

Media Release



bluffton
HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

January 23, 2017

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Bluffton's Director of Finance & Administration Shirley Freeman Retires

Mayor Lisa Sulka, Town Council members and staff honored Shirley Freeman, the town's director of finance and administration, at the January 11 Town Council meeting for her decade of service to the Town of Bluffton. Freeman retired January 20.

"Serving as the director of finance for Bluffton has been an amazing part of my professional journey," Shirley Freeman, said. "The mission of this town to 'take care of our citizens, the town and each other,' is the focus of our work. It is that spirit which makes this town unique as Bluffton leaders and fellow staff members strive to provide financial policies and practices which have provided consistent years of financial health."

Mayor Lisa Sulka said the awards which the Town has won under Freeman's leadership speak for themselves.

"Standard and Poor's has awarded the Town of Bluffton an AA+ rating which is the second-highest rating possible for a municipality," Mayor Lisa Sulka said. "A solid, transparent, financial standing is the foundation for everything the Town does and Shirley's leadership is a main reason for the Town's financial success. We are so grateful to Shirley for leading us to that level."

During her Bluffton tenure, the finance department consistently won numerous awards for municipal finance. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) awarded the Town of Bluffton the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for eight years, the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for five years, and the Award for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Reporting for five years.

With more than 32 years of municipal finance experience in Beaufort County, Freeman spent her the last decade of her career at the Town of Bluffton. As director of finance and administration for the Town of Bluffton, Freeman supervised the finance and administration department which includes business licensing, municipal court and information technology. Freeman spent her first 22 years in financial management at the Town of Hilton Head Island.

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Freeman also served as a member of the board of directors for the South Carolina Chapter of the Government Finance Officers Association and as a reviewer for the GFOA's Certificate of Achievement Program.

In addition, Freeman was also awarded a Certificate of Achievement from the South Carolina Economic Development School and served as the treasurer of the Bluffton Public Development Corporation.

In addition to GFOA, she is a member of several other professional organizations including the Municipal Finance Officers Clerks and Treasurers Association, the Municipal Technology Association of South Carolina, the South Carolina Development Association and the Don Ryan Center for Innovation.

Freeman has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Armstrong Atlantic State University.