 278 at the Buckwalter Parkway traffic signal and turn east onto a new frontage road to access Berkeley Hall, St. Gregory the Great Catholic Church and the Bluffton Township Fire District headquarters.

#### **U.S. 278 frontage road (Rose Hill Plantation)**

Builds a road behind the Publix shopping center that would connect Rose Hill Plantation to Buck Island Road. A gated entrance to Rose Hill would be built at the end of the road.

#### **U.S. 278 frontage road (Plantation Business Park)**

Extends the road that runs in front of Plantation Business Park to connect with Simmonsville Road on the east and Westbury Park on the west. The median crossover on U.S. 278 that leads to the main entrance of the business park eventually would be closed.

#### **S.C. 170 widening phase 2**

Widens S.C. 170 from two lanes to four from the Bluffton Parkway to its intersection with U.S. 278. The parkway doesn't extend that far yet but is under construction.

#### **U.S. 278 widening phase 4**

Continues the widening of U.S. 278 from S.C. 170 to the Beaufort County line near the University of South Carolina Beaufort south campus.

#### **S.C. 170 widening phase 3**

Widens S.C. 170 from four lanes to six lanes from its intersection with U.S. 278 to the River Bend development.

#### **U.S. 278/S.C. 170 Interchange**

Reconfigures the ramps that allow drivers to merge from U.S. 278 to S.C. 170 to accommodate the additional lanes on both highways.

The county would work with the Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority to expand its bus service to provide fixed routes throughout Beaufort County.

- All cost estimates represent how much money would come from the sales tax. The costs include the county's estimate for inflation, bonding and unexpected expenses.

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, June 19, 2006 11:17 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BG: Letters: Roads, Gullah Festival & racism, Annexations

## Build infrastructure before people arrive

Published Mon, Jun 19, 2006

Comments (0) [Add Comment](#)

When we go again -- \$131 million must be raised for roads projects. As usual, voters will be asked to raise taxes to fund the improvements.

In the early 1980s, when visiting Fort Myers, Fla., I noticed miles and miles of four-lane roads to nowhere without any houses or commercial buildings in sight. I asked my host about this, and he told me that at the time Fort Myers was the fastest-growing area in the country, and the infrastructure was built first -- before the tens of thousands of homes and millions of square feet of commercial space already permitted were allowed to be built. What a concept.

by Lawrence "Vinnie" Francese, Beaufort

## Festival endures despite treatment

Published Mon, Jun 19, 2006

Comments (0) [Add Comment](#)

The Gullah Festival appreciates the patrons who attended our events, the volunteers and committee members who worked so tirelessly and the residents of Beaufort who were hospitable to our guests. We do thank and acknowledge those who wanted to attend but were unable to and supported us as they could. Even though this year's attendance was smaller than usual, it was far from "sparse."

We are well aware of the many incidents that occurred this year and of the many citizens who exhibited true Southern hospitality and the very few who chose not to be at all hospitable.

We want the residents of Beaufort to know that the unnecessary no-parking signs, the many parking tickets, towing of cars and charging unbelievable prices for towing and storage, the removal of chairs in front of a nearby hotel so that our guests could not rest in the heat of the day, canceling hotel reservations that had been previously confirmed for our workers, refusing to feed visiting visitors at a certain restaurant or having our guests frequently being called "nigger" and being told to "go home" will not stop us from having the festival. These actions are not conducive to showing Beaufort or the state in a positive light and will do nothing to enhance tourism; however, these actions only affirm our commitment to continue to educate and to have our festival every year.

We must give kudos to the manager of Country Inn & Suites for not allowing name-calling and racial slurs in that establishment.

Stay in, thanks, and we will be back again next year.

by Geraldine F. Pazant, The Gullah Festival, Executive Council president, Beaufort

## Dease annexations until plan is finished

Published Mon, Jun 19, 2006

Comments (0) [Add Comment](#)

On Thursday in The Gazette, Port Royal announced approval of property tax cuts because town officials say "recent growth, including more businesses, has added much to the town tax rolls."

In reality, Port Royal's growth will produce the need for more school facilities, roads, fire and emergency medical and police protection that the citizens of municipalities -- Port Royal, Beaufort, Hilton Head Island, Yemassee and Bluffton -- and the unincorporated county will have to pay through increased county and town property taxes.

Recently, Port Royal annexed the remote Mobley tract that will similarly increase county and town property taxes.

6/19/2006

Yemassee likewise annexed a large tract of remote rural land that will increase county and town property taxes.

Bluffton is periodically annexing additional rural land that will increase county and town property taxes.

Port Royal and Yemassee officials are behaving much like the Beaufort city officials, who desire others in the county to pay for school facilities, roads, fire and emergency medical and police protection needed to support their annexation of Clarendon Plantation and the McLeod tract.

These annexations are the result of developers shopping for a better deal than the county will provide. None seem concerned about the impact on the quality of life of citizens living in the county.

Everyone would be much better served if Beaufort city, Port Royal, Yemassee and Bluffton would cease annexing until the county regional planning process is completed, so that growth may be planned and balanced with our ability to raise taxes to pay for it.

Bill Marscher, Bluffton

Tracy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Friday, June 16, 2006 11:41 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BT: Fri. June 16, 2006: Joe Croley Column: Gas tax

Joe says ...

## Gas tax nonsense give him gas pains

When life is fair, someone will explain to me why the subject of roads and transportation drives our officials to the brink of irrational thought. We can't engineer roads to serve the taxpayer's needs, we can't build them on time, we can't maintain them and now we want to reduce a primary source of funding under the guise of a three month suspension of the state gasoline tax and at the same time charge a toll fare on Interstate 95. Why reduce the cost of driving and then charge more to do it?

Our governor has proposed dispensing with the 16.8-cent-a-gallon tax on gasoline, second lowest in the country, during the months of October, November and December this year and some members of the state Legislature are in support of this loony idea. Is this so it will cost less in gas for you to go to the polls and vote for them in November. No need, I will be willing to pay for premium gas to vote against these opportunists, who believe their re-election to be more important than the common good. So far my state representative, Bill Herbkersman, has shown the common sense to oppose this idea. Has yours? If not, contact them now and stop this foolish pandering for votes.

This tax allegedly supplies the funds to build and maintain our state road system; it certainly does not do the job now. The S.C. Department of Transportation is always crying poor mouth when it comes to road construction in this county, witness the widening of S.C. 170 to 60 feet; we had to supply a large portion of the cost of it by increasing the local sales tax.

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 15, 2006 11:52 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BT: Thurs. June 15, 2006: Editorial: Scattergun approach to road referenda not working

## We say ... Scattergun approach to road referenda not working

Beaufort County officials are trying to break down another brick wall by battering their heads against it. Again. The County Council's Public Services Committee has again approved a list, of 10 roads this time, for a sales-tax referendum they want voters to approve this November. Voters have literally been there, done that. And it's failed, twice now. This year's roads referendum idea has a price tag of \$147 million, which county officials say should be paid off in six years. And that would be fine, if it was just for, say, construction on U.S. 278, the Bluffton Parkway and whichever project is most needed in northern Beaufort County. In other words, a laser beam approach would break down that obvious anti-referendum wall voters have erected far easier than the county's preferred scattergun approach. We understand the pork barrel political game going on here. County officials can't put all of their money where it's most needed — on U.S. 278 — because of a belief, founded in reality or not, that northern Beaufort County voters wouldn't support it. As it stands, the list the county is now considering spends 54 percent of the \$147 million south of the Broad River and the remainder north of it. If the 54 percent number is supposed to make us feel better, it doesn't. Likely, it doesn't make Beaufort's voters feel all buttery, either. Do what needs to be done. Propose a referendum now to pay for the extension of the Bluffton Parkway and more improvements to U.S. 278. Do another next spring for U.S. 21 in northern Beaufort County. Trust the county's voters. They'll do the right thing and support the work that needs to be done. But stop insulting them with catch-all referenda after they've been shown to fail time after time.



Lacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 14, 2006 12:34 PM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BT: wed. June 14, 2006: Parkway, U.S. 278 top list for sales-tax hike

## Bluffton Parkway, U.S. 278 top list for sales-tax hike

LOLITA HUCKABY  
BLUFFTON TODAY

A list of 10 transportation projects topped by further improvements to the Bluffton Parkway and widening U.S. 278 made it past the County Council's Public Services Committee for possible funding by another 1 cent sales tax.

The priorities, drafted by the county engineering staff using projects identified in the northern and southern capital improvement road projects list, will go to the council's Planning Commission and Finance Committee before going to the full council for endorsement.

County officials hope voters will support the sales-tax referendum in November.

The list has a price tag of \$147 million, which county officials calculate can be paid off within six years. The total cost of the projects is \$179 million, but other funding is available for parts of the projects.

The list is divided between north and south of the Broad River projects, 54 percent of the costs are south of the Broad, the rest are in the northern part of the county.

Included in the list are:

- Bluffton Parkway Phase 5: construction and right-of-way acquisition
- Further U.S. 278 widening and frontage roads
- U.S. 21 improvements in Beaufort
- A parallel road for Boundary Street in Beaufort
- Ribaut Road improvements in Port Royal
- Planning and engineering design for a northern Beaufort bypass to connect Grays Hill and Lady's Island
- Widening S.C. 802 in the Shell Point area of Port Royal
- A countywide transit service.

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 13, 2006 11:18 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BT: Tues. June 9, 2005:Eight stoplights planned for Bluffton Parkway

## **Eight stoplights planned for Bluffton Parkway**

BY LOLITA HUCKABY  
BLUFFTON TODAY

A new access management plan for the Bluffton Parkway, complete with eight new stop lights and a roundabout, was unveiled Monday for county and municipal officials.

The Beaufort County Transportation Advisory Group gave its initial blessing to the plan drafted by the county engineering department. But the document must still be reviewed by the Bluffton Town Council as well as the full County Council.

The plan recommends speed limits remain at 45 mph once the parkway expansion is completed from Burnt Church Road to S.C. 170.

Traffic signals are proposed at the parkway's intersections with S.C. 170, Hampton Parkway, Buckwalter Parkway north and Buckwalter Parkway south, Buck Island Road, Simmonsville Road and a point between Simmonsville Road and S.C. 46.

The roundabout was proposed for the S.C.46 intersection.

The plan will also limit curb cuts and include an 8-foot-wide bike path.

Bluffton Mayor Hank Johnston, who is a member of the BTAG, called the plan a "good start" but added his council would be eager to review the proposal.

The committee also gave its approval to a \$336.6 million capital improvement road improvement list for Northern Beaufort County.

The list, plus the \$180 million road projects list already approved for Southern Beaufort County, will be used by the county officials to develop another sales tax referendum they plan to present to the voters in November.

ancy Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Tuesday, June 13, 2006 10:12 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BG: Officials eye \$131 million in road needs

## Officials eye \$131 million in road needs as tax proposed to pay for most work

Published Tue, Jun 13, 2006

By GREG HAMBRICK  
Beaufort Gazette

Comment (1) Add Comment

Beaufort County Transportation Advisory Group gave preliminary approval Monday to a list of 19 highway projects needed in northern Beaufort County over the next two decades, including nearly \$131 million in unfunded work.

The Transportation Advisory Group is a collection of county, municipal and public service leaders that makes recommendations on road improvements to local governing bodies.

The County Council approved a similar list earlier this year for southern Beaufort County that included \$71 million in unfunded road needs. The council's Public Services Committee is expected to begin selecting projects Monday from each list to be paid for through the \$147 million that could be collected over six years if voters approve a 1-cent transportation sales tax referendum in November.

The northern county list includes the \$12.3 million widening of U.S. 21 on St. Helena Island, expected to begin later this year and the \$173 million widening of 22 miles of U.S. 17 that is still awaiting word on state funding and federal permits.

The list also has several projects partially funded through impact fees charged to builders for the stress new developments have on roads, including Boundary Street improvements and a Lady's Island connector road being designed.

There's also several projects that were on a failed 2004 referendum of capital improvement projects, including the \$29.4 million widening of Lady's Island Drive and a parallel bridge to the J.E. McTeer Bridge and widening Savannah Highway from the Broad River to Shell Point that's expected to cost \$6 million.

Beaufort Mayor Bill Rauch questioned Monday whether the parallel bridge would be necessary if there were intersection improvements at Sea Island Parkway and Ribaut Road. But Colin Kinton, the county's transportation engineer, said that traffic models indicate the growth on Lady's Island will make a widened crossing a necessity.

Construction of a controversial \$180 million northern bypass proposed from north of Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort to Lady's Island was not included on the list, but \$6 million in planning and engineering for the span was included.

Officials debated best routes and the feasibility of the bypass Monday but agreed the planning phase will be necessary to determine the effectiveness in relieving downtown traffic and the impact on travel on Lady's Island.

"These are regional problems that require regional solutions," Rauch said.

Several Burton projects were on the list, including the Savannah Highway widening and improvements to Robert Smalls Parkway and Joe Frazier Road, and County Council Vice Chairman Skeet Von Harten said he's hopeful those projects will be done sooner rather than later.

"I've been patient, but I don't want us to get lost with all the discussion of the city of Beaufort and Lady's Island," he said.

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Later Monday, the County Council voted 8-3 to pull \$1.54 million from its reserve balance to reduce the expected tax increase for the budget year that begins July 1. The reduction puts the county tax increase at about \$6.2 million, or \$32 for a \$200,000 home. Councilmen Von Harten, Frank Brafman and Gerald Dawson opposed the measure.

Council members rejected, 3-7, a request by Councilman Dick Stewart to increase the county's business license fee to offset tax increases. Most said the existing program should be better enforced before raising the fee. Brafman and Councilman Peter Lamb supported Stewart. Dawson abstained.

The council also gave the second of three required readings to the school district's \$147 million budget that includes a \$110 tax increase on a \$200,000 home. Officials attribute the majority of the school district increase to the loss of \$15 million in state aid.

Both budgets will receive final approval June 26.

Contact Greg Hambrick at 986-5548 or [ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com). To comment: [beaufortgazette.com](http://beaufortgazette.com).

**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 13, 2006 9:07 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Road tax gaining traction

## Road tax gaining traction

By GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*  
Published Tuesday, June 13, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BEAUFORT -- Congestion on Beaufort County roads could be alleviated one penny at a time.

The Beaufort County Council took the first steps Monday toward asking voters to increase the sales tax by 1 percent to pay for \$147 million worth of road improvements. If the plan moves forward, voters would consider the increase in a November referendum.

The effort received support Monday from the mayors of Hilton Head Island, Bluffton, Beaufort, Port Royal and Edenton. The mayors are members of the Beaufort County Transportation Advisory Group, which voted 10-0 to endorse the sales-tax increase. The group advises the council on transportation issues.

The tax could raise money for extending the Bluffton Parkway from Burnt Church Road to the bridges of Hilton Head Island, building access roads along parts of U.S. 278 that would run parallel to the highway, and the continued widening of U.S. 278 and S.C. 170.

The council's Public Services Committee meets at 4 p.m. today at the county administration building in Beaufort to discuss what road projects in southern and northern Beaufort County should be covered by the tax. County Council Chairman Weston Newton said the committee will work to divide projects evenly north and south of the Broad River.

If the council decides to put the issue on November ballots, it would be the third time since 2002 the county has turned to voters to raise the sales tax for road projects. Voters narrowly rejected sales-tax increases in 2002 and 2004.

Newton believes the issue could win support this year because the county has worked with staff and local government leaders to prioritize road needs in northern and southern Beaufort County. The list for southern Beaufort County includes 13 projects totaling \$180 million, but the county already has found funding for many of those projects.

Ultimately, the council is in charge of deciding whether to put the issue before voters.

The council approved the proposal in first reading Monday. It will make a final vote on the tax during its third reading, which has not yet been scheduled.

If voters support the plan, the tax increase would go into effect May 1, 2007. The county would have up to six years to collect \$147 million under the plan.

The proposed increase comes after the legislature approved increasing the state sales tax by 1 cent to offer property-tax relief to homeowners. That increase will begin June 1, 2007. The legislature also approved reducing sales taxes on groceries by 2 cents.

Beaufort County voters also will be asked to consider approving a \$50 million bond referendum in November so the county can buy land and development rights to preserve open space. Long-term repayment of the bonds would increase property taxes by between \$12 and \$20 annually for a \$200,000 home, county officials have said.


## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, June 12, 2006 10:27 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BG: Week Ahead

## Week Ahead

Published Mon, Jun 12, 2006

 [Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

For the week of June 12-16.

### Monday

1 p.m.: The Beaufort County Council's Transportation Advisory Group will meet in council chambers, 100 Ribaut Road, to receive a presentation on the northern Beaufort County highway needs.

Details: 470-2800.

3 p.m.: The Beaufort County Council's Finance Committee will meet in the executive conference room, 100 Ribaut Road, to receive a presentation on the internal audit of the county's Purchasing Office.

Details: 470-2800.

4 p.m.: The Beaufort County Council will meet in council chambers, 100 Ribaut Road, to discuss the county and school district budgets, a proposed sales tax for road improvements and a proposal to alter impact fees in southern Beaufort County.

Details: 470-2800.

6 p.m.: The Pigeon Point Neighborhood Watch will meet in the Greene Street Gym at Greene and Hamar streets. Residents of Higginsonville also are invited.

Details: 379-6099.

6:30 p.m.: The Jasper County Board of Education will meet in the district office board room in Ridgeland to discuss several committee reports and special revenue budgets.

7 p.m.: The Yemassee Town Council will meet at Town Hall, 101 Town Circle, to discuss hurricane preparations and new business licenses.

Details 589-2565.

### Tuesday

8 a.m.: The Lady's Island Business and Professional Association will meet in the Sea Island Conference Center on Sams Point Road. Heather Simmons-Jones, executive director of The Greater Beaufort-Hilton Head Economic Partnership, will be the guest speaker.

Details: 838-9450.

4 p.m.: The Beaufort County Council's Public Service Committee will meet in the executive conference room, 100 Ribaut Road, to discuss a proposed sales tax for road projects and receive a presentation on the northern Beaufort County highway projects.

Details: 470-2800.

2 p.m.: The Beaufort City Council will meet in County Council chambers, 100 Ribaut Road, to consider preliminary approval of the city's approximately \$15 million budget for fiscal year 2007.

Details: 525-7070.

3 p.m.: The Beaufort County Board of Education will meet in the district office board room, 1300 King Street, to renew several contracts for food services, maintenance and transportation.

#### Wednesday

9 a.m.: Beaufort's Historic Review Board will meet in the Carnegie Building, 701 Craven St., to discuss the proposed demolition of buildings at 809 Washington St. and 944 Ribaut Road, a new house at 508 King St. and a new three-story building at the corner of Boundary and Charles.

Details: 525-7011.

10 a.m.: The Beaufort County Council's Community Services and Public Safety Committee will meet in the executive conference room, 100 Ribaut Road, to discuss fire service representation on the Construction Adjustments and Appeals Board.

Details: 470-2800.

3:30 p.m.: The Beaufort County Council's Grants and Minority Affairs Committee will meet in the executive conference room, 100 Ribaut Road, to discuss the county's local preference ordinance.

Details: 470-2800.

5:30 p.m.: The Port Royal Town Council will have a public hearing in the council chambers, 700 Paris Ave.

6:30 p.m.: The Port Royal Town Council will have a council meeting in the council chambers, 700 Paris Ave., to discuss a development agreement for more than 74 acres at Chesapeake Bay Road.

Details: 986-2211.

#### Thursday

8:30 a.m.: The Greater Beaufort-Hilton Head Economic Partnership's Board of Directors will meet at the University of South Carolina Beaufort's South Campus.

Details: 379-3958.

7 p.m.: Beaufort's Design Review Board will meet in the Carnegie Building, 701 Craven St., to discuss the Hilton Garden Inn proposed for Marsh Gardens and Trimmer Townhomes proposed for Salem Road.

Details: 525-7011.

## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Friday, June 09, 2006 10:50 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Council hopefuls face off

### Council hopefuls face off

#### Candidates in District 10 race support regional plan

BY GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*  
Published Friday, June 9, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BEAUFORT -- Don't feel bad if you don't understand the recently crafted Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan that is to serve as a guide to the area's future growth.

The candidates for the County Council District 10 seat say they've got your back.

Incumbent Margaret Griffin and challenger Jerry Stewart said Thursday they don't think most residents grasp how the plan will help solve the area's growing pains.

But in a debate Thursday, both Sun City Hilton Head residents said they would be committed to making sure the \$220,000 plan -- which recommends raising impact fees and seeking legislative approval of a real-estate-transfer fee -- doesn't wind up being shelved.

Griffin said the county's next step should be making sure Bluffton and Hilton Head Island officials are committed to joining the committees tasked with implementing it.

Stewart said the council "needs to set milestones" and hold officials accountable if they're not met.

The debate's 30-second time limit for responses made it difficult for the candidates to explain their positions on issues. The candidates will face off in the June 13 Republican primary, which is open to all voters.

In short, Griffin said she supports increasing the county's business-license fee, and she also supports asking voters in November to approve a 1 percent sales-tax increase for road improvements.

Stewart said the council needs to look at the overall tax structure for local businesses before deciding on a licensing-fee increase. He would support increasing the sales tax for roads, he said, but only after the county finds out how it will be affected by a recently approved property-tax-relief plan.

Neither candidate thinks a moratorium on development is the way to slow growth or that splitting the county into two school districts to potentially collect more state dollars is a good idea.

"As far as I'm concerned it's a nonissue, because it will never happen," Stewart said of splitting the districts.

The debates were sponsored by the local leagues of women voters and broadcast on WJWJ-TV, the local PBS station. District 10 includes Sun City Hilton Head, Windmill Harbour and greater Bluffton on the north side of U.S. 278.

Contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).



Stacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson

Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2006 8:59 AM

To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)

Subject: IP: Editorial: New town manager needs to roll up sleeves, dive in

**New town manager needs to roll up sleeves, dive in**

**Bluffton at crossroads that requires hard work, fresh perspectives**

Published Wednesday, May 10, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Where to start in offering some suggestions to Bluffton's incoming town manager?

To begin, William D. Workman will need the optimistic attitude he expressed immediately after getting the Town Council's 5-0 vote of confidence in April.

Workman said he welcomes the "challenges" facing a town that has grown from one square mile to about 50 square miles in less than a decade and whose population has grown from 1,275 in 2000 to 4,571 in 2005, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

"By and by, things are going very good here," he said.

Let's stop there. Things aren't going very well here at all. We have growth at such a pace that we can't drive on our roads and our children are stacked like cordwood in trailers outside Bluffton Elementary School, a seven-year-old facility. The same thing is happening at five-year-old H.E. McCracken Middle School and three-year-old Okatie Elementary School. We're preparing to vote May 20 on a \$43 million school bond referendum to address only the most immediate of needs.

The pristine May River is under increasing pressure from development near its shores. We are one spill away, one major storm away from oyster beds closing. If that sounds alarmist, paddle the small creeks in the river's upper reaches. Look at the additional sedimentation and the changing character of these waterways. It's there, far from the bustle of the sandbar on a busy summer day, that the problems start. Nature isn't just a pretty view.

Go into Town Hall and ask the staff the hours they work, the number of work sites they visit each week and how well they think they're doing in making sure they can stop damage before it happens, not supervise a cleanup or collect relatively paltry fines after the fact.

Bluffton's new police chief warns that his department, budgeted for 30 officers, has been overwhelmed this year with service calls and car crashes and said more officers desperately are needed if the department is going to prevent crime. He expects to need to make enough hires in the next two years to bring the department to 50 officers.

People are crying out about their property tax bills and the General Assembly is poised to upend the way local governments pay for their operations. Beaufort County will have a ballot question asking voters to approve spending \$52 million to buy land for parks and open space and plans another attempt at a local sales tax to pay for road projects in the county. Two previous attempts -- in 2002 and 2004 -- failed.

We welcome fresh energy and fresh ideas for tackling problems that have worn down even Bluffton's most ardent defenders.

But please, Mr. Workman, don't come into this job thinking it's going to be short hours and easy work. It will be quite the opposite.

5/28/2006

He did say managing growth without causing friction among its residents will be a major challenge. Yes, and more. He plans to start full time June 15, a scant two weeks away from the town's deadline to get next year's budget approved.

We hope his experience as mayor in Greenville and his work in private industry have prepared him well. He served as mayor of Greenville from 1983 to 1995. He spent 18 years in management positions in Piedmont Natural Gas and engineering firm Fluor Daniel, both in Greenville. He retired from his job as a vice president with Piedmont in February 2004. He works now as an economic-development consultant in Greenville.

The people of Bluffton and the surrounding area need a strong manager, with experience in dealing with the pressures of fast growth, building a staff, implementing a large capital improvements program from scratch and building strong intergovernmental relationships.

As we've said before, with the rapid pace of change in Bluffton, the town doesn't have time for second chances. It all needs to get done right the first time.

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 18, 2006 8:50 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: County road projects inch forward

## County road projects inch forward

Plans for streets south of the Broad still about \$71 million short of goal

GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*  
Published Tuesday, April 18, 2006  
Comments (0) → [Add Comment](#)

BEAUFORT -- Beaufort County officials are waiting on the state legislature before deciding whether to seek a sales-tax increase in November to help pay for a \$180 million plan to improve roads south of the Broad River.

The County Council's Land Management Committee voted 6-0 Monday to approve a list of 33 road projects developed by local planners and engineers after the 2004 sales-tax referendum failed.

Although the plan details ways to pay for a majority of the projects, it still falls \$71.3 million short of the amount needed for all of the projects.

County Council Chairman Weston Newton said Monday the council must wait until after state legislators decide whether to raise sales taxes for property-tax relief before considering whether to ask voters to approve a 1 percent sales tax increase for roads.

"We're moving in the direction of being prepared to submit a ballot question in November that includes a local sales tax for roadway improvements," Newton said in an interview. "But we're also watching what happens in the General Assembly to see how that impacts that."

If the legislature raises the sales tax, then the county would be less inclined to raise the local rate, he said.

The county also will ask voters to approve a \$50 million bond in November to help conserve land.

"The list (of road projects) was not advanced for the sole purpose of a penny sales tax," Newton said. "It is one consideration, but we also recognize the reality that the ballots are going to be crowded in the fall."

The county is taking steps to raise the fees it charges developers for the impact new developments have on roads. It also is developing a list of road projects for northern Beaufort County, which Newton said would also be included in a possible sales-tax referendum.

In the last four years, voters have twice rejected attempts to increase the county's sales tax by 1 percent to pay for road improvements. Referendums failed in 2002 and 2004.

The list of projects approved Monday includes extending the Bluffton Parkway from Burnt Church Road to the Hilton Head Island bridges, building several frontage roads along U.S. 278 and widening several of the roads that connect with the highway.

Contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

4/18/2006

## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, April 10, 2006 9:48 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** BG & IP: Southern Beaufort County plan closer to reality

### Southern Beaufort County plan closer to reality

Published Sat, Apr 8, 2006

By GINNY SKALSKI

The Island Packet

 [Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

BLUFFTON -- A plan addressing how to continue making southern Beaufort County a desirable place to live and work as more residents and businesses pour into the area is getting closer to being put into action.

The Beaufort County Land Management Committee voted 6-0 Friday to approve the final draft of the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan, an 81-page document that local governments paid \$220,000 to have produced.

The plan projects that the county's population south of the Broad River will double to more than 134,000 by 2020, resulting in an funding gap of more than \$370 million for roads, schools, parks and other facilities.

Those projections have been called "frightening" by county administrator Gary Kubic, but the plan identifies ways to close the budget gap. Most of those suggestions, such as raising impact fees for roads and parks and seeking legislative support for a local-option gas tax, were received favorably by the Beaufort County Council and Bluffton and Hilton Head Island officials who reviewed the plan earlier this week.

All three governments, however, took exception to a suggestion to ask the Legislature to authorize a local real-estate-transfer fee to help pay for road improvements. Instead, they said the fee should be used to pay to preserve open space.

On Friday, the committee voted against pursuing a real-estate-transfer fee to upgrade roads. Instead, committee members supported looking into a sales-tax referendum, seeking authorization of a local-option gas tax and increasing road-impact fees to plug for the \$158.4 million funding gap expected to arise in the next 15 to 20 years.

To ensure the recommendations are put into action, the report suggests creating a nine-member implementation committee made up of:

- One elected official each from Beaufort County, Bluffton and Hilton Head Island;
- One member selected by the three elected officials; and
- One representative each from the Beaufort County Board of Education, the Beaufort-Jasper Water and Sewer Authority, Jasper County, Hardeeville and the Lowcountry Council of Governments.

That panel would oversee four working groups and a transportation-planning team made up of staff members from local governments and other agencies that have a hand in the issues. The four groups would focus on the area's natural assets, land use, parks and recreation, and public safety.

Each group would be responsible for identifying ways the local governments could achieve the goals outlined in the plan. For example, the duties of the natural assets group would include taking a regional inventory of lands to target for open-space preservation.

The plan will be reviewed by the Beaufort County Planning Commission before being presented to the County Council for final approval within the next four weeks.

Contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment: [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, April 10, 2006 8:51 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP & BG: Plan to tackle growth moves closer to action

## Plan to tackle growth moves closer to action

GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*  
Published Saturday, April 8, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BLUFFTON -- A plan addressing how to continue making southern Beaufort County a desirable place to live and work as more residents and businesses pour into the area is getting closer to being put into action.

The Beaufort County Land Management Committee voted 6-0 Friday to approve the final draft of the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan, an 81-page document that local governments paid \$220,000 to have produced.

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Each group would be responsible for identifying ways the local governments could achieve the goals outlined in the plan. For example, the duties of the natural assets group would include taking a regional inventory of lands to target for open space preservation.

The plan will be reviewed by the Beaufort County Planning Commission before being presented to the County Council

4/28/2006

for final approval within the next four weeks.

The county has hired the same consultant, Clarion Associates, to create a similar plan for northern Beaufort County. The southern and northern regional plans will be used to guide the county's revision of its comprehensive plan, which serves as a guide to future growth.

County planning director Tony Criscitiello told the committee that his department will be "responsible to make sure the momentum is not lost and that the plan doesn't go in a binder on the shelf."

Contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

ancy Bradshaw

**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 06, 2006 12:12 PM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: County yields on road plan

## County yields on road plan

GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*  
Published Wednesday, April 5, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) -> [Add Comment](#)

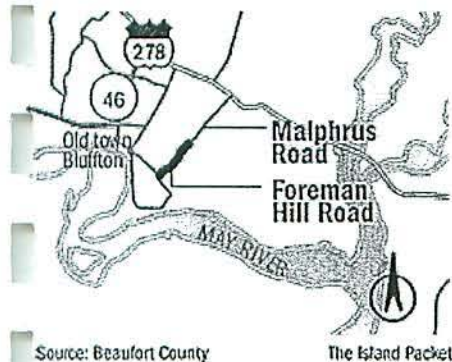
took some bellyaching, but Foreman Hill Road residents concerned that Beaufort County was moving too fast with a plan to pave their dirt road have won reprieve.

County engineering officials presented a revised list of road projects planned south of the Broad River to the Beaufort County Planning Commission on Tuesday.

The revision indicated that the county would not pave Foreman Hill Road -- a dirt road north of the All Joy community in Water Bluffton -- until several other road projects are complete, including the extension of the Bluffton Parkway from Saint Church to Malphrus roads.

Extending the Bluffton Parkway eastward is expected to take years, and county officials have not determined how to pay for it. So Foreman Hill Road residents left the meeting feeling somewhat relieved.

"It's a rural road, it's a rural neighborhood," said Jim Snow, who has lived on the road since 1980. "It did not need, at this time, a thoroughfare to run through it when the parkway and other projects needed to be done first."



Source: Beaufort County

The Island Packet

Photo:

*The Island Packet*

[Enlarge Image](#)

In addition to being paved, plans call for linking Foreman Hill Road to Malphrus Road, providing a connection between S. 278 and the All Joy community.

Residents thought the county was moving ahead with the road paving and extension because it was one of the more affordable tasks, not because it was one of the most necessary. They voiced their displeasure to their County Councilman, Peter Lamb, and blasted the proposal at a Planning Commission subcommittee meeting.

Commissioner Alan Herd told the 12 residents who attended Tuesday's meeting that their commitment to having their voices heard helped their case.

we have an example of citizens coming forward and us being able to do what you want us to ... and at the same time do something that's better for the county," Herd said. "So I think we've found a win-win."

In the end, the Planning Commission voted 4-0 to recommend approval of a capital improvement program identifying 33 road projects for southern Beaufort County. The plan was assembled by a team of local planners and engineers to figure out how to pay for road projects after the 2004 sales tax referendum failed.

The projects total \$180 million, and officials are about \$71.3 million short of the amount needed for all 33 projects. The majority of that shortfall, about \$49.2 million, is for the extension of the Bluffton Parkway from Burnt Church Road to the bridges to Hilton Head Island.

The plan will be presented to the County Council's Land Management Committee on April 17 before going to the full council. Ultimately, it could be used to help put together another sales-tax referendum.



Tacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 22, 2006 8:44 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** IP: Letter: Town sneaks in new road tax

## Town sneaks in new road tax

Published Wednesday, February 22, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

The Packet:

In a stealth maneuver, the Town Council of Hilton Head Island has effectively put in place the 1 percent tax for road projects twice defeated by island taxpayers.

In a move not seen since the king of England ruled our country, this entity has overruled the majority vote of the people with a disdain for the rights of the masses.

A little background -- last year we were told that the Town of Hilton Head Island was going to institute an additional 1 percent hospitality tax -- a sales tax on prepared foods and beverages -- before those ogres from Beaufort County did.

It sounded good to me. Fast forward to Feb. 8 when by royal decree the king's court decided it was going to give \$3 million to Beaufort County for the purposes of covering up the total mismanagement of growth in the Bluffton area.

Would guess what? They are going to ask us in November to vote to tax ourselves another 1 percent to support the roads on the other side of the bridge. That will be double what anyone else has been taxed and we already have had a head start.

Since we live in the state that had the most battles in it during the Revolutionary War, I think we should add one more -- Town Council. Or maybe dumping some tea into the waters of Harbour Town would do.

If you don't call your councilman and protest this, then at least go out and buy yourself a "red coat."

Bill Coleman

Hilton Head Island

2/28/2006

## Stacy Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2006 8:27 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: IP & BG: Hilton Head pledges \$3M to mainland traffic projects

### Hilton Head pledges \$3M to mainland traffic projects

BY TIM DONNELLY, *The Island Packet*  
Published Wednesday, February 8, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

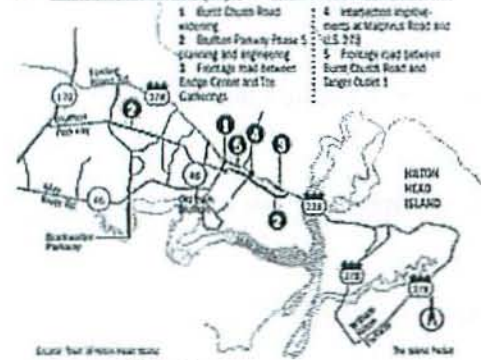


Photo:

*The Island Packet*

[+ Enlarge Image](#)

The Town of Hilton Head Island on Tuesday committed an initial \$3 million to a slate of mainland road projects, a pledge seen as crucial to get the traffic-reducing measures off the ground.

But the Town Council stopped short of agreeing to pay for specific projects, instead endorsing the \$3 million as a way to show Beaufort County and other local officials the town will be a player in efforts to improve mainland infrastructure. Specific projects -- most of which were included in the failed 2004 sales tax referendum -- should be assessed on a case-by-case basis, council members said.

"The county needs to know that we are on board," Mayor Tom Peebles said.

The council also agreed to give \$400,000 to help planning for extending the Bluffton Parkway from Burnt Church Road to the bridges to Hilton Head Island -- an extension that could take some of the pressure off U.S. 278, officials said.

The money will come from an extra 1 percent tax on prepared food and beverages the town reluctantly enacted last year. It added that amount to the 1 percent tax it already collected because a Beaufort County ordinance that was about to be approved would have increased the tax anyway but funneled the money to the county.

In doubling the tax, the town agreed to set aside a percentage for road improvements, both on and off the island. The tax is expected to bring in \$2.25 million a year, deputy town manager Chuck Hoelle said.

The slate of projects the town tentatively committed money to Tuesday is a \$180 million list of 33 items that county transportation advisors last month deemed priority needs in southern Beaufort County. Most if not all of the items are focused on getting cars through the greater Bluffton area without relying so much on overburdened U.S. 278.

It's far from a complete list, with \$71 million still lacking a source of funding. But Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton said getting the commitment from Hilton Head is another step toward solving the area's traffic problems.

...a partnership of multiple jurisdictions through various funding mechanisms and sources," said Newton, who  
ed create the list along with Peebles and Bluffton Mayor Hank Johnston. "I think it's a very significant step that all  
e of the governments have developed this list, working together since the failure of the penny sales tax."

ion Head has shown particular interest in being part of mainland traffic projects lately as growth in greater Bluffton  
reatens to hamper the flow of visitors to the island. But because the town didn't commit to specific projects it may be  
ected to help pay for, the project list could need to find even more sources of money.

ill, Newton said the county is continuing to develop other sources, including possibly another sales tax referendum in  
ember.

t's not the silver bullet," he said. "(But) having \$71 million unidentified is better than \$180 million unidentified."

ontact Tim Donnelly at 706-8145 or [tdonnelly@islandpacket.com](mailto:tdonnelly@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to  
[islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2006 11:17 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** BG: County could vote on tasks

## County could vote on tasks

Published Thu, Jan 26, 2006

By GREG HAMBRICK  
The Beaufort Gazette

[Comments \(2\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

The Beaufort County Council may go without a citizen-based committee to determine projects for a proposed sales tax hike, relying instead on the remaining projects from a failed 2004 referendum compiled by a citizen board as well as new road needs.

With voters likely to face a number of ballot questions in November that include proposals to raise money for school construction and land conservation, a capital projects sales tax would add 0.5 or 1 percent to pay for the voter-approved list.

County Council Chairman Weston Newton said Monday that he will discuss with municipal leaders the county's approach to collecting the projects for the referendum, possibly leaving project decisions to the council instead of a citizen-led selection committee used in 2004.

Referendums in 2002 and 2004 were rejected by voters, both losing to a majority in northern Beaufort County.

Projects to choose from include most of those left unfunded after the rejection of the \$122 million referendum in 2004 as well as \$70 million in road needs in southern Beaufort County identified by county and municipal leaders this week.

Beaufort Mayor Bill Rauch said Newton has been good at providing input for residents and municipal officials.

"If there's a good-faith effort for input, I think there can be a good list," he said.

Mayors likely will have to meet with Newton and County Council Vice Chairman Skeet Von Harten to lay out priorities and determine the scope of the capital project list, Rauch said.

Newton did not say what other steps he would take to receive input on proposed projects.

On Monday, the county's Transportation Advisory Group, made up of elected officials from various municipalities and public service districts, approved a \$180 million needs assessment for southern Beaufort County roads, including future portions of the Bluffton Parkway and widening of S.C. 170 from Riverbend to S.C. 46.

Though the county likely will consider increasing fees for new developments in the region to pay for those needs, there will be a more than \$70 million shortfall that will need to be covered by the referendum, Newton said.

"That may well be half the referendum question right there," he said.

Northern Beaufort County road needs will be determined by the county's transportation model, which should be completed in late February. The study is expected to include the feasibility of a so-called northern bypass from north of Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort to Lady's Island.

Projects in the 2002 referendum included a parallel bridge next to the J.E. McTeer Bridge to Lady's Island, back access roads along Robert Smalls Parkway and money for the widening of U.S. 17 from Gardens Corner to Big Estate Road.

While the state is expected to pay for most of the widening project, other road needs remain unfunded and likely will cost more now than they would have two years ago, said Colin Kinton, the county's traffic engineer.

7/27/2006

spring, for it to be on the November ballot.

last year, council members had considered a local option sales tax referendum that would have put the majority of the revenue from a 1 cent sales tax toward property tax bills, but Newton said that other needs and efforts on the state level to relieve tax burdens have pushed that option aside.

"The most pressing need is to address road funding," he said.

Proposals in Columbia that include eliminating the majority of property taxes for an additional 2 percent sales tax would also have an impact on the capital projects question, Newton said.

"There's a lot of uncertainty because of what's happening in Columbia," he said.

Contact Greg Hambrick at 986-5548 or [ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com). To comment: [beaufortgazette.com](http://beaufortgazette.com).

## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 26, 2006 11:09 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** IP: Time to get out ahead on roads and stay there

### Time to get out ahead on roads and stay there

#### Playing catch-up a hazardous game we can ill afford

Published Thursday, January 26, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Something needed to be done about the Russian roulette drivers play as they try to cross or turn onto S.C. 46 at Bluffton Parkway, so news of a four-way stop to be followed by a traffic roundabout at that intersection is welcome.

But plans to widen that section of S.C. 46 to four lanes means eventually we will be tearing up the single-lane roundabout

Don't get us wrong. Something has to be done at that intersection. But we need to figure out a way to build road improvements without having to tear them up later. And we have to ask why that intersection wasn't better designed from the get-go. Common sense says do it right the first time.

We're going to do the same kind of thing again if we later build a shorter route for Bluffton Parkway from Buck Island Road to S.C. 170 after finishing the route overlapping Buckwalter Parkway now under construction.

Even small road projects mean big headaches here. When a fender-bender at 6:30 a.m. at Moss Creek can back up traffic on U.S. 278 and its side roads until 11 a.m., we have a serious issue on our hands. Look at the reports on traffic accidents in the past two weeks. Road projects, even if they are on hiatus during the day, make for confusing, hazardous navigation.

Piecemeal solutions are what got us here. That and an unwillingness or inability to bite the bullet on long-term road needs well ahead of demand so that long-term financing plans could be put in place. We started this process a decade ago with Beaufort County's first comprehensive plan. That plan included a transportation element with lines on maps showing where roads would be needed. We're starting to see variations on those suggested roads in planning or under construction today, but at what cost? Planning, engineering and construction that should have begun a decade ago are just getting started. All the while, new development has forging ahead at a breakneck pace.

We know there is a long list of reasons some key road projects are woefully behind schedule (two failed sales tax referendums top the list). But we need to do better.

The southern Beaufort County regional plan gets us moving again, with its long-term look at what's ahead. The Beaufort County Transportation Advisory Group adopted a plan Monday detailing \$180 million in road improvements for southern Beaufort County. The plan lists 33 projects aimed at improving roads and traffic conditions, and it identifies how local officials expect to pay for them. Topping the list is extending Bluffton Parkway and widening S.C. 46 from Bluffton Village to U.S. 278.

That's what needs to happen. We need specific projects, with dollar amounts and funding sources listed. Let's get out ahead of road issues and stay there.

Stacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]

Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2006 9:44 AM

To: Public Information

Subject: IP: County adopts detailed plan of road projects, funding options

## County adopts detailed plan of road projects, funding options

Published Tuesday, January 24, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BEAUFORT -- The Beaufort County Transportation Advisory Group adopted a plan Monday detailing \$180 million worth of road improvements in southern Beaufort County.

The plan lists 33 projects aimed at improving traffic conditions and is meant to help local officials identify ways to pay for them.

The only objection to the plan came from Lowcountry Regional Transportation Advisory Chairman Thomas Heyward, who opposes a plan to pave a dirt section of Foreman Hill Road that runs north from Ulmer Road and connect it to the paved portion of the road that runs south from U.S. 278.

He said that project will encourage drivers to cut through the neighborhood. He also had concerns about the order in which the county is tackling the construction of the Bluffton Parkway.

The advisory group's recommendations also included suggesting the county begin the process of raising road impact fees in southern Beaufort County and evaluating the possibility of a sales tax referendum in November to pay for road improvements.

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 23, 2006 9:26 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** BG & IP: County leaders ponder 'frightening' projections

## County leaders ponder 'frightening' projections

BY GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*  
Published Saturday, January 21, 2006  
🔗 [Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BLUFFTON -- The population of southern Beaufort County is expected to double to more than 134,000 by 2020. And the roads, school and parks necessary to accommodate the boom could cost the region more than \$455 million, according to a county plan.

Beaufort County Council members received the sobering projections in the final draft of the Southern Beaufort County Regional Plan on Friday during the first day of the council's annual planning session. The session continues today at 8:30 a.m. in the Hargray Building at the University of South Carolina Beaufort's south campus.

The problem is, the county is only expected to take in about \$117 million from dedicated sources, such as impact fees and federal earmarks for road improvements -- leaving an approximately \$338 million funding gap, according to county planners.

"The numbers are frightening," said county administrator Gary Kubic.

### ROADS

New residents also mean more cars on the area's already busy roads. The plan reveals that most of southern Beaufort County's regional road network will be graded as failing if no capital improvements are made in the next 15 to 20 years. The grading system is based on the design of roads and the number of cars that travel on them, according to long-range planner Robert Merchant.

The regional plan, which is expected to be adopted by the council as well as Bluffton and Hilton Head Island officials by June, is meant to help guide growth for the remaining 11 percent of uncommitted land in southern Beaufort County. The rest of the land in the region has been developed or is set aside for development, conservation or public use.

The county hired Denver-based Clarion Associates to compile the plan, which will be used when the county revises its comprehensive plan in 2007. The consultant has recommended the county nearly quadruple its base impact fees for roads in the southern part of the county from \$440 to at least \$1,660 per single-family home to help pay for road improvements. The fees paid by developers usually are passed along to homebuyers.

Other money-generating ideas suggested in the plan include asking county voters to approve an extra 1 percent sales tax, which could generate about \$350 million for the southern and northern parts of the county if voters authorized the tax for two seven-year periods. Similar referendums were turned down in 2002 and 2004.

### PARKS AND SCHOOLS

To accommodate the new families, the plan estimates the county will need to acquire 525 acres of new park land at an estimated cost of \$66 million.

The population growth is expected to funnel roughly 4,400 new students into southern Beaufort County's schools. That



ditions to existing schools, according to information in the plan pulled from the school district's long-range planning consultants, DeJong & Associates.

County planning director Tony Criscitiello suggested saving tax dollars on school and park construction by pairing both on one site. Criscitiello estimated 175 acres are needed for new school construction.

"That's the kind of thing intergovernment communication is all about," Criscitiello told the council.

Council members suggested the plan be reviewed by Jasper County and Hardeeville officials because the effects of developments planned there are expected to spill over the Beaufort County line.

"I think for us to try to stuff this down Jasper County's and Hardeeville's throats isn't going to fly," said Councilman Peter Lamb, who represents Bluffton.

Contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

Stacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
Sent: Monday, January 23, 2006 9:22 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: BG & IP: County aims to improve reassessment

## County aims to improve reassessment

BY GREG HAMBRICK, *The Beaufort Gazette*  
Published Sunday, January 22, 2006  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BLUFFTON -- Improving county services was the priority on the final day of the Beaufort County Council's annual planning retreat, including needed improvements to the county's reassessment process.

The countywide reassessment in 2004 left some taxpayers with sticker shock at their ballooning property values, while officials complained that some homes were grossly misappraised.

County staff members are holding weekly meetings to find ways to integrate the different offices involved in compiling property information and tax collections, said county administrator Gary Kubic.

"We can get the tools, we can buy the software, the problem is getting coordinated," he said.

But council members said a priority will be hiring staff needed to improve the assessment of property.

Last month, assessor Ed Hughes told council members he had a tough time keeping trained appraisers, and when fully staffed he still would helm an overburdened department.

At current staff levels, appraisers would be fielding 22,800 parcels each during the next reassessment, compared with 6,800 parcels per appraiser in Charleston and 7,630 per appraiser in Spartanburg County, Hughes has said. At full staff, Beaufort County would lag behind with more than 12,000 parcels for every appraiser.

Kubic said recommendations for increased staff in the Assessor's Office should be in front of the council within the next month.

"There is no reason not to staff it appropriately," said Councilman Peter Lamb. "This body has got to bite the bullet on tax assessors."

Looking ahead to other multi-year needs, Kubic said he will develop a five-year forecast on budget needs and priorities.

County planners estimate there were more than 153,500 residents in Beaufort County in 2004, the most current data available. They project a growth rate of 4,690 people a year through 2025.

Kubic recommended the council begin considering land purchases to meet the needs of the growing population.

"What I'm worried about is that if we don't become more aggressive at securing what we need, it will end up costing us more," he said.

Council Chairman Weston Newton said the council also will take a detailed look at the various services the county provides, comparing them to other counties and weighing them against services provided 10 years ago.

"We're servicing more people, but are we giving more county services? I don't know," he said.

7/27/2006

## Stacy Bradshaw

**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 18, 2006 12:38 PM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** IP & BG: lic Information Office

### County hones in on regional road projects

BY GINNY SKALSKI, *The Island Packet*

Published Wednesday, January 18, 2006

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Local officials hope a plan detailing \$180 million worth of road improvements in southern Beaufort County will generate support for raising the money needed to pay for them.

The plan, released Tuesday, spells out 33 projects aimed at improving driving conditions. It's intended to help local officials identify ways to pay for some of the improvements -- including a possible sales tax referendum in November and an increase in fees builders pay for increased traffic new development brings.

Some of the projects have been discussed since before 2002, the year voters nixed a measure to increase the sales tax by 1 percent to help pay for road improvements. Voters rejected a similar measure in 2004.

Since then local officials have come up with other ideas to pay for 23 of the projects -- including building parts of the Bluffton Parkway and a section of road connecting Foreman Hill and Malphrus roads. But they're still \$71.3 million short of the amount needed for all 33 projects.

"At the end of the day there's still a very significant amount of dollars unfunded, but this is a comprehensive list of the road improvements we think (we) need to be able to try to address," said County Council Chairman Weston Newton.

#### Top 10 list for roads

These are the 10 road improvements proposed for areas south of the Broad River in Beaufort County over the next five years. In all, the projects are expected to cost \$95.4 million.

- 1 Bluffton Parkway Phases 3 & 4 and Buxton Parkway widening
- 2 S.C. 46 widening
- 3 Burnt Church Road widening
- 4 Bluffton Parkway Phase 5 planning and engineering
- 5 Foreman Hill Road connection
- 6 Bridge road between Edge Center and The Gathering
- 7 Intersection improvements at Malphrus Road and U.S. 278
- 8 Intersection improvements at Square Pope Road and U.S. 278
- 9 Bridge road between Burnt Church Road and Tanger Outlet 1
- 10 William Hillan Parkway resurfacing

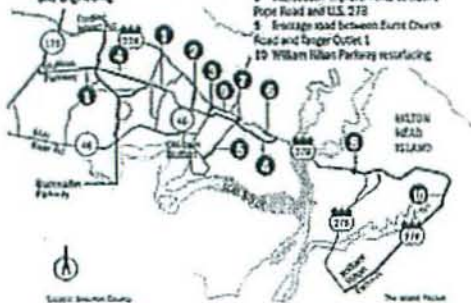


Photo: Source: Beaufort County.

*The Island Packet*

[+ Enlarge Image](#)

The Beaufort County Transportation Advisory Group, made up of mayors and senior administrators from the county's municipalities, will meet next week to discuss the plan. The plan was assembled by a team of local planners and engineers to figure out how to pay for road projects after the 2004 sales tax referendum failed.

"We've worked really hard to identify alternative funding sources and really address the projects that need to be done to provide for safe and efficient travel in southern Beaufort County," said county traffic engineer Colin Kinton, who helped

In addition to approving the plan, Newton will ask the Transportation Advisory Group to recommend that the county start the process of revising and updating road-impact fees in southern Beaufort County.

Additionally, he wants the group to suggest that the county evaluate a potential sales-tax referendum in November to pay for unfunded projects on the list and for yet-to-be-determined projects in northern Beaufort County. The county might not seek a sales-tax increase, however, if state legislators decide to raise sales taxes for another pressing need -- property tax relief.

"The totality of circumstances may suggest it's futile or, theoretically, even impossible," Newton said.

Newton also wants the Transportation Advisory Group to continue to lobby Congress for additional federal money for U.S. 278 and the Bluffton Parkway and to consider applying to the State Infrastructure Bank for road money.

Newton plans to post the list of projects on the county's Web site ([www.bcgov.net](http://www.bcgov.net)) along with information about funding sources and anticipated project schedules after the transportation group meets.

"We see this as kind of a first step of bringing it to this joint group," Kinton said. "And then we can ... go on to the respective governmental entities."

Contact Ginny Skalski at 706-8144 or [gskalski@islandpacket.com](mailto:gskalski@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2005 8:45 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** BG: Officials to appear on 'Coastline'

## Officials to appear on 'Coastline'

Published Thu, Nov 17, 2005

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton and County Administrator Gary Kubic are expected to appear on WJWJ-TV's call-in show "Coastline" at 8 p.m. today.

The two are expected to discuss funding needs for transportation and land preservation which could lead to plans for a referendum next year. They also will discuss the county's new admissions fee.

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2005 8:42 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** BG: Letter: The 'SWU' fee is a real shocker

## The 'SWU' fee is a real shocker

Published Thu, Nov 17, 2005

Comments (0) [Add Comment](#)

I have never questioned my county tax bill. I have grumbled but dutifully paid what the county said we owed.

With all the talk about \$300 million for this and \$100 million for that, a sales tax here, a bond referendum there and a decision over past bonds and taxes, what are elected officials thinking?

What has shocked me this year is the "SWU" fee. The McTeer family has owned Capers Island. Camp sites were sold and mostly the island has disappeared due to extreme erosion. One parcel we have continued to pay taxes on is actually four acres of marsh. The county assessor classifies it as "marsh, eroded." The tax amount is 35 cents. This isn't a misprint; it is 35 cents. The Storm Water Property fee is \$333.30. No misprint, either, and it is up from \$140 last year. This is spartina marsh in the Atlantic Ocean, not the Walmart parking lot. Who in their right mind came up with this "rain" tax? The same amount of rain will fall on the ground whether my property sheds the water or not. My private, paid-for property absorbs this water.

Wastewater treatment is not and will not be an issue for St. Helena Island or Capers Island. We also own a small 2.14-acre marsh on the island near Coffin Point. The rain tax is \$10.07. There seems to be no reason to the way the tax is computed. This is a case of local government twisting an interpretation of a mandate to create a new tax. Don't regulations exist for paved parking lots, golf courses or such that had to have retention ponds in the plans?

Homeowners may want to examine their own SWU fee on the tax bill.

James E. McTeer Jr.

St. Helena Island


Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 17, 2005 8:22 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** IP: Newton, Kubic on 'Coastline' today

## Newton, Kubic on 'Coastline' today

Published Thursday, November 17, 2005

 [Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton and county administrator Gary Kubic are expected to appear on WJWJ-TV's call-in show "Coastline" at 8 p.m. today.

The men are expected to discuss funding needs for transportation and land preservation, which could lead to plans for a referendum next year. They also will discuss the county's new admissions fee.

Viewers may call in with questions at 524-0808.

Stacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
Sent: Thursday, November 10, 2005 9:21 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: IP: Council chairman lays out tax, transportation issues

## Council chairman lays out tax, transportation issues

By TIM DONNELLY, *The Island Packet*  
Published Thursday, November 10, 2005  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton on Wednesday predicted the failed 1 percent sales tax referendum will make a comeback on the 2006 ballot but added that several other pushes for sales tax money could be competing for attention.

Newton, addressing a meeting of the League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island, also said local officials should be ready to cooperate with Jasper County in anticipation of that area's growth spurt or else U.S. 278 will be turned into a permanent parking lot.

Jasper County officials can learn from the many growth mistakes Beaufort County's made, he said. But if they don't, the new development could push evacuation time for Hilton Head beyond 80 hours -- far too long to safely clear the area.

"It takes longer for us to evacuate than it does for us to predict a storm, we're in trouble folks," Newton said.

Newton's speech focused on transportation issues at a time when the area's infrastructure is undergoing major changes. The widening of U.S. 278 from four to six lanes has been under way since the summer, and construction is beginning this month on extending the Bluffton Parkway from Simmonsville Road to S.C. 170.

Voters nixed the measure to increase the sales tax by 1 percentage point in 2002 and 2004, a defeat for officials who hoped to use the money to pay for Bluffton Parkway's extension and intersection improvements along U.S. 278.

In light of severe emerging needs -- including lowering property taxes, paying for infrastructure improvements and getting more money for schools -- Newton said voters next November probably will face either the 1 percentage point increase for local projects, a statewide 2 percentage point increase for property tax relief or a school-funding measure.

"It's going to be a busy next

2 months," he said.

While those are the most pressing issues, Newton echoed the concerns of other officials in stressing that the looming growth in Jasper County must be addressed ahead of time to adequately plan and adjust. The city of Hardeeville recently tripled in size, which over the next 20 years, he said, will be like dropping the city of Savannah between S.C. 170 and Interstate 95.

Jasper County officials are counting on that cooperation, county administrator Andy Fulghum said in an interview Wednesday.

"There's obviously a need, and we're doing that already," he said. "You can just imagine the different types of service demands that we are going to experience in Jasper County."



## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 31, 2005 9:01 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** IP: Officials speak at chamber meeting

### Officials speak at chamber meeting

BY TIM DONNELLY, *The Island Packet*  
Published Saturday, October 29, 2005  
📄 [Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

The three leaders of the Town of Hilton Head Island, the town of Bluffton and Beaufort County were the speakers at Friday's Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce meeting. Following are highlights of their speeches:

#### Hilton Head Island Mayor Tom Peeples

- Renewed his challenge to the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry to create an interest-free loan program to provide moderate-income residents with a means to pay for getting sewer service. The program is a key component of his sewer initiative, but Peeples said he has heard no response from the foundation.

"If we truly want to make the best of our environment ... we really need to get ourselves off septic tanks, period."

- Said the No. 1 priority for the town in the coming year will be to make sure Hilton Head is as prepared as possible to deal with a hurricane or other disaster.

He stressed the need for home and business owners to be aware of insurance and disaster readiness in the wake of a record-breaking and devastating hurricane season.

The Town Council this year adopted an ordinance that eliminates red tape to allows owners to rebuild their property immediately after a hurricane.

"You have to walk away with a set of plans (for your building) ... We have created a way to let these structures go back together as quickly as possible."

- Invited residents of Jenkins Island to consider seeking annexation into town limits, but said the town government won't try to forcibly annex the land. The move to annex the area arose after Hilton Head lowered its tax rate earlier this year, making it slightly lower than the Bluffton Township's Fire District, which Jenkins Island is part of.

"Those folks believe they're part of the town; they ought to be part of the town. I believe it's in their best interest and in the best interest of our community."

#### Bluffton Mayor Hank Johnston

- Stressed the importance of constructing Bluffton Parkway and eventually extending it from the bridges to Hilton Head Island all the way to Interstate 95. The issue is of particular importance now that the hurricane season raised concerns about evacuation routes, he said. Johnston said local governments will have to get Hardeeville to participate in paying for and constructing the roadway.

"I think our highest priority is to get the Bluffton Parkway built. We must build an alternate road."

- Encouraged efforts to get the parkway designated U.S. 278-A, making it eligible for federal dollars. The Lowcountry

parkway at S.C. 46, Simmonsville and Buck Island roads.

said the referendum on a 1 percent sales tax that failed last November needs to be revisited to help pay for transportation improvements. "I'm here to tell you, it's not over. We have to do that again and pursue that."

### Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton

pushed for more economic diversification in the county. Of 106,000 parcels in the county, only 4,000 to 5,000 are commercial properties, he said.

That's less than 4 percent and is an unhealthy ration."

The New River campus of the Technical College of the Lowcountry now under construction and the planned May River Technology Park will help that problem, Newton said.

Said roadway construction on U.S. 278 and Bluffton Parkway are important steps to help relieve congestion in the area. Newton said the county is working to get the parkway project added to the state's project priority list to make it available for state and federal money.

He praised recent efforts by the school board and county to work together on education issues.

By working together, we will accomplish more than we did in the past as adversaries."

Declared that cooperation between Bluffton, Hilton Head and Beaufort and Jasper counties is crucial to the success of the southern Beaufort County regional plan, but the governments first need to address a projected \$360 million funding gap in the plan.

The real challenge will be implementing the plan at each governmental level. It's more important than ever to address our transportation needs regionally."

Indicated a new referendum on a sales tax to help pay for projects might get on the ballot in November 2006.

## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 24, 2005 9:58 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** IP: Options available to pay for needs

### Options available to pay for needs

Published Sunday, October 23, 2005

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

To The Packet:

The looming costs for roads, schools and parks for fast-growing southern Beaufort

County approach half a billion dollars. A similar amount is going to be needed for northern Beaufort County.

Rather than throwing another capital projects sales tax into referendum in 2006, Beaufort County Council alone could take the following two steps:

- Offer a referendum on the local option sales tax under the conditions that 100 percent of the money (\$26 million annually) would be used to reduce property tax (as is done in 29 of the state's 46 counties).
- Fund sufficiently and complete well thought-out regional plans for the county.

Beaufort County and municipalities could:

- Raise countywide development fees and impact fees to at least the national average, renegotiating existing development agreements if necessary, so that those who benefit from growth pay more of the cost of that growth.

The three steps above alone will not produce enough needed revenue. There will be at least two other potential sources of infrastructure funds:

- Offer a capital project sales tax in 2008. Voters might go for it if the projects to be built were determined by well thought-out regional plans rather than politics.
- Raise property taxes. Property taxpayers might accept higher taxes after getting tax relief through the local option sales tax.

I know of no survey of voters to find out why they voted "no" on the capital project sales tax twice. It might pay to try to get the answers to that question before doing anything else.

Bill Marscher

Hilton Head Island

Tracy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 21, 2005 11:14 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** BG & IP: County Council to weigh 2006 referendum options

## County Council to weigh 2006 referendum options

By GREG HAMBRICK, *The Beaufort Gazette*  
Published Friday, October 21, 2005

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BEAUFORT -- The Beaufort County Council will begin talks next month on funding options for roads, tax relief and land conservation to prepare for potential referendums in the 2006 general election.

Voters narrowly defeated a 2004 capital project sales tax referendum that included \$121 million in road, park and building projects. A similar program in 2002 was defeated more soundly.

While council members stress that the questions in front of voters will be more limited in scope and cost, the breadth of the issues could break voter sentiment with as many as four sales tax or bond referendums being considered by the county and the school district.

According to 2003 numbers, the latest available, the state collected about \$20 million from 1 percent of sales tax in Beaufort County.

The council was criticized in 2002 for having too much control over the capital project sales tax program list, so the 2004 referendum was driven by a citizens group that selected projects. But the council probably went too far in its effort to remain hands-off, County Councilman Mark Generales said.

"Next time," he said, "we'll insert ourselves in the education process."

County Councilman Gerald Dawson said his northern Beaufort County constituents don't have the faith in the council needed for a referendum to succeed.

"It's going to be a tough sale," he said.

Rising property taxes, spurred by state school funding shortfalls, probably will be an issue that might encourage opposition, Generales said.

Council Vice Chairman Skeet Von Harten said he's hopeful for a property tax relief referendum, but that the county's decision probably will depend on efforts in the General Assembly next year to lessen the burden on property taxpayers.

Competition on the ballot might be an issue, with only 2 percent of additional sales-tax revenue allowed by the state.

The Beaufort County School District has identified \$256 million in needs over the next five years, including building construction, renovation and technology needs.

With about \$4 million left in the county's conservation land-buying program, voters probably will see a referendum regarding land needs. Possibilities include a sales-tax referendum to pay for continuing the program or a bond referendum earmarking a portion of county property tax.

The county's program initially was funded in a 2000 referendum putting property tax dollars aside for \$40 million in land

**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 20, 2005 8:48 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** BG: Stewart to appear on 'Coastline'

## Stewart to appear on 'Coastline'

Published Thu, Oct 20, 2005

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

Clark Stewart will be the guest on "Coastline" at 8 p.m. today on WJWJ-TV.

WJWJ-TV is operating at low power during its transition to digital transmission, so the show will be simulcast on CWJWJ, which is available on most cable systems in Beaufort and Jasper counties.

Stewart is expected to discuss issues relating to the widening of U.S. 17 at the Combahee River. He will also address the topic of property tax refunds as well as plans for potential capital tax referendums in the 2006 elections.

Viewers will be able to call in questions at 524-0808.


Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 18, 2005 10:22 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** BG: Letter: Use other options before capital tax

## Use other options before capital tax

Published Tue, Oct 18, 2005

 [Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

The looming costs for roads, schools and parks for fast-growing southern Beaufort County approach half a billion dollars. A similar amount is going to be needed for northern Beaufort County.

Rather than throwing another Capital Projects Sales Tax into referendum in 2006, Beaufort County Council alone could take the following two steps:

- Offer a referendum on the Local Option Sales Tax under the conditions that 100 percent of the money (\$26 million annually) would be used to reduce property tax (as is done in 29 of the 46 S.C. counties).
- Fund sufficiently and completely well thought-out regional plans for the entire county.

Beaufort County and municipalities could:

- Raise countywide development fees and impact fees to at least the national average, renegotiating existing development agreements if necessary so that those who benefit from growth pay more of the cost of that growth.

Obviously, the three steps alone will not produce enough needed revenue. There will then be at least two other potential sources of infrastructure funds:

- Offer a Capital Project Sales Tax in 2008. Voters might go for it if the capital projects to be built would be determined by well thought-out regional plans rather than politics.
- Raise property taxes. Property taxpayers might accept higher taxes after getting tax relief through the Local Option Sales Tax.

I know of no survey of voters to find out why they voted no on the Capital Project Sales Tax twice. It might pay to try to get the answers to that question before doing anything else.

Bill Marscher

Hilton Head Island

Stacy Brasnaw

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From: Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
Sent: Monday, October 17, 2005 8:40 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: FW: Editorial: Look at the big picture to meet growth demands

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From: Suzanne Larson [mailto:lobos@hargray.com]  
Sent: Sunday, October 16, 2005 12:38 PM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: IP:Editorial: Look at the big picture to meet growth demands

## Look at the big picture to meet growth demands

Regional plan offers community a sense of purpose

Published Saturday, October 15, 2005

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

The final report isn't finished yet, but already the fear arises that another stab at shaping the future of this community could become a door stop that gathers dust.

But we see a lot of hope with the southern Beaufort County regional plan and hope that its steering committee finds ways to champion that hope and force it into action.

With the help of a respected consulting firm, and with the bonus that the same firm is also working with neighboring Currituck County, the plan will break new ground.

It will do what local elected leaders hoped it would do. It will quantify the challenges this community faces due to rapid growth. And it will show ways that the challenges can be met.

Translating that paperwork into new ways of approaching planning and permitting, new laws, new revenue streams and new approaches at how the community looks and feels will be the hard part.

Leaders, including Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton, have recognized that all along.

But no one can reach a dream without having a road map. And the new regional plan can provide that.

It can, for the first time, pull together all the data from local governments to show the big picture. It can help the community make data-driven decisions. It can show how many homes are here and how many are coming, how many parks are here and how many are needed, how many roads are needed and how much they will cost. It can show how similar challenges are addressed in other communities around the nation. It can show how this community stacks up in meeting its greatest challenge: preserving a high quality of life in a high-growth market.

It can help the citizens see whether local governments are shaping the community future, or whether private businesses are shaping it -- or to what degree that chore is being shared. Are developers doing enough? Are local governments doing enough?

Our hope for this important effort is that it doesn't get bogged down in such details as the width of setbacks. This community has many details written into the law already, and they must be rigorously enforced.

What the community really needs is the bigger picture. How many acres of parks are needed and where can they go? Roads and schools: How many, where and when? Given that overview, the public can better understand, and support, requests for new funding sources, such as a local sales tax increase.

It's going to cost a lot to shape this community into something the people want. Early estimates show \$500 million more is needed than can currently be funded.

Use the regional plan to show how various elements -- all the different local governments, the development and housing industry and the citizens -- can pull together to really and truly shape the future. Look beyond jurisdictional lines. And look for ways to address the key to the whole thing: Pacing growth to better match the community's ability to cope with it.

The southern Beaufort County regional plan can be the most important step yet in helping translate those hopes into realities.



Tracy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 17, 2005 8:39 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** FW: County to begin tax, bond referendum talks

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [mailto:lobos@hargray.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 16, 2005 12:42 PM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** BG: County to begin tax, bond referendum talks

## County to begin tax, bond referendum talks tax relief, roads and preservation lead needs

Published Sun, Oct 16, 2005

GREG HAMBRICK  
Beaufort Gazette

[Comment \(1\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

Beaufort County Council will begin talks next month on funding options for roads, tax relief and land preservation to prepare potential referendums in the 2006 general election.

Elected voters narrowly defeated a 2004 capital project sales tax referendum that included \$121 million in road, park and building needs. A similar program in 2002 was defeated more soundly.

While council members stress that the questions in front of voters will be more limited in scope and cost, the breadth alone could shake voter sentiment with as many as four sales tax or bond referendums being considered by the county and the school district.

The county has several options for referendums, including:

- A capital project sales tax referendum that would pay for specific road improvements or other needs through an additional percentage to the state's 5 percent sales tax;
- A local option sales tax referendum that would provide at least 71 percent of the revenue to property tax relief, leaving the remainder to the discretion of the county and municipalities where the money is collected;
- A transportation sales tax referendum that allows broad discretionary spending that could include roads, greenspace and other needs; or
- Bond referendums that dedicate a portion of property taxes or other local revenue toward a roads or land preservation program.

According to 2003 numbers, the latest available, the state collected about \$20 million from 1 percent of sales tax in Beaufort County.

After the council was criticized in 2002 for having too much control over the capital project sales tax program list, the 2004 referendum was driven by a citizens group that selected projects. But the council likely went too far with its effort to remain hands-off, said County Councilman Mark Generales.

"Next time, we'll insert ourselves in the education process," he said.

County Councilman Gerald Dawson said his constituents in northern Beaufort County don't have the faith in the council that's needed for a referendum to succeed.

"It's going to be a tough sale," he said.

10/27/2006

ising property taxes, spurred by state school funding shortfalls, likely will also be an issue that might encourage opposition, Generales said.

There's only so much money that people have," he said.

Council Vice Chairman Skeet Von Harten said he's hopeful for a property tax relief referendum, but that the county's decision likely will depend on traction in the General Assembly next year to lessen the burden on property tax payers.

While the local option sales tax provides a component for limited capital improvements for counties and municipalities, Von Harten said it would be a sneaky way to make money through a sales tax hike.

People are smarter than that," he said.

Competition on the ballot might be an issue, with only 2 percent of additional sales tax revenue allowed by the state.

The Beaufort County School District has identified \$256 million in needs over the next five years, including building construction, renovation and technology needs.

Funding has not been identified, but could include currently allowed district borrowing, a sales tax referendum or bond referendums on additional property taxes. A school district referendum does not have to wait for November and district officials have discussed a summer vote.

Generales said it makes little difference whether the district decides to approach voters with a referendum in 2006.

"The district is separate," he said. "Their success or failure won't have any impact on us."

## Land buys

With about \$4 million left in the county's conservation land buying program, voters likely will see a referendum regarding land needs. Possibilities include a sales tax referendum to pay for continuing the program or a bond referendum earmarking a portion of county property tax bills to go toward land preservation.

The county's program initially was funded in a 2000 referendum putting property tax dollars aside for \$40 million in land preservation. But the county is negotiating more than \$20 million in potential purchases with only \$4 million to spend, Von Harten said.

Purchases have included a planned Crystal Lake park on Lady's Island, abandoned Fort Fremont in the Lands End community and four shared purchases with the Department of the Navy to protect Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort from encroachment.

While approval of a roads referendum might hinge on how specific the county is with the nature, location and cost of each project, a conservation referendum will need to speak in general terms.

Negotiations for properties are almost always in private until the County Council has to make a decision on whether to purchase the property. Once an individual property is publicly identified, the price inevitably climbs, said Slade Gleaton, regional director for the nonprofit Trust for Public Land, the county's land buying partner.

Council members said the county should be successful, even without specific spending identified, because the program has shown the county's good stewardship.

"Our land preservation efforts to date have been well received," Von Harten said.

Contact Greg Hambrick at 986-5548 or [ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com). To comment: [beaufortgazette.com](http://beaufortgazette.com).

ancy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [slarson@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 12, 2005 8:59 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** IP: Panel approves Bluffton Parkway project

## Panel approves Bluffton Parkway project

**Despite funding shortage, county committee agrees to move forward**

BY ROBERT SANDLER, *The Island Packet*  
Published Wednesday, October 12, 2005  
[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BEAUFORT -- Bids for construction of Bluffton Parkway west to S.C. 170 have come in \$3.6 million over budget, but a county Council committee voted Tuesday to proceed with the project and find the money later.

The parkway now exists between Burnt Church and Simmonsville roads. Beaufort County had budgeted \$19 million to extend the parkway to S.C. 170, including a 1-mile stretch that would overlap with the Buckwalter Parkway, and expected the project to be completed by February 2007.

The county received only two bids for the project -- at \$22.6 million and \$28.8 million.

Council members at Tuesday's Public Services Committee meeting voted 7-0 to recommend the full council award the contract to the low bidder, Malphrus Construction, but did try to negotiate a better deal and pursue additional contributions from Bluffton.

"I think we ought to move along with this," said Councilman Dick Stewart of Beaufort.

The bids are above the estimate mostly because of higher costs of fuel and asphalt in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, which damaged Gulf Coast oil refineries, according to county administrator Gary Kubic.

The project is being paid for from impact fees paid by developers throughout the southern portion of the county, including the towns of Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, as well as a new countywide 2.5 percent tax on event admissions.

The money also is supposed to pay to widen the Buckwalter Parkway to four lanes, but Kubic said that also probably will come in over budget.

Stewart said the project needs to move forward partly because the county needs voters to approve a 1 percent sales tax for transportation and public works projects, expected to be on the November 2006 ballot. The public will expect to see results on Bluffton Parkway if it is going to approve the tax, he said.

"I just think this 15- to 18-month timetable is very significant if we expect to have any success with a referendum next year," he said.

Bluffton Mayor Hank Johnston said in an interview that he would ask Town Council to discuss the request in a closed-door session at tonight's meeting. Any potential funding from the town would have to come from a new tax-increment financing district.

Johnston said developer John Reed had offered to donate fill dirt for construction of the parkway. Reed is a partner in several Buckwalter-area developments and is preparing to begin work on Hampton Lakes.

1/27/2006

He's going to be moving a lot of dirt to create the lake in that project," Johnston said. "It might be a convenient way to get this much-needed roadway done."

Reed could not be reached for comment.

Kubic noted that his staff had not verified that the low bidder, Malphrus Construction, complied with the county ordinance allowing preference of local vendors and requiring notification of minority-

owned businesses. He said he wanted to ensure that the firm had complied with the ordinance before approving the contract.

County Council could vote on authorizing the contract at its Oct. 24 meeting.

Contact Robert Sandler at 706-8144 or [rsandler@islandpacket.com](mailto:rsandler@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

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ancy Bradshaw

From: slarson@bcgov.net  
Sent: Monday, August 29, 2005 8:48 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: FW: BG & IP: Committee hears options

From: Suzanne Larson [mailto:lobos@hargray.com]  
Sent: Sunday, August 28, 2005 10:47 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: BG & IP: Committee hears options

## Committee hears options

### Regional needs addressed by planning consultants

BY ROBERT SANDLER, *The Island Packet*  
Published Saturday, August 27th, 2005

0 Comments (0) → [Add Comment](#)

Southern governments look to raise hundreds of millions of dollars for road, park and school needs over the next 15 years, consultants are suggesting that regional planning be handled by regional boards to continually look at the entire area's needs.

Clarion Associates, a Denver-based group compiling the southern Beaufort County regional plan, is encouraging creation of a new southern Beaufort County transportation committee to prepare regional transportation plans. That group, the consultants say, should make recommendations on the regional road network -- including major routes on Hilton Head Island and greater Bluffton.

Also, a work group should be established between the school district and local governments to discuss planning for future school needs.

Those recommendations were presented by Clarion Associates at a meeting of the regional plan steering committee Friday at the Hilton Head Island library.

The consultants have identified about \$495 million in improvements to the road, park and school system that are needed today and will be needed as southern Beaufort County grows over the next 15 years. But governments only have mechanisms in place to collect about \$129 million for those needs.

To make up the shortfall, the consultants suggested the county immediately and drastically raise impact fees paid for the construction of new buildings.

Developers currently pay about \$440 for road improvements per single-family house and about \$483 for parks. The consultants suggest raising the road fee to at least \$1,600 and the park fee to about \$840. Those changes would raise about \$72 million for roads and \$10 million for parks.

Craig Richardson, one of the consultants, said the suggestion to raise the impact fee was "very reasonable" and would be more like a "fair-share fee."

Richardson also said county voters should approve a 1 percent capital improvements sales tax. County officials already have said they plan to put the question to voters at the next possible opportunity -- in November 2006. Similar referendums failed in 2002 and 2004.

Don Blair, chairman of the Bluffton Planning Commission who also sits on the regional plan's steering committee, said he was worried about creating a new regional committee that only would be part-time. Instead, he suggested that any new regional authority be given a full-time staff to continually examine southern Beaufort County's growth issues.

"This committee this morning is an example of how ineffectual a committee can be -- with less than 50 percent attendance," Blair said.

Even members of the steering committee missed Friday's meeting, including four of the panel's 10 voting members, according to committee vice

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Bluffton Head Island Mayor Pro Tem Ken Heitzke mentioned that even if all of the roads, parks and schools are built, the consultants' report doesn't look at how to pay for ongoing operational costs.

All these costs probably are the tip of the iceberg," he said.

Richardson said ongoing operational and maintenance costs could equal the one-time construction costs, but his firm wasn't going into detail on that subject because it wasn't in its contract.

The steering committee faced a tough reception from several people who attended Friday's meeting.

Manny Peralta, who lives in Windmill Harbour, told the steering committee that the impact fees should be raised even higher if they are to pay for the costs of all new development. To pay for the \$154 million of future road needs, it would take an impact fee of more than \$3,000 to offset the costs that will be generated by future development, Peralta said.

Chuck Henry, a resident of Daufuskie Island, told committee members that they were forgetting about how his island fits into the plan. The consultants and county planning officials responded that the plan only is supposed to consider issues that affect the entire region. County planners are working on separate programs for remote Daufuskie.

Among the consultants' other suggestions:

- Local governments should allow other neighboring jurisdictions to review plans for major development projects before approving them.
- The Lowcountry Regional Transportation Authority should pursue mainline bus service along U.S. 278 through greater Bluffton, including a transfer center somewhere in the area's western edge.
- Consider the possible consequences of the area becoming a metropolitan planning organization, a designation that could improve the region's chances of getting federal money.
- Add traffic cameras and message boards throughout the regional road network.

Contact Robert Sandler at 706-8144 or [rsandler@islandpacket.com](mailto:rsandler@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** slarson@bcgov.net  
**Sent:** Monday, August 29, 2005 8:44 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** FW: Rare chance exists to fix deadly road

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**From:** Suzanne Larson [mailto:lobos@hargray.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 28, 2005 11:14 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** BG: Rare chance exists to fix deadly road

## Rare chance exists to fix deadly road Local funds could lead to action on U.S. 17

Published Sat, Aug 27, 2005

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

Regional leaders should strike while the iron is hot if they truly want to get a death trap removed from the Lowcountry. The offer now on the table to finally widen a deadly 22-mile stretch of U.S. 17 is a good deal for Beaufort and Colleton counties. It pools local and state dollars to pay for a \$150 million project that is almost ready to go to contract.

Local leaders heard a proposal this week that shows:

- The State Infrastructure Bank granting \$90 million;
- The S.C. Department of Transportation paying \$3 million a year for 20 years to retire bonds; and
- Local governments paying \$1.3 million for 20 years to retire bonds.

With the money already in hand from various sources, and a construction contract could be approved by February, local leaders were told.

The \$1.3 million would collectively come from Beaufort and Colleton county councils, along with the Lowcountry Council of Governments, which represents Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper counties. A local contribution of \$26 million to get a \$150 million asset to this region is a good deal.

Someone will say that it is a state and/or federal responsibility to fully fund widening a stretch of highway where 33 people have died since 1997, including 12 so far this year. But the truth is that local governments are chipping in to get things done, here and across the state. The S.C. 170 widening in Beaufort County is an example, as are new roads around the congested Myrtle Beach area. So, the real question is not who pays what, but this: Do you want the road fixed?

Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton raised good points in this week's discussion. He said the State Ports Authority should be asked to contribute because trucks servicing the ports in Charleston contribute heavily to the need to widen U.S. 17. He's right. The Ports Authority contributed heavily to the new Arthur Ravenel Bridge in Charleston for the same reason: The needs of the ports were a key factor in the need for the highway project. A related suggestion that has been aired is to route trucks servicing the ports away from U.S. 17 as they link to Interstate 95. If the truckers will do that, perhaps the Ports Authority can help out. If not, the Ports Authority should help.

Newton also said the county has nowhere to turn for the cash, suggesting it may be a part of a capital projects sales tax referendum that could go to voters in November 2006. Perhaps it could still be there if action is taken today.

But we'd like to see this nagging problem checked off the community's to-do list now. We say the iron is hot because the public is outraged at the continual deadly nature of the road, the highway department has plans in place, the permitting agencies have fast-tracked the project, elected leaders are trying to address the problem and the State Infrastructure Bank will not always have

7/27/2006

390 million to contribute.

It's been talked about for many years. This is a rare chance to see results.

-- The Island Packet



Stacy Bradshaw

From: slarson@bcgov.net

Sent: Friday, August 26, 2005 10:48 AM

To: Public Information

Subject: IP: Editorial: Rare chance on the table to address deadly highway

## Rare chance on the table to address deadly highway

### Local contributions finally could lead to action on U.S. 17

Published Friday, August 26th, 2005

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Regional leaders should strike while the iron is hot if they truly want to get a death trap removed from the Lowcountry.

The offer now on the table to widen a deadly 22-mile stretch of U.S. 17 is a good deal for Beaufort and Colleton counties. It pools local and state dollars to pay for a \$150 million project that almost is ready to go to contract.

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Local governments paying \$1.3 million for 20 years to retire bonds.

With the money already in hand from various sources, and a construction contract could be approved by February, local leaders were told.

The \$1.3 million would collectively come from Beaufort and Colleton county councils, along with the Lowcountry Council of Governments, which presents Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper counties. A local contribution of \$26 million to get a \$150 million asset for this region is a good deal.

Some will say that it is a state or federal responsibility to fully fund widening a stretch of highway where 33 people have died since 1997 – including 2 so far this year. But the truth is that local governments are chipping in to get things done, here and across the state. The S.C. 170 widening in Beaufort County is an example, as are new roads around the congested Myrtle Beach area. So, the real question is not who pays what, but this: Do you want the road fixed or not?

Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton raised good points in this week's discussion. He said the State Ports Authority should be asked to contribute because trucks serving the ports in Charleston contribute to the need to widen U.S. 17. He's right. The Ports Authority contributed heavily to the new Arthur Ravenel Bridge in Charleston for the same reason: the needs of the ports were a key factor in the need for the highway project. A related suggestion that has been aired is to route trucks from the ports away from U.S. 17 as they link to Interstate 95. If the truckers will do that, perhaps the Ports Authority can beg out. If not, the Ports Authority should help.

Newton also said the county has nowhere to turn for the cash, suggesting it may be a part of a capital projects sales tax referendum that could go to voters in November 2006. Perhaps that is still possible even if action is taken today.

Let's we'd like to see this nagging problem checked off the community's to-do list now. We say the iron is hot because the public is outraged at the continual deadly nature of the road, the highway department has plans in place, the permitting agencies have fast-tracked the project, elected leaders are trying to address the problem and the State Infrastructure Bank will not always have \$90 million to contribute.

This has been talked about for many years. This is a rare chance to see results.

8/27/2006


Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** slarson@bcgov.net  
**Sent:** Friday, August 26, 2005 10:45 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** IP: Plan calls for impact fees to soar

## Plan calls for impact fees to soar

BY ROBERT SANDLER, *The Island Packet*  
Published Friday, August 26th, 2005

 [Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Consultants who have identified almost \$500 million in upcoming infrastructure needs for southern Beaufort County are recommending massive increases in development impact fees, along with tax increases for residents.

Development impact fees should be almost quadrupled for road construction and doubled for park construction, according to Clarion Associates, a consulting firm compiling a plan for Beaufort County, Bluffton and Hilton Head Island.

The regional plan's steering committee meets at 9:30 a.m. today at the Hilton Head Island library to discuss the consultants' suggestions for raising fees and other actions that local governments could take. The joint planning effort started in September 2004 and is expected to finish in the spring of 2006.

In compiling the regional plan, the consultants have said southern Beaufort County is expected to be completely built out by about 2018 or 2020. The area will need \$495.6 million in roads, parks, schools, fire protection, emergency medical facilities and library services, but it currently has means to raise only \$129 million.

Development impact fees are paid for the construction of all new buildings throughout the county, including lesser amounts with the Town of Hilton Head Island and at Sun City Hilton Head. The base impact fees for roads in the southern part of the county should be almost quadrupled, from \$440 to at least \$1,600 per single-family home, the consultants say. That would generate an extra \$72 million.

Impact fees for parks should jump from \$483 to \$840 per single-family home, they say. That would bring in an extra \$10 million.

The consultants also suggest that county voters approve an extra 1 percent sales tax in the November 2006 election. If voters authorized the tax for two seven-year periods, it could generate \$322 million for the southern and northern parts of the county. Though a similar referendum passed in 1998, subsequent sales taxes were rejected in 2002 and 2004.

But local changes may not be enough, the consultants say. Local officials should lobby the state legislature to allow a real estate transfer fee throughout the county and allow local communities to implement a gasoline tax. State law currently allows the real estate transfer fee only on Hilton Head. Those changes could bring \$173.6 million over 15 years, the consultants say.

Eventually, officials hope to begin work on a similar regional plan for northern Beaufort County.

Tacy Bradshaw

From: slarson@bcgov.net  
Sent: Wednesday, August 24, 2005 8:37 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: BG & IP: Alternative U.S. 17 funding requested

## Alternative U.S. 17 funding requested

GREG HAMBRICK, *The Beaufort Gazette*  
Published Wednesday, August 24th, 2005

[→ Add Comment](#)

BEAUFORT – Beaufort County leaders asked the state Department of Transportation on Tuesday to find other funding sources after the department asked for \$26 million from the region for widening U.S. 17 from Gardens Corner to Jacksonboro in Colleton County.

The Transportation Department has expedited permitting and preliminary work on the 22-mile widening as deaths on the road continue to climb, with 33 deaths since 1997 and 12 since January 2004.

Beaufort County has provided \$2 million from developer fees to go toward the \$150 million project. But the state department said Tuesday that a collective \$1.3 million annual contribution over 20 years probably would be needed from Beaufort and Colleton counties and the Lowcountry Council of Governments, which represents Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper counties.

The presentation came at a meeting Tuesday of the Beaufort County Transportation Advisory Group, a committee of county and municipal leaders and local road and safety officials that reviews and comments on transportation plans.

Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton said the county would have to meet with the other local governments to determine whether the local contribution could be met.

"At the end of the day, the only way we have to get money is raising property taxes," Newton said.

The proposed funding plan would include a \$90 million grant from the South Carolina Transportation Infrastructure Bank, which pays for large road projects in South Carolina, along with the sale of \$48 million in bonds through the bank, which would have to be reimbursed.

The Transportation Department is expected to pay \$3 million annually for the next 20 years to pay back the bonds, with an additional \$1.3 million of net payment left to the local governments.

Newton suggested other alternative funding sources, including contributions from the General Assembly or a capital project sales tax that could go to voters in November 2006.

Transportation Department officials have said they need committed funding by Nov. 24 to ensure the project contract is approved by February.

Newton also suggested that the S.C. State Ports Authority be asked to contribute to the project. Authority vendors use the highway as a southern connector to Interstate 95.

"We need to reach out to all parties and bring them to the table," Newton said.

Other funding in place for the project includes:

- \$10 million in the six-year federal highway bill signed into law by the president this month.
- \$13.3 million for a new Combahee River Bridge through federal bridge replacement funds.
- \$700,000 for intersection improvements at S.C. 64 through state intersection improvement funds.

The state Transportation Commission is expected to take up the department's funding proposal at its Sept. 15 meeting in Columbia.

Contact Greg Hambrick at 986-5548 or [ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com).

Stacy Bradshaw


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From: slarson@bcgov.net  
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2005 10:15 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: IP: Editorial: Long-awaited boat landing puts spotlight on recreation

## Long-awaited boat landing puts spotlight on recreation

### *Bluffton baseball tournament shows value of more investment*

Published Sunday, August 21st, 2005

 [Comments \(0\)](#) -> [Add Comment](#)

Two recent events point to the importance of regional governments making parks and recreation a high priority.

First is the long-awaited opening of a new boat landing and fishing pier on the south end of Hilton Head Island.

Second, is the state championship tournament held at Shults Park in Bluffton for a youth baseball league.

The boat landing opened on Broad Creek near the Cross Island Parkway without a formal ceremony. But don't underestimate its importance to Beaufort County, which paid \$1.1 million for the facility built on two acres owned by the Town of Hilton Head Island. It has been in the works for several years, and has run into more than its share of unexpected problems. It opened a year late and about \$250,000 over budget, but it should quickly prove to be one of the community's most prized assets.

It becomes only the second public boat landing on the island. And it should keep motorized boats from ever having to use the other landing in the sensitive headwaters of Broad Creek, which is not even fully accessible at low tide.

Waterways like the Broad Creek, and Calibogue Sound beyond, are the economic and cultural foundation of this community. It is imperative that the public have ready access to the water.

This landing is the latest in a long list of improvements made by local towns and the county to see that the public has access to rivers and the ocean. It shows the determination, money and cooperation required to make good ideas come to life.

The baseball tournament, which attracted more than 150 13-year-olds and their families, also should help everyone connect the dots between recreation facilities and a prosperous quality of life. It took a well-run tournament by the county recreation staff to show how much the investment in Shults Park by the county and the town of Bluffton has paid off. It brought money to cash registers, and fueled community pride.

Our community hosts many recreation events that quietly boost the economy, such as the Banana Open college tennis tournaments and other events involving the sports of soccer, lacrosse, golf, fishing, swimming, boating and running. It's a shame the island lost the Gus Macker three-on-three basketball tournament. But this community continues to attract both residents and visitors who are active and demand the best in recreation programs and facilities.

Recreation opportunities, particularly on the exploding mainland, need to keep ahead of the curve of growth. To do that, we can take tips from other communities. Look at our online discussion of the issue in a blog post called "We Need Parks" ([http://www2.islandpacket.com/we\\_need\\_parks](http://www2.islandpacket.com/we_need_parks)). Parks and recreation will need a steady form of income, such as a penny sales tax devoted to capital improvements.

As the new landing and baseball tournament prove, every nickel devoted to parks and recreation will pay dividends many times over economically, physically and emotionally.

Tracy Bradshaw

From: slarson@bcgov.net

Sent: Friday, August 19, 2005 9:52 AM

To: Public Information

Subject: BG & IP: Counties, agency expected to ante up for U.S. 17

## Counties, agency expected to ante up for U.S. 17

By GREG HAMBRICK, *The Beaufort Gazette*  
Published Friday, August 19th, 2005

Comments (0) -> [Add Comment](#)

BEAUFORT — Beaufort and Colleton counties and the Lowcountry Council of Governments will be asked to contribute \$26 million over the next 20 years to help pay for the widening of U.S. 17 from Gardens Corner to Jacksonboro.

The state Department of Transportation has pursued the widening of the narrow 22-mile stretch of highway for more than a year, but recent fatalities spurred the state to fast-track permitting and designs to get the project under way as early as February. Thirty-three people have died on the highway since 1997.

The Beaufort County Transportation Advisory Group, a multi-jurisdictional group that comments on regional transportation issues, will hear a presentation from the Transportation Department on Tuesday regarding the funding plan.

Beaufort County last year committed \$2 million to the project through developer fees. But the estimated \$150 million cost for the project probably will require a more substantial buy-in from local governments, Keith Bishop, finance director for the Transportation Department, said Thursday.

The funding plan includes an application from the two counties for a \$90 million grant from the State Infrastructure Bank, along with \$48 million in bonds through the bank that would have to be reimbursed.

For local contribution, the two counties and the regional agency would be expected to contribute a total of \$1.3 million a year toward the bond, with the Transportation Department contributing \$3 million a year. All contributions are contingent on approval from the local groups, Bishop said, and it has not been determined how they would be broken up among the entities.

The Infrastructure Bank applications typically include a local match of about 35 to 40 percent, he said. The \$105 million widening of S.C. 170 was paid for primarily through the infrastructure bank and included a \$30 million investment from Beaufort County raised through a 1 percent capital project sales tax approved by voters.

Beaufort County has a history of acknowledging that full funding for road projects doesn't come from Columbia, County Council Chairman Weston Newton said Thursday, but the county doesn't have the money to invest in the project.

"We haven't presented an alternative revenue source," he said, "it's a commitment to increase property taxes."

The county has presented two unsuccessful capital-project sales-tax referendums to voters since 2002, and both included money for U.S. 17 improvements. Newton said another referendum is expected in November 2006.

The Transportation Department is open to in-kind contributions, Bishop said, including donations of locally owned right of way or commitments for future maintenance of the highway.

"I don't think we've taken anything off the table," he said.

Other funding in place for the project includes:

- \$10 million through a congressional earmark in the six-year federal highway bill signed by the president this month.
- \$13.3 million for a new Combahee River Bridge through federal bridge-replacement funds.
- \$700,000 for intersection improvements at S.C. 64 through state intersection improvement funds.

The Transportation Department previously suggested the cost for the widening could reach \$200 million, but Bishop said he was comfortable working with a \$150 million budget.

Contact Greg Hambrick at 986-5548 or [ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com).

7/27/2006

Stacy Bradshaw


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From: slarson@bcgov.net  
Sent: Wednesday, August 10, 2005 9:14 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: IP: editorial: Look at all the facts and figures to understand local sales tax

## Look at all the facts and figures to understand local sales tax

### *Confusing options can be sorted out by looking at big picture*

Published Wednesday, August 10th, 2005

 [Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Beaufort County staff will provide a great service to the public in giving a local option sales tax a close look.

Time spent in the coming weeks to weigh the effect of the potential tax is time well spent.

This community is beginning to get a clearer picture of the depth of the problem of funding the services the growing population demands. A preliminary tally for southern Beaufort County alone is \$500 million for schools, roads, parks, etc.

All funding options need to be considered. And those considerations must be based on facts and data, not emotion or hearsay. They should be based on the big picture showing the long-term needs with incremental steps to get there.

It can be very confusing.

The local option sales tax being studied by the county staff is different from the penny sales tax referendum for capital improvements that has been on two recent ballots. A positive vote on either of those two referendums would have put 100 percent of the money collected into the projects listed for a set time, and then the tax would be lifted.

The other option, which was set up by state law and is referred to as LOST (local option sales tax), comes with a number of caveats. Primarily, this income is to be used to reduce property taxes. At least 71 percent of the income has to go to that purpose. Then, the money is split between local governments. And there is a provision that wealthier counties collecting the tax must share a bit of it with poorer counties. Once enacted, it can end only by referendum.

The option has been available since the 1990s, and 29 of the state's 46 counties participate. Beaufort County voters have turned down the option twice, just as they have more recently twice rejected a capital projects sales tax increase.

But Beaufort County governments, and residents, need to keep an open mind about enabling the sales tax to do more of the heavy lifting needed here. With so much of the sales tax money coming from visitors, Beaufort County residents would get a big return on this tax. It seems foolish to leave that kind of money out of the equation when the community needs so much capital improvement.

Yes, the sales tax is a regressive tax, meaning it hits poor people harder than wealthier people. But the situation should be viewed in terms of the lesser of evils, not an endless and fruitless search for the perfect way to raise money to get things done.

In the background are promises from legislative leaders that change will be enacted next year in the property tax. That could involve a change in the statewide sales tax.

Now is a perfect time for the county staff to help the public and the local policymakers see the true ramifications of the LOST and any other options that could help provide community services.

Stacy Bradshaw

From: slarson@bcgov.net  
Sent: Friday, July 29, 2005 10:56 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: BG: New bill could aid highway

## New bill could aid highway House expected to approve \$10M early today

Published Fri, Jul 29, 2005

By GREG HAMBRICK

The Beaufort Gazette

0 Comments (0) [Add Comment](#)

Efforts to widen U.S. 17 could receive \$10 million in seed money under a massive \$286.4 billion highway and mass transit federal spending bill expected to be approved by the House early this morning.

The money comes at a time when state officials are prepared to fast track permitting to widen the 22-mile stretch from Gardens Corner to Jacksonboro in Colleton County but have been unsure about where the up to \$200 million to pay for it would come from.

Nearly three people have died in traffic accidents on U.S. 17 since 1997, including in a Navy bus collision in March 2004 that killed three sailors and a June 23 collision that killed four people.

"It's a good way to get the project started as we begin to look for more money," State Transportation Commissioner John Hardee said Thursday.

The long-delayed six-year spending package includes broad state allocations and \$36.6 million in earmarks for Beaufort County, including \$26.6 million to widen U.S. 17.

After House approval, the huge spending package will be sent to the Senate and then moved on to the president's desk for his signature.

County Lawrimore, spokeswoman for Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., said the surprising addition of millions for the Lowcountry came after a lot of work by the state's congressional delegation.

"They've just been working really hard on it for a while," she said.

Efforts to widen U.S. 17 after a string of recent fatalities have spurred regulatory agencies to compromise and streamline approvals. Lawrimore hopes for a construction contract by February.

But the timeline is contingent on finding the money to keep the project on track.

"I don't want to see us ready to move ahead and the money's not in place," Hardee said.

Through various sources, the state has already found \$24 million for the widening, including:

- \$13.3 million in federal bridge replacement funding to replace the Combahee River Bridge;
- \$700,000 for state intersection improvement funding at S.C. 64 in Colleton County that will be added to the total project cost;
- Nearly \$8 million in federal safety improvement money for preliminary environmental and design work; and
- \$2 million from Beaufort County through its impact fee program.

The Transportation Department is looking for further funding through an application to the State Infrastructure Bank, expected in the next few weeks. The bonding agency has about \$130 million to dole out to capital projects statewide after state legislators appropriated dollars to highway needs in June.

7/27/2006

### Links

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But the Transportation Department recognizes that the limited pool of money won't fully pay for the project, said Keith Bishop, deputy finance director for the department.

"We're going to have to sharpen our pencils on this," he said.

Bishop said the department hopes the Conservation Bank can assist in purchasing 100-foot buffers along the highway that the state hopes will appease

environmental groups that could protest the project.

Costs for the buffers have not been determined, but Dana Beach, executive director of the Coastal Conservation League, estimated the cost at \$8 million to \$10 million, considering a large portion of the area is already preserved through private conservation easements or public preservation efforts.

Because of the wording of the enabling legislation, the Transportation Department and the local counties cannot apply for Conservation Bank funding, but the state Department of Natural Resources, Forestry Commission and Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism can, as well as nonprofit conservation groups.

The general assembly could also provide money for the project once the legislature returns in January, Bishop said.

"The timing would be good there," he said.

Members of the Beaufort, Colleton and Charleston delegations have pledged to help find money for the project.

Beaufort County has also included funding for widening and other improvements on U.S. 17 in failed 1 percent capital project sales tax referendums in 2002 and 2004.

County Council Chairman Weston Newton said he expects that money for U.S. 17 would join other infrastructure needs on any potential sales tax referendum in 2006.

"Highway 17 is one of the most prevailing needs of the county," he said.

Rep. Catherine Ceips, R-Beaufort, said the outcry from residents is what spurred Congress to find the money.

"It shows that when you get a group of citizens calling and asking for things, things happen," she said.

Contact Greg Hambrick at 986-5548 or [ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com). To comment: [beaufortgazette.com](http://beaufortgazette.com).



## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Dennis Adams [dadams@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 28, 2005 1:08 PM  
**To:** Dennis Adams  
**Subject:** BG: County staff to assess sales tax plan (Juy 28)

County staff to assess sales tax plan

Published Thursday July 28 2005

By GREG HAMBRICK

The Beaufort Gazette

County staff will determine in the next three weeks the impact of a potential 1 percent local option sales tax envisioned as a subsidy for the county's rising property tax bills.

Approved by voters in 29 of the state's 46 counties since 1991, the sales tax provides at least 71 percent of the revenue for county and municipal property-tax relief with the rest available for additional tax relief or needed capital improvements.

County Council members informally asked for the information Wednesday following a presentation on the sales tax that was defeated by Beaufort voters twice in the 1990s and has been abandoned at least once since because of a perceived lack of support.

According to 2003 tax collections, the most recent data available, the state collected \$20 million from a 1 percent sales tax in Beaufort County, county Controller Tom Henrikson said.

Using the state formula, \$14 million would be credited to tax bills for county and municipal operations. An additional \$6 million would be split between the county and municipalities -- based on population and where the tax was collected -- for additional cuts or to pay for capital improvements.

County Councilman Mark Generales said the perception has been that Hilton Head residents would oppose the measure as a community that largely sees its tax revenues spent elsewhere.

But Hilton Head Mayor Tom Peebles said he didn't expect the impact to be worsened by a shift from property tax collections to sales taxes.

"What we need to do is work out the numbers," he said.

Opposition to these initiatives is most often tied to a lack of confidence in elected officials not raising taxes once the rollback is in place, Peebles said.

"The belief was you can roll my taxes back today, but you can raise them tomorrow," he said.

Jasper County has been collecting the additional 1 percent sales tax for property tax relief since 1991. This year, the county used the revenue for property tax credits while Ridgeland and Hardeeville subsidized budget increases, keeping property taxes at or near last year's levels.

Council members questioned how the sales tax would work with statewide efforts for a sales tax increase and other

local sales tax measures likely to come before voters.

Several Beaufort County Council members have suggested that they will return to voters in 2006 for another 1 percent sales tax referendum that would fund needed capital improvements. Previous referendums were defeated in November and in 2002.

Unlike the general promise of tax credits and capital improvements under the local option sales tax, the capital project sales tax narrowly defeated by voters last year gave a clear list of projects tax money would be spent on, said County Councilman Dick Stewart.

"You may disagree with the list, but there's no confusion about where the money was going," he said.

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## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Dennis Adams [dadams@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 28, 2005 1:25 PM  
**To:** Dennis Adams  
**Subject:** IP: Editorial: Apologies, roadwork changes usher in new era of challenges (July 28)

Apologies, roadwork changes usher in new era of challenges

Massive traffic jam can serve as an eye-opener for public

Published Thursday, July 28th, 2005

If traffic flowed like the apologies did at Wednesday's public meeting about U.S. 278 construction, this community would have licked its most vexing problem.

None of the speakers at the gathering in the Bluffton library minced words or wasted time: they apologized for the gridlock July 19 on U.S. 278 and feeder streets in the Bluffton area and onto Hilton Head Island.

That was the right thing to do. Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton and Sheriff P.J. Tanner were joined in making apologies by representatives of the S.C. Department of Transportation and the contractor on the 18-month, \$16 million widening project that has just begun. About 100 citizens were told that reverberations of the transportation meltdown were felt all the way through the DOT administration and to the state Highway Commission. All local state politicians were cited as registering loud complaints.

Remedies and changes resulting from the debacle are encouraging. Tanner has assigned two employees -- one for daytime and the other for nighttime -- to be in "the zone" on U.S. 278 construction at all times. They are to be the public's liaison with the contractor, and communication is to be constant.

That type of coordination could have prevented part of the July 19 mess.

Workers would have never gotten on the road that night if the contractor had known how badly traffic was still backed up on the island. People were stuck in traffic for up to four hours -- as late as midnight. Some factors may not be controllable, such as the flurry of wrecks in the area that day, but the public was promised that officials are now more alert, more flexible, more communicative and better prepared to deal with the special challenges U.S. 278 presents.

When all is said and done, however, reality dictates that there will be many road construction delays for years to come. And, like this project, it will by necessity overlap both tourism season and hurricane season.

Speaker after speaker, including Bluffton Mayor Hank Johnston and the DOT representatives, warned that the current project will help, but it should not be perceived as a cure-all. It is only a beginning. Even with the County Council and Bluffton Town Council making moves this week to get the next phase of the Bluffton Parkway going, more help will be needed. And that does not count the explosion that is about to happen in the Hardeeville area as Jasper County's population is expected to soar to almost 200,000 in the next 15 years -- from 21,000 in the 2000 Census.

For this booming region, hundreds of millions of dollars will be needed for roads alone. Newton said, "We will be talking about another penny sales tax in 2006." And the state's antiquated, inadequate highway funding formula must be updated.

Local elected leaders -- and the private sector that is building so much so fast -- also must seek more creative ways

of solving congestion problems that look beyond pavement and red lights.

The painful traffic jam of July 19 will have a redeeming factor if it prompts more dialogue and alerts the public to the huge challenge ahead for this community.

## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Dennis Adams [dadams@bcgov.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 27, 2005 10:23 AM  
**To:** Dennis Adams  
**Subject:** IP: Headline: Officials address U.S. 278 concerns at meeting (July 27)

Officials address U.S. 278 concerns at meeting

Changes made to help ensure massive backups don't return

BY ROBERT SANDLER, The Island Packet

Published Wednesday, July 27th, 2005

BLUFFTON -- The various agencies working on U.S. 278 through greater Bluffton have made several changes since last week's massive backups, and officials said Tuesday they won't let them happen again.

Among the changes announced to about 50 residents who attended a public meeting Tuesday at the Bluffton library:

A sheriff's deputy always will be with the work crews on the highway.

Sheriff's deputies using cameras to monitor the roads are extending their nightly work time from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m.

Electronic message boards and a planned Web site will be used to inform the public of the road work.

On July 19, motorists were slowing to a crawl in front of steel plates on top of U.S. 278, extending the morning and evening commutes to Hilton Head Island. That evening, some people spent four hours just to get from Hilton Head to S.C. 46.

William Wilfong, area manager for APAC-Southeast Inc., the company handling the construction project, said he regretted that work crews closed a lane the night of July 19 to proceed with construction despite the long lines of cars.

"That evening," he said, "we should not have gotten in the road."

The new system that involves deputies, he said, will help prevent that from happening again.

Representatives of APAC, the state Department of Transportation and Beaufort County took questions on exactly how traffic would improve.

U.S. 278 is being widened to six lanes from just west of the Hilton Head bridges westward to Simmonsville Road. The project is scheduled to be complete in October 2006.

"The next 18 months are not going to be easy for any of us that travel that corridor with any frequency," County Council Chairman Weston Newton said.

Lane closures on U.S. 278 originally were scheduled to occur from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. But after the July 19 backups, officials delayed the start times to 9 p.m. When tourist season winds down,

the start time is scheduled to return to 7 p.m.

Erin Otten of Bluffton said when she's on Burnt Church Road trying to turn onto U.S. 278 in the mornings, she waits "forever."

When construction begins to affect the sensors at traffic lights, she worried, "It'll be forever and a day."

But Robert Clark, the Transportation Department's district engineer, said traffic signals were on a new fixed-timing system that doesn't involve the sensors in the pavement, so the timing shouldn't change.

The department's program manager in charge of the U.S. 278 project, Wilson Elgin, tried to answer the question of why construction began during tourist season.

"The public was demanding that something be done to (U.S.) 278 as soon as possible," he said.

If a hurricane appears likely to hit the area, construction will stop 24 hours in advance and the construction workers will leave the area, he said.

One resident asked whether the widening contract included a penalty provision if it is not complete on time, similar to the S.C. 170 widening.

Elgin said the U.S. 278 contract includes \$3,000-per-day penalties if it is not complete in October 2006.

Newton said some highway funding in South Carolina is distributed based on seniority of state senators. Other areas throughout the state with less traffic than the Lowcountry have gotten impressive roadside fountains because their senators are powerful, he said.

One reason U.S. 278 was widened from two lanes to four lanes east of S.C.

170 in 1987 was because the Lowcountry's senator was James Waddell, who had been in office for many years, Newton said. Today, Beaufort County doesn't have that same advantage and therefore doesn't get the same funding.

Because the state doesn't give enough money for all the transportation projects Beaufort County is planning, the county has had to raise certain taxes. On Monday, County Council approved a 2.5 percent tax on admissions to certain events, such as movie tickets and greens fees at golf courses.

Newton also said he expects Beaufort County to ask voters to approve a 1 percent sales tax increase for transportation projects at the November 2006 election.

Contact Robert Sandler at 706-8144 or [rsandler@islandpacket.com](mailto:rsandler@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [islandpacket.com](http://islandpacket.com).

Stacy Bradshaw

From: slarson@bcgov.net  
Sent: Monday, July 25, 2005 11:36 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: BG: Council to explore local option sales tax

## Council to explore local option sales tax Meeting will consider ways to relieve property tax burden

Published Mon, Jul 25, 2005

By GREG HAMBRICK  
The Beaufort Gazette

0 Comments (0) Add Comment

Beaufort County Council will host a workshop session Wednesday to vet council interest and feasibility in a 1 percent local option sales tax envisioned as a subsidy for rising property tax bills.

Voters in 29 of the state's 46 counties have approved the local option sales tax, including Charleston, Jasper and Colleton counties, adding 1 percent to the state's 5 percent sales tax.

The law requires that 71 percent of the tax collections be used to reduce county and municipal property tax bills and the remainder be made available for additional tax credits or other needs, including infrastructure improvements.

Beaufort County is open to alternatives to property tax hikes to pay for the increased cost in services, said Councilman Mark C. Perales, chairman of the council's Finance Committee, but perceived opposition south of the Broad River might derail the attempt.

"The sense is it's going nowhere," he said. "We're not going to waste the energy to put something in front of voters that they're going to vote against."

In fact, two attempts to get a local option sales tax passed by voters in the early 1990s failed.

Proponents of the local option sales tax and a tax that would go entirely to building projects have based their support on the idea that tourists would pay about 50 percent of the total amount collected.

Wilton Head Island Mayor Tom Peebles said Thursday that he is reserving judgment and that he'll have to find out how much money would come back to the town considering that a majority of the tax would be collected there.

The amount split among the municipalities is based on a state formula that considers tax collections and population.

Supporter Billy Keyserling, a former Beaufort city councilman, said he recognizes that the state formula could be improved to increase the return for municipalities but that voters need to be given the choice.

"With all the talk about property tax relief, it is the only process I'm aware of that has lowered the people's property taxes," he said.

According to 2003 tax collections, the most recent data available, the state collected \$20 million from a 1 percent sales tax in Beaufort County, county Controller Tom Henriks said.

Using the state formula, \$14 million would be credited to tax bills for county and municipal operations, while \$6 million would be split between the county and municipalities for additional cuts or to pay for capital improvements.

Jasper County has been collecting the additional 1 percent sales tax for property tax relief since 1991, said Ronnie Malphrus, the county's deputy administrator for finance.

### If you go

What: Local option sales tax workshop

When: 4 p.m. Wednesday

Where: Council chambers, 100 Ribaut Road

Details: 470-2800

With \$1.7 million in collections in the past year, a taxpayer with a \$100,000 home should see a \$133 credit on the county's property tax bill, Malphrus said, up from a \$125 credit last year.

Meanwhile, increased collections from the local option sales tax have helped municipalities in Jasper County subsidize budget hikes in recent years so that property tax bills remain static.

Ridgeland's operating budget increased \$104,000 this year to \$2.3 million, but the owner of a \$100,000 home in the town will see an increase of less than \$1 in property taxes, with a \$95 credit to that homeowner to subsidize the tax hike.

Ridgeland Town Manager Jason Taylor said the local option sales tax has been pivotal in providing the money needed to do landscaping, sidewalk and park improvements in the small town without increasing the burden on taxpayers.

Hardeeville has seen its operating budget balloon to \$4.5 million, an \$800,000 increase over last fiscal year. The sales tax credit, matched with development, has helped maintain the property tax rate at \$390 for a \$100,000 home in Hardeeville since 2001. Last month, the Beaufort County Council approved a \$73 million budget, which meant a \$12 spike in property taxes for the owner of a \$200,000 home.

Several Beaufort County Council members have suggested that they will return to voters in 2006 for another 1 percent sales tax referendum that would fund needed capital improvements. Previous referendums were defeated in November and in 2002.

Keyserling said limited capital improvements under the local option sales tax could provide the political capital necessary for a majority of voters to approve a 1 percent capital projects sales tax after November 2006, which is the earliest a local option plan could be put on the ballot.

"The way the government gets credibility is by giving back," he said.

Contact Greg Hambrick at 986-5548 or [ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com](mailto:ghambrick@beaufortgazette.com). To comment: [beaufortgazette.com](http://beaufortgazette.com).



Stacy Bradshaw

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From: slarson@bcgov.net

Sent: Monday, July 25, 2005 11:35 AM

To: Public Information

Subject: IP: Letter:

## You see result of the 'no' vote

Published Sunday, July 24th, 2005

Comments (0) → [Add Comment](#)

The Packet:

Everyone seems to be shocked over the traffic we now must endure during the widening of U.S. 278. One lady wrote, "Why are we just now trying to deal with things? I saw this coming eight years ago." I can only hope that she was not one of the "nay" voters when in 2002 and again in 2004 we were given the opportunity to avoid this mess by voting for a mere 1-cent temporary increase in our local sales tax.

Even if only tourism had helped us fund this project, it would probably have been just about complete at this time. Also, keep in mind that this is only a small portion of the improvement that could have been started if the referendum had passed in 2002. We've got a long way to go, so buy a couple of good books to read while sitting in traffic.

"Vote and Peace" may be a good first choice.

De Weinman

linton


## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** slarson@bcgov.net  
**Sent:** Monday, July 25, 2005 11:28 AM  
**To:** Public Information  
**Subject:** IP & BG: Public meetings schedule

## Public meetings schedule

Published Monday, July 25th, 2005

 [Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)  
For the week of July 25-29.

### Monday

2 p.m.: Beaufort County Council's Finance and Intergovernmental Relations and Economic Development committees hold a joint meeting in the executive conference room of the administration building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort. The panels will hear a presentation on economic incentives and property taxes and their impact of school funding.

2:30 p.m.: Hilton Head Island's Board of Zoning Appeals meets in council chambers at Town Hall. Agenda items include public hearings on a request for appeal from Gary Burgess of Andrews Engineering on behalf of Carol and R.J. Bartholomew Jr. and a request for variance on buffer requirements at 135 and 137 Squire Pope Road.

3 p.m.: Bluffton's Watershed Advisory Committee meets at Bluffton High School. The agenda includes a discussion on forming subcommittees and volunteer monitoring of the May River.

3 p.m.: Beaufort County Council's Intergovernmental Relations and Economic Development Committee meets in the executive conference room of the administration building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort. The panel will discuss several items for inclusion on the county's legislative agenda, and also consider the establishment of "hassle-free zones" for commercial development.

5 p.m.: Beaufort County Council meets in council chambers of the administration building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort. The council will hear an update on the U.S. 278 widening project in greater Bluffton and consider authorizing a \$30 million borrowing for construction of the Bluffton Parkway and widening of the Buckwalter Parkway. The council also is scheduled to give final approval to a new stormwater management rate structure. At 6 p.m., public hearings and final votes will be held on levying a 2.5 percent tax on event admissions and the donation of a half-acre in the City of Beaufort for affordable housing.

### Tuesday

8 a.m.: The South Island Public Service District commission meets at the district's treatment plant on Lawton Canal Road. The agenda includes adoption of the Beaufort County tax penalty schedule.

9 a.m.: The Hilton Head Public Service District commission holds a workshop at the utility's office, 21 Oak Park Road. The agenda includes discussions of the following: the sewer program, the reverse osmosis project, the backflow prevention program, the stormwater equipment management proposal and a closed-door session to discuss the general manager's performance plan review.

1:15 p.m.: Hilton Head Island's Design Review Board meets in council chambers at Town Hall. Agenda items include a town pathway and pedestrian lighting system and conceptual design of new airport hangars.

4:30 p.m.: Beaufort County Council's Public Services Committee meets at the Bluffton library on S.C. 46. The panel will consider awarding contracts for planning services for county airports and sidewalk and pathway projects.

5:30 p.m.: Bluffton's town manager, planning director and chief of police will be at Town Hall to answer questions and take comments from the public.

6 p.m.: Bluffton's Town Council meets at Town Hall. The agenda includes a funding agreement for the Bluffton Parkway between the town and Beaufort County and a swap of a town-owned property for a new parcel in the Buckwalter tract planned for the technology park.

6 p.m.: The Beaufort County school board meets in the board room at the District Office, 1300 King St., Beaufort. The agenda includes a discussion on a proposed charter school on St. Helena Island.

Bluffton: Beaufort County Council holds a public information meeting at the Bluffton library to discuss the U.S. 270 widening. Representatives of the State Department of Transportation will speak.

### Wednesday

10:15 a.m.: Beaufort County's Development Review Team meets in the executive conference room of the administration building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort. No agenda was available.

11 a.m.: County Council holds a work session in council chambers of the administration building, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort. The council will discuss optional sales taxes.

11 a.m.: The Planning and Development Standards Committee of Hilton Head Island's Town Council meets in council chambers at Town Hall. The agenda includes proposed land management ordinance amendments to create a Neighborhood Character Overlay District for the Holiday Homes subdivision.

11 a.m.: Bluffton's Planning Commission meets at Town Hall. The agenda includes updates on the town's Community Infrastructure Bank and affordable housing; consideration of master plans for Seasons at New Riverside and Southern Oaks; consideration of an amendment to the master plan for Hampton Hall; discussion of the cultural resources element of the comprehensive plan; consideration of a signage element for a Highway Commercial Overlay District Certificate for Church of the Cross Buckwalter campus; and the application status of the development plan/subdivision.

### Thursday

10 a.m.: The Beaufort-Jasper Water and Sewer Authority board of directors holds its annual meeting at the utility's office in Okatie. The agenda includes reports from the capital projects, finance and personnel committees; an update on the Port Royal Island water reclamation facility including the plant and pipeline status; and a closed-door session to review the general manager's performance.

Stacy Bradshaw

From: slarson@bcgov.net  
Sent: Thursday, July 21, 2005 9:20 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: IP: editorial: Tuesday's traffic meltdown shows crucial need for Plan B

## Tuesday's traffic meltdown shows crucial need for Plan B

*Take a new look at both 'simple' and 'impossible' ideas*

Published Thursday, July 21st, 2005

[Comments \(0\)](#) -> [Add Comment](#)

Hilton Head Island and Bluffton cannot function long under the gridlock conditions experienced on U.S. 278 and feeder roads Tuesday. The powers-that-be need a Plan B.

That could include things that sound simple:

Somehow make the steel plates across the highway less spooky to the skittish drivers. Why people come to a stop before crossing a steel plate that's only 3/4 inch thick is a mystery. Perhaps the plates could be painted black to blend in with the road, rather than the red they are today. Maybe the new asphalt paved at the edges of the plates in an effort to eliminate the bump will encourage more reasonable traffic flow.

Negotiate quicker, and ahead of time. This community does not have the time for the contractor and state highway engineers to negotiate what steps will be taken to improve traffic flow. U.S. 278 is the one and only main thoroughfare for two booming communities and a major resort destination. There is no room for error, or time to waste, on this project.

Change the times for the nightly lane closings. Everyone found out the hard way Tuesday that lane closings that start at 7 p.m. cut too close to the daily commute time. The daily commute congestion had not cleared before the lane closed, meaning people were sitting in traffic after 11 p.m. That won't do.

Plan B could also include some factors that are not as simple.

Think again about everything that has been dismissed as impossible. That includes staggered work hours and a greater variety of check-in times for overnight lodging. That should also include affordable housing on Hilton Head so more of the work force can live there. It could include a new look at ferry service from Beaufort and park-and-ride lots near the island. It could include opening gated communities so traffic can flow through the community more smoothly. It could include a legal battle to stop or slow new construction until the road network can handle the load. It could include a local option sales tax to constantly address the road network. It could include flyovers to replace traffic lights.

None of those ideas is new. All have been hashed and rehashed. But Tuesday's gridlock sends a signal that all options must be on the table. Consider the fact that the disruptions of road construction will be with us for the foreseeable future. Consider the fact that we are now experiencing only the tip of the iceberg of permitted development in Beaufort County -- and that doesn't count the onslaught now permitted around U.S. 278 in Hardeeville. And consider the fact that with the \$16 million construction project just begun on U.S. 278 and the pending start of major construction on the Bluffton Parkway, road improvements are already being done as fast as humanly possible. When all that is considered, it is more clear than ever that our community faces a crisis sooner rather than later and a Plan B is mandatory. In this light, it is important to look at both the "simple" and the "impossible" solutions. They should all have new meaning after Tuesday.

From: slarson@bcgov.net

Sent: Friday, July 15, 2005 9:06 AM

To: Public Information

Subject: BG: Editorial Thu. July 14: Widening U.S. 17 only safe solution

## Widening U.S. 17 only safe solution

### S.C. 170 improvements reduced fatalities

Published Thu, Jul 14, 2005

[Comments \(0\)](#) [Add Comment](#)

Legislators and other state officials are stepping up to their rightful roles to reduce fatalities on one of the most deadly roads in the United States. But as they step up, they should keep another road in mind.

Instead of being widened to four lanes, the 17-mile stretch of S.C. 170 between Beaufort and McGarvey's Corner for years was one of the deadliest highways in South Carolina. Since the road has been widened to four lanes, a fatal accident hasn't been recorded on the road. These improvements were due in large part to voters agreeing to a one-cent sales tax to speed up the widening of the highway on a local timetable instead of the delayed state timetable created by an inadequate funding mechanism.

Monday, Gov. Mark Sanford and other state officials were in the county to discuss the importance of short-term and long-term improvements to the highway, including assigning a team of state troopers to assess safety on the highway.

On Friday the S.C. Highway Commission, at a special meeting on the just completed Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge in Charleston, will provide information to determine whether the traffic speed on the 22 miles of U.S. 17 between Gardens Corner and Jacksonboro could be lowered. That is certainly a start to safety improvements and a remedy that many elderly people who live in the vicinity of U.S. 17 advocated at meetings Monday.

But that is just a beginning. The saturation patrols also should be a reminder to motorists to use common sense and slow down. If slower local traffic won't matter much if tractor-trailer rigs and other speeders zoom through the area creating hazards -- causing wrecks.

Short-term safety improvements also need to be implemented, including those mentioned Monday: rumble strips on the median to alert drivers, reflectors to outline lane boundaries and caution signals. Diverting truck traffic from the stretch of U.S. 17 through Walterboro to I-95 also should be considered.

A suggestion from Dana Gasque, the mother of a college student killed in a wreck on the highway, is what will improve safety on this road as it did on S.C. 170: "Four-laning is what's going to fix the problem," she said Monday.

Gov. Sanford on Monday said, "The money will be found" for the improvements. Estimates are that widening the highway and bridges will cost about \$200 million. About \$7.75 million has been allocated for preliminary studies and planning, but the remainder is largely unfunded.

The governor didn't cite a source for the money. Rearranging priorities within the Department of Transportation would help at the state and federal level. Aside from that, area residents would entertain other state residents chipping in with a temporary one-cent sales tax to pay for the sorely needed highway widening.

Stacy Bradshaw


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From: slarson@bcgov.net  
Sent: Sunday, July 10, 2005 12:31 PM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: IP: Editorial: Show the public big picture in meeting true cost of growth

## Show the public big picture in meeting true cost of growth

### *Deals on development agreements only the tip of the iceberg*

Published Sunday, July 10th, 2005

 [Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Development agreements reached with landholders and the towns of Hardeeville and Bluffton net out at about the same cost to the developers. That should make everyone gulp.

We say "gulp" because we have learned in Bluffton that development fees -- while very important -- won't pay for the growth that is coming.

Bluffton even renegotiated with developers and landowners after their initial agreements. That option always should be kept alive.

Landowners in Hardeeville -- poised to build some 30,000 homes -- should do more than allow the public to buy land for schools and parks at below-market prices. Those community improvements are needed by the public, but they also are needed by the builders of neighborhoods. The developers should give the land to the public. After all, what's good for the overall community is good for developers. That includes congestion control, clean rivers, good schools, etc. The private sector must help make it happen. Landowners must see beyond their lot lines and quarterly earnings reports.

With this area being planned from scratch -- from raw land -- we have a rare and fleeting opportunity to do the job well. That includes placing parks, streets, schools, homes and businesses in logical places, but it also includes controlling the rate of growth to match the public's ability to pay for services.

It will take a valiant effort by everyone. The southern Beaufort County regional plan that is now under way is helping to quantify the problem. It is showing that some \$500 million worth of services are needed, but not funded. And Beaufort County, even with growth and a high property-tax base, had to raise taxes this year despite growth in revenue. These are signs that our regional leaders need to come to terms with the true cost of growth.

Jasper County is looking to the future with the same national consulting firm that is working on the southern Beaufort County plan. That should help. Northern Beaufort County needs to do the same. Then local leaders need to get the public -- and the development industry -- involved in funding solutions.

With the legislature poised to tinker with -- or perhaps bludgeon -- property taxes next year, local governments need to be more concerned than ever about how they will raise money to provide services.

A sales tax to fund roads and parks should be a given in Beaufort County, where it would bring in a lot of money and tourists would pay at least half of it. If voters know how that money would fit with the big picture of the community plan, they should be more likely to approve it. Leadership is needed to show the public the overall challenge, and the overall solution. The public will demand that new growth pay its fair share. And it will ask to see ways the rate of growth is being controlled. Development agreements are important, but the harder work lies ahead. Meeting the challenge will require teamwork and strong leadership.

Stacy Bradshaw

From: slarson@bcgov.net  
Sent: Wednesday, July 06, 2005 8:22 AM  
To: Public Information  
Subject: IP & BG: Deputies suspend U.S. 278 light control

## Deputies suspend U.S. 278 light control

BY ROBERT SANDLER, *The Island Packet*  
Published Wednesday, July 6th, 2005

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

BLUFFTON -- If you get caught in rush-hour traffic on U.S. 278 today, don't be too quick to blame Sheriff P.J. Tanner.

Tanner's three-week experiment of having deputies control traffic signals on U.S. 278 from Moss Creek to Simmonsville Road ended Tuesday morning. The signals will go back to their computerized automatic timing, with some slight adjustments.

Deputies had operated the signals during morning and evening weekday rush hours since June 22 and on Saturdays since June 18. They increased the green times for both U.S. 278 and side-street traffic.

The deputies were extending the green times for side streets to almost two minutes, while the green time on U.S. 278 was lengthened to four minutes during rush hours, the sheriff said. But those timings can't just be programmed into the computers at the traffic lights. The signal computers can run a full cycle of 255 seconds; the deputies' system would require 360 seconds.

Deputies will return to their regular duties for the rest of this week, but next Monday they will be back at the intersections in the trouble zone -- now extended west to Buck Island Road -- to count the number of vehicles turning left and right or crossing the highway. They won't be operating the traffic lights.

Tanner said he would continue to try to find ways to improve traffic flow on U.S. 278, saying his traffic counts would not go to waste.

"We've got to keep this thing moving," he said. "This is not something that's going to get stale."

Tanner met Tuesday in Beaufort with top administrators and transportation engineers for the county and the Town of Hilton Head Island, as well as the state Department of Transportation's district highway engineer to discuss the results of his traffic counts.

Most of the officials emerged from the meeting with a renewed emphasis on two solutions to the U.S. 278 traffic congestion: widening the highway and extending Bluffton Parkway to provide an alternative route to U.S. 278.

Hilton Head Island deputy town manager Chuck Hoelle said county and town officials are working on trying to pay for several projects that would have been funded through a 1 percent sales tax, which voters rejected last November. Those projects include extending Bluffton Parkway to S.C. 70; widening Simmonsville Road, S.C. 46 and Burnt Church Road between U.S. 278 and Bluffton Parkway; building frontage or back-access roads along U.S. 278; and extending and paving Foreman Hill Road to connect with U.S. 278.

"We're working to a great extent to a list that you saw ... in the 1 percent special-purpose tax," Hoelle said.

Even if voters rejected the tax by a 141-vote margin last November, the county can't wait until November 2006 to hope another referendum is approved. That's why the towns of Bluffton and Hilton Head Island, along with Beaufort County, are enacting new taxes and fees to raise more money.

"There's only so much a machine or a man can do," county administrator Gary Kubic said. Regardless of whether the lights are being operated by deputies, "you only have so much space, and you're putting a lot of vehicles in it."

That's why "the Bluffton Parkway project is being pushed vigorously," Kubic said.

At the meeting, a consensus was reached that the county should hire a private firm to get accurate counts of all the traffic and which way it turns, Tanner and Hoelle said. The counts would be given to traffic engineers who would figure out where turn lanes should be added.

Kubic said he would have to discuss the matter more with transportation experts as to whether to get the traffic counts before or after the widening project.

7/7/2006

Stacy Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Monday, June 27, 2005 9:47 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: BG: Blood on our hands for deaths on U.S. 17

## Blood on our hands for deaths on U.S. 17

### Time for rhetoric is over

Published Sat, Jun 25, 2005

Just two days ago, four more souls were lost and seven forever scarred on a rural spat of highway in an area that might as well be no-man's land.

The 22 miles of U.S. 17 from Gardens Corner in Beaufort County to Jacksonboro in Colleton County comprise one of the deadliest stretches of American asphalt on the most fatal road in the Lowcountry.

How many more lives will we let slip away because of our inaction?

Charleston Highway is no congested U.S. 278 or U.S. 21, it doesn't run through our back yards and it's not a road that most of us drive daily. Therefore, U.S. 17 doesn't receive the attention or priorities from our government representatives.

Shame on us.

We care more about being stuck in Saturday traffic on our way to the outlet malls in greater Bluffton than we do about saving lives. We care more about driving behind elephantine Winnebagos on U.S. 21 on the way to the beaches of Hunting Island. We care more about the hairline cracks in bridges on S.C. 170.

It's infuriating that the state Department of Transportation doesn't have the money to make our roads safer, that our representatives won't act beyond press statements of rhetoric, that residents don't demand more from their governments or give more to save lives. The tombs of those souls lost prematurely cradle our friends, our neighbors, our children.

How many more lives can we afford to lose? Consider these staggering figures, from 1997 to 2003, the latest data available:

- 895 crashes have occurred on the 22-mile stretch U.S. 17. That's one wreck on the highway every two and a half days;
- 23 people have died on the rural span. That's one person killed about every three months; and
- 552 people have been injured in accidents on the stretch. That equals one injury about every four days.

You can set your watch by it: By the beginning of the work week, an accident will have occurred on U.S. 17. By Wednesday, another person will have been injured. By Labor Day, another life will have been lost.

Unfortunately, that number will grow as more people move to the Lowcountry and legislation to raise money for highway improvements will wither. Local referendums, gas-tax hikes, axle-fee tariffs and surcharges to oil companies have not been supported. These measures would have raised millions for roads like U.S. 17.

There's no one to blame but ourselves, resident and representative alike.

U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson, R-S.C., said in a statement released to the press on Thursday that "Today's tragedy is a horrific reminder that we must secure funding to widen and improve this dangerous highway." Rep. Catherine Ceips, R-Beaufort, proposed forming an advocacy group to widen the highway to four lanes and expedite the permitting and funding process at the federal level. It sounds like a good place to start.

But it wasn't that long ago that three sailors perished and 71 were hurt in a March 2004 accident on U.S. 17 that similar rhetoric, albeit well-intentioned, was given.

Ceips sent a letter March 3, 2004, to John N. Hardee, Second Congressional District, S.C. Department of Transportation commissioner, asking that he work to speed up the process of widening a section of U.S. 17. She wrote on behalf of the families of Cooper Gasque and Cassandra Leek, college students killed on the stretch of U.S. 17. "We must," she wrote, "... do all we can as leaders ... to take whatever steps necessary to zealously pursue all avenues available to try and prevent similar tragedies from claiming our loved ones."

Ten days later, the sailors died.

A scan back through The Beaufort Gazette archives since the Navy bus crash shows no fewer than a dozen entries from politicians, highway commissioners, County Council members who were then standing up to fight for money to make the road safer.

What happened between March 13, 2004, and June 23, 2005? Ceips, perhaps, sums it up best: "So many people have been touched by deaths on that highway, and they don't have a pulled-together effort to get the highway widened."

David Gasque lost his son, Cooper. But Gasque has channeled his energy to speak about the funding needs of the highway that he calls "the Dead Zone."

There are no more poignant words than those he told The Gazette on May 13:

"That's the reason we're vocal. I don't want anyone's blood on my hands."

Shame on us for bloodying our hands with our silence, our forgetfulness and our complacency.

It's time to make a difference. Ceips is asking for volunteers for an advocacy group to raise awareness and seek funding for the

7/27/2006



also suggest contacting your legislative and highway representatives:

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham: 202-224-5972;

U.S. Rep. Joe Wilson: 202-225-2452;

State Sen. Clementa Pinckney: 803-212-6056;

State Sen. Scott Richardson: 803-212-6040; and

State Highway Commissioner John N. Hardee: 803-647-9122.

## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 22, 2005 10:30 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Officials stress cooperation among counties

### Officials stress cooperation among counties

BY ROBERT SANDLER, *The Island Packet*  
Published Wednesday, June 22nd, 2005

[Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)

Officials with the towns of Bluffton and Hilton Head Island on Tuesday encouraged planners charting the course of southern Beaufort County to keep working with Jasper County to ensure wider regional cooperation.

Bluffton Mayor Hank Johnston said he wanted to make sure Jasper County officials were fully informed of the southern Beaufort County regional plan as development comes to the neighboring county. The prospective developers of three tracts are asking Hardeeville for permission to build about 38,000 housing units.

Johnston said he was especially concerned about water quality, along with other basic infrastructure needs.

Water knows no political boundaries," he said.

Speaking more about the general development of his town, Johnston advised Jasper County that not everything Bluffton had done was perfect: "We have some things that we wish we had done differently six or seven years ago."

At a separate meeting Monday with Beaufort County Council, Chairman Weston Newton repeatedly encouraged planners to work with Jasper County officials for similar reasons.

Gone are the days when a project on Hilton Head only impacts Hilton Head or a project in Bluffton only impacts Bluffton," Newton said.

Consultants with Clarion Associates have been working since September to compile a plan for all of Beaufort County south of the Broad River. The county and both towns are paying the firm \$220,000 for the work, which is expected to be complete by spring 2006.

They have identified \$495 million of infrastructure -- mostly roads, schools and parks -- that will be required to serve a south-county population that is expected to double within 15 years. While property taxes and fees from developers are expected to pay for some of the needs, about \$365 million of the total is unfunded.

The consultants have suggested increases in developer fees, county sales tax and local gasoline tax, along with a fee for real estate transactions throughout the county. But state law doesn't allow a local gas tax, and Hilton Head Island is the only jurisdiction in South Carolina where the real estate transfer fee is legal.

Hilton Head Island Mayor Tom Peebles said he would support all those suggestions, including raising developers' fees, a local gas tax and a broader real estate transfer fee. He blamed home builders and developers north of the Broad River for blocking the county's efforts at getting the real estate fee allowed on a greater scope.

"Until the local north-of-the-Broad builders ... get on board, we don't have a chance," said Peebles, who owns a construction company.

While separate meetings were held with the county and town councils Monday and Tuesday, several officials didn't attend the update on the regional plan.

At Hilton Head Island's Planning and Development Standards Committee meeting, councilmen Drew Laughlin and Bill Ferguson were absent. At Bluffton's joint meeting of Town Council and the Planning Commission, council members Oscar Frazier and Lucille Mitchell and commission members Don Blair, Fred Hamilton Jr. and Allyne Mitchell were absent.

At Monday's County Council meeting, Councilwoman Margaret Griffin was absent, although she attended Tuesday's meeting in Bluffton.

Contact Robert Sandler at 706-8144 or [rsandler@islandpacket.com](mailto:rsandler@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [www.islandpacket.com](http://www.islandpacket.com).

Stacy Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Tuesday, June 21, 2005 8:51 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP & BG:Planning pleases council

## Planning pleases council

### County still vexed by cost of regional effort

ROBERT SANDLER, *The Island Packet*  
Published Tuesday, June 21st, 2005

Comments (0) → [Add Comment](#)

BLUFFTON – County Council members said Monday they were mostly pleased with regional planning efforts for the area south of the Broad River and offered suggestions to help improve the area. But they also learned that they currently have few means to close a \$365 million funding gap for the needs identified by the study.

Council Chairman Weston Newton said the planning process is crucial because the actions of one municipality – Hilton Head Island, Bluffton or even Hardeeville – affect the entire region, as do the actions of Beaufort County.

"There are the days when a project on Hilton Head only impacts Hilton Head or a project in Bluffton only impacts Bluffton," he said. Each area's actions "have a direct impact on all of the folks in all of southern Beaufort County."

Beaufort County and towns of Hilton Head Island and Bluffton jointly are paying \$220,000 to Clarion Associates of Denver to tell the governments what they should be doing over the next decades as the area grows. The planning effort started in September 2004 and is expected to finish in the spring of 2006.

Clarion consultants briefed County Council members on their progress Monday at the Bluffton library. The consultants will hold two separate meetings today with officials from Hilton Head and Bluffton.

Southern Beaufort County's population is expected to grow from about 67,000 today to about 135,000 when it is built out, which is expected to happen before 2020, according to the consultants.

To serve all the new inhabitants, more than \$495 million worth of infrastructure improvements must be made to meet the needs for schools, parks, roads, the consultants found. About \$130 million of that already will be collected through fees collected from developers and other taxes.

The consultants have suggested that the county raise the fees it collects from developers to meet more of the needs. They also recommended the county implement a 1 percent sales tax, which voters rejected in 2002 and 2004, and suggested collecting a fee on real estate transactions and imposing a county gasoline tax – both of which aren't allowed under state law. (Under a special provision of state law, the Town of Hilton Head and is the only government that may collect a real estate transfer fee.)

Council Vice Chairman Skeet Von Harten said he was disappointed that state legislators continually reject Beaufort County's pleas to allow the real estate transfer fee, saying, "I don't know if we will ever get it or not."

Councilman Mark Generales offered a couple of suggestions to the planners in terms of easing traffic flow: building an express route from Interstate 95 to the greater Bluffton area and asking time-share owners on Hilton Head to stagger their check-in dates.

"If everyone has to come in on a Saturday and leave on a Saturday," he said of the time-share check-in dates. "Can't we start a week on a Monday for some of these units?"

Newton said while he was pleased with the work he had seen so far, the hard part will come in persuading Hilton Head and Bluffton town officials to support the plan.

"The real challenge lies in the implementation of what comes out of this," he said.

Contact Robert Sandler at 706-8144 or [rsandler@islandpacket.com](mailto:rsandler@islandpacket.com). To comment on this story, please go to [www.islandpacket.com](http://www.islandpacket.com).

7/1/2006


Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 12, 2005 12:33 PM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP: Letter: Traffic problems getting worse

## Traffic problems getting worse

Published Sunday, June 12th, 2005

 [Comments \(0\)](#) → [Add Comment](#)  
To The Packet:

The solution to traffic problems in southern Beaufort County appears no closer than ever before. Confusion reigns on what should be done and how the total cost should be funded.

An increase in sales tax is the most regressive measure in sight. A storm of protest would greet a higher tax on expensive motor fuel. Moreover, the spending plans strike many as counter-productive.

The S.C. Department of Transportation has engaged a contractor to pave a mile of the median strip approaching the four-lane bridge to Hilton Head Island. Three lanes for drivers, including many commuters from Bluffton, would jam traffic at the bridge and in the opposite direction heading west.

Plans for massive growth in Bluffton and Hardeeville threaten worse traffic on U.S. 278. But who would buy a home or start a business where roads, schools, police, and fire services are not already in place? In any event, the public will not want to pay for the infrastructure needed for keeping pace with rapid development.

Jay Reid

Hilton Head Island

## Stacy Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Sunday, June 05, 2005 2:44 PM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP: Growth-plan officials seek immediate action

### Growth-plan officials seek immediate action

By TRAVIS LOLLER, *The Island Packet*  
Published Saturday, June 4th, 2005

Comments (0) → [Add Comment](#)

A steering committee charged with helping form a regional plan that will allow southern Beaufort County to solve the problems stemming from its rapid growth is impatient for answers.

On Friday, the group heard the last of four background reports that define the problems residents south of the Broad River are facing, primarily because of rapid growth. Consultants with Denver-based Clarion Associates and Maryland-based TischlerBise have projected a population of between 130,000 and 140,000 at buildout, around 2020.

The most recent background report stated that current revenue sources will bring in only enough money to meet about 26 percent of the more than \$95 million needed to support that population over the next 15 years.

Consultants suggested a combination of a capital projects sales tax, impact fees for new development, a real estate transfer tax and a local option sales tax as ways to bridge the revenue gap, but they did not offer a specific funding plan. That will be part of a memorandum expected in August. A final plan is not expected until early next year.

"The plan is still nine to 12 months away," said Beaufort County school board member David Chase, a nonvoting member of the committee. "How do we start to deal with the problems now? If we wait another year, we're going to see costs increase."

Beaufort County planning director Tony Criscitiello said the county is taking "incremental steps" while the plan is developed. "It's not an issue of saying we're not going to act until we finish the report," he said.

Criscitiello said the county recently enacted a 2 percent hospitality tax to increase its revenue. It also passed a traffic impact analysis ordinance that requires developers to help pay for road improvements that will reduce the burden their projects place on existing roads.

The committee also discussed alternative ways to reduce the need for new roads, parks and other improvements. Several members said they were interested in trying to reduce the rate of growth to give local governments more time to pay for growth-related needs.

Clarion Associates' Gary Dale said the issue would be explored fully in the memorandum planned for August.

TischlerBise's Carson Bise warned, "Under the current revenue structure, an attempt to slow growth might put more burden on the local governments, because you're relying on the growth of tomorrow to pay for the needs of today. So it probably will not work without other funding sources."

Criscitiello suggested purchasing development rights to reduce the ultimate projected population of southern Beaufort County. Committee member Diane Chmelik, representing Beaufort County's Planning Commission, suggested purchasing land to keep it out of development, a proposal the committee agreed to include in its goals.

Contact Travis Loller at 706-8140 or [tloller@islandpacket.com](mailto:tloller@islandpacket.com).

Stacy Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Friday, June 03, 2005 11:20 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP: Planning consultants foresee revenue gap

## Planning consultants foresee revenue gap

BY TRAVIS LOLLER, *The Island Packet*  
Published Friday, June 3rd, 2005

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Without new revenue streams, southern Beaufort County will pull in only about 26 percent of the money it needs to meet the growing demand for roads, parks, schools, libraries and emergency services over the next 15 years.

On Thursday, consultants preparing a regional plan to address growth-related problems on Hilton Head Island, Bluffton and unincorporated southern Beaufort County told a roomful of residents that the area will need about \$496 million to serve the growing population based on currently planned development. Projected revenue from current sources leaves local governments about \$366 million short.

Consultants expect the population of southern Beaufort County to reach between 130,000 and 140,000 by buildout, around the year 2020. Bridging the monetary gap in those years will be difficult, they said, and require more than one funding tool.

Suzanne Larson of Maryland-based TischlerBise suggested the use of increased impact fees, a capital projects sales tax, a real estate transfer fee and a local option gas tax. The presentation was not meant to be the final word on how to pay for needed improvements, he said, but an evaluation of different ways to raise revenue. He and other consultants chose to concentrate on tools that would generate large volumes of revenue.

Despite two defeats at the polls, Larson said a capital projects sales tax still was "the best candidate to fund your needs" because "it places a pretty good tax burden on non-residents and has a tremendous potential to generate revenue over the next 15 years."

The tax could generate \$23 million annually, or \$350 million county-wide over 15 years, he said.

Increasing the county's road impact fees from \$440 to \$1,600 per single-family home, the national average, would generate an additional \$72 million for roads over 15 years. Increasing county park impact fees from \$483 to \$840 per single-family home would generate an additional \$10 million for parks over 15 years.

The county could choose to increase impact fees even more. Some fast-growing Sunbelt communities have road impact fees approaching \$5,000 per single-family home, Larson said.

Over 15 years, a countywide local option gas tax could bring in \$44 million, and a real estate transfer fee could bring in \$129 million. Both of these options would require changes to state law, and their suggestion prompted some skeptical comments from the audience about their feasibility.

A real estate transfer fee has faced stiff opposition at the state level. Currently Hilton Head is the only place in the state where such a fee is legal.

But Craig Richardson of Denver-based Clarion Associates said it was necessary to consider options that presently are not authorized by the state because "you're not going to be able to solve your problems with what you have on the table."

A number of Sunbelt communities his company has worked with have succeeded in making changes at the state level that allowed them to increase revenue, he said.

The consultants said increased property taxes probably will be needed to build new schools and should not be counted on to pay for other needs. The Beaufort County School District is working on its own revenue plan that should be complete this summer.

Greg Dale, also with Clarion Associates, said there are other ways to address growth-related problems that do not involve simply raising revenue.

Slowing the rate of growth is an option that would give local governments more time to deal with its problems, although it ultimately would not decrease the funding gap. Strengthening the commercial base could help local governments as well, because businesses tend to pay for themselves through property taxes while homes do not.

The funding options presented Thursday are part of a background report to the regional plan called Fiscal Opportunities and Constraints on Growth.

7/31/2006

Stacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Wednesday, June 01, 2005 9:07 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP & BG: Officials continue regional dialogue

## Officials continue regional dialogue

BY ROBERT SANDLER, *The Island Packet*  
Published Wednesday, June 1st, 2005

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SAVANNAH – Government and business leaders from Beaufort and Jasper counties held another meeting Tuesday with officials from the Savannah metropolitan area, continuing to discuss ways to help integrate the bi-state region.

The gathering at the Savannah International Trade and Convention Center on Hutchinson Island was a follow-up to an April meeting in which participants began identifying topics the bi-state area needs to work on together. Discussion has focused on economic development, transportation, water quality, education and workforce development, and building a regional vision. In about three weeks, the group will meet again to further define exactly what should be done on those subjects.

The Bi-State Metropolitan Regions Initiative, sponsored by the University of Georgia, is working in two other population centers: Chattanooga, Tenn., and its extension into Georgia, as well as Columbus, Ga., and its reach into Alabama.

Jim Youngquist, the university professor who is directing all three efforts, said the three bi-state regions will meet at some point in August to share ideas and find ways to work together. The entire effort is an attempt to find "ways to break down the state line," he said.

Several Lowcountry representatives worked toward identifying ways governments can raise money for transportation projects.

Jasper County Council Chairman George Hood said his county is working on establishing development impact fees, which developers pay to help defray the strain that new buildings place on infrastructure.

"We are close now, I think, to having a plan," Hood said. "A lot of developers don't want to pay as much as they should."

Some parts of Beaufort County have been collecting the impact fees in different ways over the past several years, with proceeds going toward road, library and park construction.

Money for transportation projects also can be raised through sales tax referendums, other special taxing districts and direct contributions from developers, officials noted.

Stacy Bradshaw

From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Monday, May 02, 2005 9:02 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP & BG:Tax rejections forces county to get creative

## ax rejections forces county to get creative

ROBERT SANDLER, *The Island Packet*  
Published Monday, May 2nd, 2005

Six months ago today, Beaufort County voters rejected by the slimmest of margins a 1 percent sales tax that would have paid mostly transportation improvements.

Before the election, County Council and all five of the county's municipalities passed resolutions supporting it and encouraging voters to approve it. Nevertheless, the tax failed by 141 votes out of more than 53,000 cast. Officials had said the sales tax would let the county's residents help themselves, with statistics showing that almost 50 percent of the tax would be paid by tourists.

Six months after the tax failed, officials still say voters would have been wise to approve the tax. About half of the 33 projects have been shelved until more money can be found.

In the face of defeat, local governments are finding creative ways – special taxing districts, levying new taxes and in some cases using state money – to pay for what they believe are the most crucial projects.

Some of the work would have been done in the unincorporated county, such as frontage roads along U.S. 278 and construction of the Bluffton Parkway.

As Greater Bluffton continues to grow and traffic worsens on U.S. 278, residents have been clamoring for construction of an alternate route: the Bluffton Parkway. The defeat of the sales tax has even spurred a group of residents from many mainland communities – Cross Creek, Colleton River Plantation, The Crescent, Belfair, Eagle's Pointe, Rose Hill Plantation, Sun City Hilton Head, the Farm at Buckwalter and Old Carolina – to band together to form the Greater Bluffton Residents Advisory Group.

The group has just pushed officials to reject a proposal to build express toll lanes down the median of U.S. 278. Now it is working toward getting state and federal money to build the Bluffton Parkway.

Tom Croley, the group's leader, said the timing associated with unveiling the details of the proposed toll lanes on U.S. 278 so soon before the election "ultimately submarined it." But he said residents realize a tax increase is necessary to help improve traffic flow in the county.

"I think people realize a tax increase is needed, and if they want Beaufort County's money to stay in Beaufort County for the benefit of the county, that is certainly one of the best options to accomplish the goal," Croley wrote in an e-mail to *The Island Packet*.

The parkway now exists between Burnt Church and Simmonsville roads, but officials have run out of money to build more of the road. The sales tax would have funded its construction west to S.C. 170.

Some of Bluffton officials have renegotiated development agreements on several planned communities to get extra donations from developers. In exchange for greater housing density, developers have given the town several million dollars for road projects, including Bluffton Parkway, widening of Buckwalter Parkway and some improvements to S.C. 46.

County Council Chairman Weston Newton said he recently met with Bluffton Mayor Hank Johnston to determine how much money had been raised toward funding the Bluffton Parkway. Newton said the town raised about \$6 million out of \$9 million that is needed for the construction. The road will cost a total of \$25 million, but most of that is being paid through impact fees that developers pay to the county.

The county issues bonds to raise the remaining \$3 million needed for building the Bluffton Parkway, it also may include some money for widening Buckwalter Parkway to four lanes. Both projects were included in the 1 percent sales tax list.



In recent months, the county enacted a hospitality tax — essentially a 2 percent tax on prepared food and drinks. Newton said the council soon will consider an admissions tax that would be collected on tickets to for-profit events, such as movies, professional sporting events and bowling alleys. The council also is reviewing whether to raise the business license fee.

Those taxes have been pitched for various uses, including the county's land-buying program, but ultimately could go toward road construction, Newton said.

Those potential taxes and fees, however, won't raise enough money to solve all the county's woes. And under state law, local governments are supposed to rely mostly on a property tax or sales tax.

Right now, we're exploring and reviewing other mechanisms to come up with funding," Newton said, such as taxes on prepared meals or event admissions. "We are analyzing those right now to see how we might be able to come up with the revenue stream ... without having to burden property owners. Obviously, one of the benefits to a sales tax is that it's paid in significant part by visitors."

Hilton Head Island's most prominent project would have repaved William Hilton Parkway from Squire Pope Road to Sea Pines Circle.

Town manager Steve Riley said the town was working on a plan to pay for realigning the intersection of William Hilton Parkway and Squire Pope Road.

The repaving of the parkway, however, will take much longer. Riley said the town is participating in a matching funds program with the state Transportation Department that gradually will pave some sections of the road.

Projects in the city of Beaufort are being paid for mostly by borrowing, which will be paid back using property taxes, Mayor Bill Rauch said.

We always said that the (1 percent sales tax) was property tax relief," Rauch said. "These things have to get built; we're going to build them. What we're going to do instead is borrow the money, (and) pay it back from the general fund."

Newton said the county still is considering whether to ask voters again to consider a 1 percent sales tax in November 2006.

We continue to look for funding sources," he said, "but ... revenue streams made available to local government are very limited."

Contact Robert Sandler at 706-8144 or [rsandler@islandpacket.com](mailto:rsandler@islandpacket.com).

Stacy Bradshaw

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From: Suzanne Larson  
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2005 9:33 AM  
To: County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
Subject: IP & BG: County Council kicks off planning session

## County Council kicks off planning session

Two-day event will be used to discuss goals

By ROBERT SANDLER, *The Island Packet*  
Published Friday, March 18th, 2005

Beaufort County Council begins its annual two-day planning session today, analyzing its progress toward last year's goals and determining how to fulfill those objectives this year.

The council will spend much of the time discussing its five long-term goals: strengthening and diversifying the county economy, ensuring that county government is sound financially, maintaining planned and orderly growth, delivering county services in a cost-effective manner and establishing an effective transportation and road system.

Beaufort County Council Chairman Weston Newton said the planning meetings offer a chance to review what the council has done and how it can be done better in the future.

Part of the retreat will be looking at what our objectives were for last year and using a yardstick to see what we accomplished, what we left undone, ... are we focusing our resources in the right place," Newton said. "It's an overview of where we've been and also what we need to do in terms of our guiding principles or guiding goals."

The council also will analyze its top priorities for 2004, only some of which were successful.

The council's top priorities that were accomplished included beginning the county's southern regional plan, intended to help manage growth south of the Broad River, and continuing to develop a strategy to oppose the closure of the three military installations in the county. Widening of S.C. 170, another of the council's top priorities, mostly is complete but continues to drag on.

Other top priorities weren't so successful, including working to alleviate traffic congestion on U.S. 278 and passing the 1 percent sales tax referendum to pay for road and public works projects. Voters rejected the tax proposal in November.

The council faced similar successes and failures in addressing its other priorities. It successfully imposed development impact fees south of the Broad River and continues to purchase rural land throughout the county to preserve it from development. However, priorities such as more construction of the Bluffton Parkway and capping increases in property assessment remain stalled.

Contact Robert Sandler at 706-8144 or [rsandler@islandpacket.com](mailto:rsandler@islandpacket.com).

Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, March 21, 2005 9:23 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** IP & BG: Low morale, rising costs dominate council retreat

## Low morale, rising costs dominate council retreat

BY ROBERT SANDLER, *The Island Packet*  
Published Sunday, March 20th, 2005

OKATIE -- County Council members were given something of a one-two punch at the second day of their annual planning meetings: costs of maintaining county facilities and services are increasing rapidly, and many staffers are beset by low morale.

Several of the county's top staffers spoke at the council retreat Saturday at the University of South Carolina Beaufort's south campus. Nearly all of them said they don't have enough office space or support staff and wages are inadequate. On top of that, some communications systems are several years old and will begin to fail in the next few years, they said. That will mean a need for expenditure of several million dollars just to stay at current levels of service.

"We're at a crossroads in this county, where a lot of original investments made five to 10 years ago are maturing and a lot of replacement possibilities are coming online," county administrator Gary Kubic said.

County finance director Tom Henrikson agreed, saying that since the county has put off updating major equipment, many bills may come due in the near future.

"The deferred maintenance program is about to choke (the schools); it's choking us now," Henrikson said. "We're getting at a point where it's going to be more and more difficult to maintain a level of service that we're at."

Suzanne Gregory, who oversees services for the county's 1,100 workers, said employees were sick of the various salary studies done in recent years and want to see their salaries change.

"Morale because of compensation right now is rather low," she said. "If it's important to retain our employees, we need to look at it and be willing to move forward with it."

Some employees are upset because workers at the Sheriff's Office have a salary schedule under which pay increases by a set amount each year, Gregory said.

Councilman Frank Brafman of Hilton Head Island said when he used to work for the U.S. Treasury Department, he and his colleagues didn't compare salaries to those for employees of the State Department or other similar agencies.

"We didn't spend our careers bitching about it," he said. "What we can do is make sure our employees get paid a fair amount."

Councilman Mark Generales of Lady's Island said he knew staffers have been given limited budgets in recent years but said the only way to get more money will be by raising property taxes, something the public may not want to do.

"I don't think there's any question that you folks need increases across the board," he told the group of department heads. "I think (a tax) increase is going to be a difficult sell."

Council Chairman Weston Newton of Hilton Head said the county will have to decide what services it needs to provide and whether taxpayers will foot the bill.

"We cannot be all things to everybody without raising taxes," Newton said.

Council members threw out a variety of ideas to increase revenue without a property tax hike. The concepts included an extra tax for new developments, establishing school impact fees and placing a toll on future extensions of the Bluffton Parkway. Most were not discussed.

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...utton suggested asking voters to add 3 percent to the sales tax at a referendum next year, with proceeds going toward schools, transportation and the purchase of rural land to prevent it from being developed.

...ouncilmen Gerald Dawson of Sheldon and Herbert Glaze of Burton did not attend Saturday's meeting.

## Stacy Bradshaw

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**From:** Suzanne Larson  
**Sent:** Monday, February 28, 2005 10:11 AM  
**To:** County Distribution (pio@bcgov.net)  
**Subject:** CMN: Not so fast . . .

### Not so fast . . .

*BLUFFTON: DOT decision maker says tolls remain on U.S. 278 upgrades table.*

Mon. 2/28/05

**Frank Morris**  
**Carolina Morning News**

John Hardee, Beaufort County's state highway commissioner, says that "a toll should be the absolute last resort" for financing major U.S. 278 improvements, but the commission has not ruled it out.

He gave the update Friday after a state Department of Transportation engineer said a toll proposal - made last year by a private business team to pay for its proposed mainland U.S. 278 express lanes project - is not viable.

A Columbia businessman, Hardee holds the DOT's sprawling 2nd Congressional District seat that includes Beaufort and Jasper counties. In late January, he joined a 6-0 commission vote backing top DOT administrators' recommendation to give "further review" to the express lanes concept with the toll-financing option.

Now, without a deadline, the commission is waiting for a recommendation and the toll option remains on the table. "I don't delegate decisions," Hardee said.

"We haven't even discussed it because the information has not come back to us yet," he said.

"To me, a toll should be the absolute last resort. That is the last, last, last resort." But, he added, "I think it's really too early to say how we're going to finance it, how we're going to pay for it, until we get everything nailed down.

"Let's see what it really encompasses and what we're talking about, and let's get us a total cost."

He said that the DOT staff would make a recommendation on whether to authorize building express lanes and charging tolls, and then the commission would decide what to do.

Hardee also said he has heard "not a word" from any one in Beaufort County for or against putting more tolls on U.S. 278. The Cross-Island Parkway on Hilton Head Island, built as part of U.S. 278, became the state's first toll road when it opened in 1998.

The day he voted to explore the tolls option, Hardee said that while "no one likes taxes or tolls," they need to be looked at "until we get adequate (highway) funding."

Rocque Kneece, the DOT program development engineer heading state reviews of U.S. 278 project options, said Friday that "tolls is no longer one of those viable things" due to strong community opposition at January public forums.

He also said a toll decision is up to the commission.

"Generally, we don't want to force tolls on a community if the community's not supporting that concept," Kneece said.

He said other options involving county government include trying another sales tax referendum or seeking funding from the state infrastructure bank.

Weston Newton, Beaufort County Council chairman and the BTAG chairman, said Friday that instead of looking at tolls or more local funding for highway improvements it is incumbent on the DOT and the state Legislature to find the money needed for U.S. 278 improvements.

He said Beaufort County needs to be recognized as a big player in the state's number one industry, tourism, and get more support

7/27/2006

The idea of tolls is an invitation for the local community to help themselves, in conjunction with the tourists. But, I think that the state has the responsibility as the beneficiary of all those tourism revenues, in the way of sales taxes, to make sure that they are helping fund transportation improvements," Newton said.

Reporter Frank Morris can be reached at 837-5255, ext. 108

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**YOU GO** What: A Beaufort County Transportation Advisory Group meeting. When: 2 p.m. Thursday Where: County Council Chambers, 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort. Agenda: Discussion of U.S. 278 improvement options and a report on a U.S. 278/S.C. 170 traffic access management plan.

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## 2006 BEAUFORT COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS

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Gerald Dawson	6	AA <sup>2</sup>	M	(843) 846-4830	64-A Horace Dawson Drive Seabrook, SC 29940
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Dick Stewart	11	C	M	(843) 379-2700	P.O. Box 2266 Beaufort, SC 29901

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<sup>1</sup>Caucasian

<sup>2</sup>African American