

BLUFFTON TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES
JUNE 21, 2016

Mayor Lisa Sulka called the workshop to order at 6:00 p.m. Town Council members present were Mayor Pro Tempore Larry Toomer, Fred Hamilton, Harry Lutz and Dan Wood. Town Manager Marc Orlando, Deputy Town Manager Scott Marshall, Director of Finance Shirley Freeman, and Town Attorney Terry Finger were also in attendance.

Public Comments:

Richard Nettles, 31 Sweet Pond Court, recommended a Town Council Member increase due to Bluffton's growth.

Kevin Hennelly, 126 Weston Court, stated he appreciated the efforts of Town Council. Wards are developing not by design. A managed change will create a controlled change. Wards will preserve Bluffton's culture.

Brandon Childs, 15 Promenade, agreed with Mr. Nettles' comments.

Joanie Heyward, questioned if having wards would create better relationships between Town Council and residents? She feels that the Town is well represented.

Sharon Brown, 163 Buck Island Road, stated that wards would preserve cultures in the communities and have more representation. She also stated Town Council should hold community meetings.

Bridget Frazier, 15 Guerrard Avenue, stated that Bluffton is not like other towns. Outsiders do not know the culture. She suggested having two (2) wards for Old Town and at-large for the new areas.

Anne Cooke, 37 Thomas Heyward Street, Chairman of Town of Bluffton Municipal Election Commission, questioned if Town Council was feeling overwhelmed? She is in favor to continue having municipal elections on the odd years.

Shere Colborn, 82 Boundary Street, stated the municipal elections should remain on the odd years. She also stated that Town Council should have community meetings.

Discussions on Town Council Composite:

Scott Marshall, Deputy Town Manager, gave an overview of the following:

- Procedure for changing number of Town Council Members:
 - Successful petition
 - Action of majority of Town Council
- Public referendum as a result of successful petition:
 - Valid petition contains verifiable signatures of no less than 15% of voters who reside within the Town of Bluffton
- Public referendum as a result of action of majority of Town Council:
 - Town Council may pass an ordinance calling for a referendum

(Continued)

Discussions on Town Council Composite - Continued:

- What happens after referendum?
 - Effective in the next municipal general election cycle
 - Additional seats appear on 2017 ballot
 - Additional members would be seated in January 2018
 - No other election on same question may be held for two (2) years
- Considerations of Increasing Town Council size:
 - Complexity of services
 - Town Council Workload
 - Diversity and size of population
 - Political dynamics and preferences of municipality
- Impact of Increase in Number of Town Council Members:
 - Total annual budget impact of adding two (2) Town Council Members of \$46,200 to \$59,000
 - Impact to Town Council processes
 - Town Council to Town Manager ratio/availability
 - Committees
 - Meeting frequency
- Related Matters to Consider:
 - Method of Election of Town Council Members
 - District considerations
- Methods of Elections:
 - Majority, Plurality or Primary
 - District Considerations/Options

Town Council was in consensus that the Town Council Member increase will not be placed on the November 2016 ballot by way of a Town Council Ordinance. There may be further discussions on changing the method of elections relating to plurality vs. majority and at-large vs. districts.

Workshop adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Mayor

Town Clerk