

# Media Release



**bluffton**  
HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

March 17, 2017

For more information:

Debbie Szpanka  
Public Information Officer  
Town of Bluffton  
20 Bridge Street  
Bluffton, South Carolina 29910  
(Office) 843-706-4534  
(Cell): 843-540-2274  
(Email): [dszpanka@townofbluffton.com](mailto:dszpanka@townofbluffton.com)

Town of Bluffton Promotes Richard Spruce to the Town's Chief Building Official  
Town Invites Contractors to "Meet the CBO" April 5

Richard Spruce is the Town's new chief building official, effective Friday, March 17.

Spruce has been with the Town of Bluffton for nearly a year as the chief plans examiner. In his role as chief building official, Spruce supervises the administration of building and construction codes, permits, facilities management and standards for construction procedures. Spruce is the main liaison between the Town and the representatives of the local contractor industry.

"We hope contractors and their representatives come to Richard anytime they have a question about a process or code," Mayor Lisa Sulka said. "We want the people whom we serve to use our staff as tour guides through the process in hopes permitting and code enforcement is more of a partnership and a streamlined experience."

Prior to Spruce' position with the Town, he worked for 15 years for the Town of Hilton Head Island as a fire inspector, plans examiner and flood plain manager. Spruce also spent 20 years working for the Montgomery Fire Department in Alabama, where he retired as the Deputy Fire Marshal. Spruce also spent 21 years in the Alabama National Guard, six with the Army and 15 with the Air Force. He has been a resident of Bluffton for 10 years.

"The Town is pleased to have Richard as the head of the Building Safety Division as his decades of service in the public safety sector is invaluable in this position," Town Manager Marc Orlando said.

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## **Meet the CBO, Richard Spruce**

The Town is hosting a “Meet the CBO” event Wednesday, April 5, from 11:30 a.m. – 12: 30 p.m. at Town Hall (20 Bridge Street). Contractors and their representatives are invited to come to the event to learn more about the Town’s new Chief Building Official Richard Spruce. This meet and greet will also give contractors the opportunity to ask questions about processes, procedures or codes. These meet and greets will be held every other month in 2017.

Richard Spruce will also be available at the Hilton Head Area Home Builders Association’s Lowcountry Home and Garden Show, Friday March 24, 2017 from 1 p.m. – 3 p.m., Saturday, March 25 from 10 a.m. – noon and Sunday, March 26, from noon - 2 p.m. at Buckwalter Recreation Center. Please stop by the Town’s table.

“These meet and greets will help us get to know the Town’s contractors and their specific needs better,” Heather Colin, director of the Town’s growth management department, said. “Our goal is to work together with contractors so we are better partners in aligning projects with the Town’s ordinances, building codes and overall culture.”

The Town’s chief building official is the main contact and liaison between the Town and local contractor industry. Please feel free to call Richard Spruce anytime during the Town’s business hours if you need assistance in any aspect of the building codes or permitting. His office number is (843) 706-7812. Town Hall hours are 8 a.m. – 5: 30 p.m. Monday – Thursday, On Friday, Town Hall is open from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## **George Owens**

George Owens, the Town’s chief building official for two and half years will retire Friday, March 17.

Owens has served as the Town’s chief building official since November 2014 and has worked for the Town for nine years. In addition to serving as chief building official, Owens has also held the positions of a commercial, residential and fire safety plan examiner.

Prior to Owens’ positions with the Town, he worked for 25 years as a chief building inspector, plans examiner and construction superintendent in Tulsa, Oklahoma and the Town of Hilton Head Island. Owens is also a Vietnam Veteran, having served in the United States Marine Corps.