

BLUFFTON TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 27, 2016

Mayor Lisa Sulka called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Council members present were Mayor Pro Tempore Larry Toomer, Fred Hamilton, Harry Lutz and Dan Wood. Town Manager Marc Orlando, David Nelems, Executive Director of the Don Ryan Center for Innovation, and Town Attorney Terry Finger were also in attendance.

Municipal Hometown Economic Development Grant Resolution

Executive Director, David Nelems gave an overview. The Municipal Association of South Carolina's (MASC) board of directors created and has earmarked \$200,000, for the inaugural 2016 Hometown Economic Development Grant program to fund economic development activities that have a positive impact on creating jobs and improving the quality of life in cities and towns. Beginning this fall, cities and towns can apply for grants up to \$25,000 to fund economic development projects that will produce measurable results, can be maintained over time by the city or town and can be replicated in other municipalities.

The Hometown Economic Development Grant program may be utilized for a number of eligible economic development activities including programs developed by a municipality or in partnership with others including, but not limited to, downtown development or revitalization; small business assistance or business incubators like the Town's Don Ryan Center for Innovation (DRCI). The DRCI, through the Town of Bluffton intends to apply for the maximum award of \$25,000. If awarded, the grant funds will be used by the DRCI for advertising and marketing purposes as well as for educational session programming.

Per the grant program, municipalities that receive a grant must provide matching funds and show commitment to providing the local match through Council's adoption of a Resolution. The local match ranges between 5 percent to 15 percent of the grant award which is determined by population. The Town falls within the highest population category of 10,000+ resulting in a required 15-percent match which equates to \$3,750 for a full grant award of \$25,000. Staff has discussed the required match with the Town's Finance Department and has confirmed the availability of funds. As such, staff requests the approval of the proposed Resolution committing to the local match for the grant application package.

(Continued)

**Toomer moved to approve a Resolution Committing the Town of Bluffton to Providing a Local Match for a Municipal Association of South Carolina Hometown Economic Development Grant. Lutz seconded. The vote was unanimous**

Consideration of a Resolution Authorizing the Purchase and Conveyance of Approximately 1.47 Acres of Real Property in Bluffton, SC, Commonly Known as 68 Boundary Street,(R610-039-00A-0097-0000) From Marsh Rentals, LLC, to the Town of Bluffton, SC for the Purchase Price of \$1,095,000.00; and Authorizing the Execution and Recordation of Certain Documents in Connection Therewith

Town Manager, Marc Orlando gave an overview. The property located at 68 Boundary Street consists of 1.47 acres and is located between Lawrence and Green Streets immediately south of DuBois Park. It is zoned Neighborhood Center-HD. There are three structures on the property consisting of a triplex and two cottages. None of the structures are contributing to the local or national Bluffton Historic District designations. This property has been listed for sale by Rachael Cram, Bluffton Realty, for \$1,095,000.

At the May 10, 2016, Town Council Meeting, Council directed Town Staff to investigate the potential purchase of this Property given the opportunity to preserve open space and eliminate development rights in the May River watershed. At that time, Town Staff ordered an appraisal from Valbridge Property Advisors.

Following a discussion in Executive Session during the June 14, 2016, Town Council Meeting, Town Council, by majority vote, approved the Motion to authorize the Town Manager to enter into negotiations for the purchase of property within the Bluffton Historic District with the purchase price not to exceed the list price.

Acting on Town Council's direction, Town Staff approached the Seller of the Property and first offered the appraised value of the Property: \$1,000,000.00. The Seller's agent then notified Town Staff that the Seller was only considering two options: (i) selling the Property at the list price, or (ii) subdividing and developing the Property. Given the Old Town Master Plan's focus on preserving green space, reducing density and exploring (Continued)

parking additions, Town Staff offered the Seller the list price: \$1,095,000.00.

On June 21, 2016, the Seller's agent notified the Town of the Seller's acceptance of the Town's offer. On July 20, 2016, the Town and the Seller executed a Purchase and Sale Agreement for the Town's purchase of the Property with the Town's due diligence period expiring on September 19, 2016, and closing to occur no later than October 3, 2016.

In accordance with Section 5-7-40 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, as amended, and Section 2-13 of the Bluffton Code of Ordinances, the Town may purchase real property by resolution of the Town Council adopted at a public meeting.

The property provides for a natural extension of DuBois Park with many significant trees offering shaded open space and other opportunities to expand parkland in the Bluffton Historic District. The property also maintains significant frontage on three major streets in the Old Town area: Boundary Street, Green Street and Lawrence Street. Preliminary designs indicate that the addition of approximately 750 feet of street frontage alone could result in the addition of as many as 26 public parking spaces in the heart of Old Town.

Additionally, the purchase and preservation of this land as open space would remove development rights and reduce the increased demand on parking and other public infrastructure resulting from the development of the property. Town Staff estimates the property can accommodate approximately 12 mixed-use lots supporting approximately 30,000 square feet of floor area or approximately 12 single-family homes. It may be possible to get more dwelling units with a townhome and/or live-work product but it is difficult to estimate the number given the form-based code.

The property is scheduled to close on or before October 3, 2016.

**Wood moved to adopt a resolution approving the purchase of 68 Boundary Street in the Bluffton Historic District from Marsh Rentals, LLC. Toomer seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

(Continued)

Executive Session:

- a. Legal Advice from Town Attorney Regarding Real Estate Contract on Bluffton Village Parcel (Pursuant to SC FOIA Section 30-4-70 (a)(2))

**Toomer moved for Town Council to go into Executive Session to discuss the abovementioned items. Lutz seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Town Council entered into Executive Session at 6:22 p.m.**

Mayor Sulka recused herself and left the room at 6:22 p.m.

Actions from the Result of Executive Session:

Mayor Pro Tempore Toomer called the meeting back to order at 6:50 p.m. and announced no votes were taken.

**Hamilton moved to approve a *Nunc Pro Tunc* resolution ratifying the August 19, 2013 purchase of certain real property by the Town of Bluffton, consisting of eleven parcels of approximately 0.603 combined acres located in Bluffton Village in the Town of Bluffton, South Carolina, and supplementing the Town records to incorporate the addition of a written recusal statement regarding Town Council decisions made therewith, and, authorizing the Town Clerk to accept and record any and all documents in connection therewith. Wood seconded. The vote carried unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

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Mayor

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Deputy Town Clerk