



BEAUFORT COUNTY SO

# Beaufort County CONNECTS

*Winter 2024 | Volume Two*

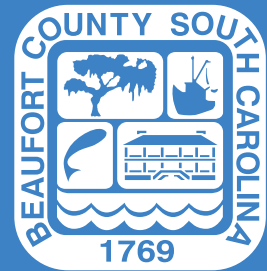




*The Recovery is Worth the Walk Event, held in October, was a free event offered to the community to celebrate substance recovery and showcase prevention efforts. Visit [beaufortcountysc.gov/alcohol-and-drug](http://beaufortcountysc.gov/alcohol-and-drug) for more information or to find services and support.*

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*Beaufort County Connect* represents the outreach campaign for the Beaufort County Government. Currently the effort is comprised of the mobile reporting app (available on the App Store and on Google Play), engagement webpage at [connect.beaufort-countysc.gov](http://connect.beaufort-countysc.gov) and now this new, quarterly newsletter.

We hope you will share your feedback with us or your Council Representative.

*Cover Photo Courtesy of Walter Field*

*Want one of your photos featured in our newsletter? Email your submission to [wpio@bcgov.net](mailto:wpio@bcgov.net)!*

# Your Beaufort County Council



**JOSEPH PASSIMENT**  
CHAIRMAN  
*District 5*  
*Term: 2022-2026*



**ANNA MARIA TABERNIK**  
*District 6*  
*Term: 2022-2026*



**LAWRENCE P. MCELYNN**  
VICE-CHAIRMAN  
*District 10*  
*Term: 2022-2026*



**LOGAN CUNNINGHAM**  
*District 7*  
*Term: 2020-2024*



**GERALD DAWSON**  
*District 1*  
*Term: 2020-2024*



**PAULA BROWN**  
*District 8*  
*Term: 2022-2026*



**DAVID BARTHOLOMEW**  
*District 2*  
*Term: 2022-2026*



**MARK LAWSON**  
*District 9*  
*Term: 2022-2026*



**YORK GLOVER, SR.**  
*District 3*  
*Term: 2020-2024*



**THOMAS REITZ**  
*District 11*  
*Term: 2022-2026*



**ALICE G. HOWARD**  
*District 4*  
*Term: 2022-2026*

*We need you to serve on a board or commission!*

*Learn more about your local government  
and get involved by visiting [beaufortcountysc.gov](http://beaufortcountysc.gov)*

# Upcoming Council Meetings

Unless otherwise noted, all meetings take place at 100 Ribaut Road, Beaufort in Council Chambers. Visit [www.beaufortcountysc.gov](http://www.beaufortcountysc.gov) for the full meeting calendar, agendas, minutes, and more.

Meetings are livestreamed on [beaufortcounty.tv](http://beaufortcounty.tv).

**January 8 at 9 a.m. | County Council Budget Workshop**

**January 13 at 4 p.m. | Community Services and Land Use Committee**

**January 13 at 6 p.m. | Beaufort County Council Meeting**

**January 21 at 4 p.m. | Public Facilities and Safety Committee**

**January 27 at 4 p.m. | Finance, Administration, and Economic Development Committee**

*Hilton Head Island Branch Library*

**January 27 at 6 p.m. | Beaufort County Council Meeting**

*Hilton Head Island Branch Library, Hilton Head*

**February 4 at 9 a.m. | County Council Retreat**

**February 10 at 4 p.m. | Community Services and Land Use Committee**

**February 10 at 6 p.m. | Beaufort County Council Meeting**

**February 18 at 4 p.m. | Public Facilities and Safety Committee**

**February 24 at 4 p.m. | Finance, Administration, and Economic Development Committee**

**February 24 at 6 p.m. | Beaufort County Council Meeting**

# Upcoming Events

**January 1 | County Offices Closed**

*New Years Day*

**January 2 at 10 a.m. | Council Oath of Office Ceremony**

*Council Chambers*

**January 20 | County Offices Closed**

*Martin Luther King, Jr. Day*

**January 23 at 6 p.m. | Chat with Council**

*Bluffton Branch Library*

**February 17 | County Offices Closed**

*President's Day*

**February 20 | Chat with Council**

*Burton Wells Recreation Center*

**March 20 | Chat with Council**

*Hilton Head Island Branch Library*



**Beaufort County**  
SOUTH CAROLINA

843-255-2000  
[www.beaufortcountysc.gov](http://www.beaufortcountysc.gov)



# A HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

# County Tree Lighting

On December 13, the Beaufort County Emerging Leaders program held the third-annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. This free, family-focused event is a celebration of the season featuring musical performances by local school groups, face painting, crafts, and food trucks! County departments were invited to showcase their programs and services by hosting a table at the event, and the evening culminated in a surprise visit from Santa himself!



## Local Election Results

105,414 Voters in Beaufort County Cast Their Ballots This Year

The Board of Voter Registration and Elections has compiled full, official election results online at [beaufortcountysc.gov/vote](http://beaufortcountysc.gov/vote).





## NEWS & UPDATES

### 278 CORRIDOR PROJECT UPDATE



*Aerial view of current bridges headed into Hilton Head*

The Town of Hilton Head Island and Beaufort County are continuing collaborative discussions on the future of the 278 Corridor Project. Following the recent failure of the 2024 Proposed Sales and Use Tax Referendum at the ballot, both entities remain committed to exploring solutions that prioritize the needs of residents and visitors alike.

This project, which seeks to improve safety and accessibility along the 278 Corridor, is critical for the region’s infrastructure. With the South Carolina State Infrastructure Bank requiring a comprehensive financial plan to address the funding shortfall by March 31, 2025, Beaufort County and the Town of Hilton Head are working together to reevaluate cost estimates, identify potential alternative funding sources, and determine actionable next steps.

“The 278 Corridor Project is essential for ensuring safe and efficient travel for our residents and the millions of visitors who come to Hilton Head each year,” said Town of Hilton Head Island Mayor Alan Perry. “While the referendum’s outcome has given us a challenge, we must find a solution that protects and encourages the health and vitality of our local, regional and statewide economies.”

Beaufort County Council Chairman Joseph Passiment echoed the sentiment, stating, “The County is dedicated to securing the resources necessary to move this project forward. Addressing the needs of the 278 Corridor is not just an infrastructure priority—it’s a commitment to the safety, quality of life, and sustainable growth of our community. Collaboration with the Town of Hilton Head Island is key, and we appreciate their partnership as we navigate these waters together.”

The County and Town will continue to explore funding opportunities to ensure the project progresses in a manner that reflects the community’s best interests. Both entities encourage residents to stay informed and participate in future discussions as plans evolve.

For updates and additional information about this and other Beaufort County projects, visit [www.beaufortcountysc.gov](http://www.beaufortcountysc.gov). To learn more about Hilton Head Island news and updates, visit [www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov).

## 2025 COUNCIL MEETING CALENDAR ENCOURAGES PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

After receiving citizen feedback, County Council voted on December 9 to accept a meeting calendar that has Committee meetings starting at 4 p.m. and Council meetings starting at 6 p.m. The calendar also includes a rotating location schedule, where every other month the meetings will be held in a different facility across the County. Chat with Council meetings return in 2025, offering informal opportunities to connect directly with Members. These changes aim to include more Beaufort County residents in the decisions that affect them. Visit [www.beaufortcountysc.gov](http://www.beaufortcountysc.gov) for the entire calendar.





# RIBAUT ROAD CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS PLAN GATHERS SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITY INPUT

The Ribaut Road Corridor Improvements Plan held a public meeting on October 25, 2024 to present alternate designs for community feedback. Hundreds of local residents attended the meeting to review the proposed changes and weigh in on their needs for the corridor. An online feedback page was created after the event where those who couldn't attend the meeting could review the proposed designs and weigh in for an additional 30 days.

The County's goal is to create a master plan that reflects the needs of the community, and we appreciate all the participation and feedback. The responses will be compiled and incorporated into the proposed plan, and additional rounds of community and stakeholder input will be held in the future.

The Ribaut Road Corridor Improvements Plan is intended to address safety concerns along Ribaut Road between Boundary Street and the Russell Bell Bridge, and to enhance the road consistent with the visions of the Town of Port Royal, the City of Beaufort, and Beaufort County. As part of any roadway improvements made to Ribaut Road, this project plans for the burial of utilities along the corridor for streetscaping and beautification.

More information about the project and the current plans can be viewed at [www.reimagineribautroad.com](http://www.reimagineribautroad.com).



## ALL ABOARD BEAUFORT COALITION LAUNCHED TO FOSTER YOUTH RESILIENCE

All Aboard Beaufort is A Coalition for Resilient Youth dedicated to fostering resilience in youth through community engagement, support programs, and educational initiatives. The Coalition offers a variety of programs including mentorship, educational workshops, recreational activities, and community service projects.

Program sponsors include Beaufort County, including the Nexus Care and Human Services departments, and the United Way of the Lowcountry. The coalition is looking for community involvement through volunteering, event participation, and donations. More information about the Coalition, its mission, and upcoming events and programs can be found at [www.beaufortcountysc.gov/alcohol-and-drug/all-aboard-beaufort](http://www.beaufortcountysc.gov/alcohol-and-drug/all-aboard-beaufort).

## ENHANCED PASSIVE PARKS PROGRAMMING OFFERS FREE, FAMILY-FRIENDLY FUN

The Beaufort County Passive Parks department has an exciting nature program schedule, with birding, trail walks, and special events to help you take it outside! Join Beaufort County Naturalist Destiney as she helps event attendees enjoy the wildlife and beauty of our area, and shares how special and important our local environment is! These educational events are FREE and great for families as well as nature enthusiasts. Contact the Passive Park Naturalist at [destiney.rains@bcgov.net](mailto:destiney.rains@bcgov.net) for more information or visit our website to see the whole program schedule!



**Bonus - Check out the "Take it Outside!" Nature Show on BCTV's Youtube!**





## GO GREEN: NEW SERIES COMING TO COUNTY LIBRARIES THIS YEAR!

Beaufort County’s Environmental Education Coordinator will be making a series of educational presentations at Beaufort County Library Branches in 2025. Learn about Stormwater management, Composting techniques, and Recycling materials through programs tailored for kids, teens, and adults! These free programs will teach attendees on easy-to-implement changes and practices that benefit our environment.

### Stormwater 101

January 14, 10:30am  
Bluffton Library | Adults  
January 15, 4:00pm  
St. Helena Library | All ages  
*Learn about stormwater runoff management and its impact on our local waterways.*

### Composting 101

February 12, 1:00pm  
Hilton Head Library | All ages  
February 22, 11:00am  
Port Royal Library | Adults  
*Learn techniques for creating compost at home and its benefits for soil health.*

### Recycling 101

March 4, 4:00pm  
Beaufort Library | All ages  
March 10, 10:30am  
Lobeco Library | Kids & Teens  
*Learn about recyclable materials and how to reduce waste.*



## LAUREL BAY PATHWAY NOW OPEN

On Friday, December 13, Beaufort County, the South Carolina Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Marine Corps Air Station joined other project supporters, community partners, and contractors to mark the grand opening and ribbon cutting of the Laurel Bay Pathway Project. This new public pathway seamlessly connects Laurel Bay Housing to the Marine Corps Air Station, creating a convenient route for residents, personnel, and those utilizing the trail for recreation. Funded by a match from the South Carolina Department of Veterans Affairs and funds from the 2018 One Cent Sales Tax, this project’s completion marks a celebratory milestone.



The Laurel Bay Pathway offers a secure route for daily commutes and recreational activities. Crosswalk improvements and sidewalk additions now allow increased connectivity to essential commercial centers for those without access to motor vehicles, opening more options for safe utilization of the Spanish Moss Trail. By directly connecting to the established trail, this pathway strengthens the connection between MCAS, Laurel Bay, and the surrounding community.

Speakers at the ribbon cutting ceremony included Beaufort County Assistant County Administrator Jared Fralix, Beaufort County Councilman Gerald Dawson, SC Military Base Task Force Representative Col. Neal Pugliese, and MCAS Beaufort Commanding Officer Col. Mark Bortnem.

Beaufort County would like to express its gratitude to everyone involved in bringing this project to fruition. From dedicated County staff and the leadership of our Military Commanding Officers to the South Carolina Department of Veterans Affairs and our contract engineers, this was a monumental effort that was years in the making. It is our hope that this project will serve our community for years to come.



# BEAUFORT COUNTY VETERANS AFFAIRS OPENS NEW BLUFFTON LOCATION



The Beaufort County Veterans Affairs Department celebrated the Grand Opening of a new Bluffton location on October 25. The office is located at 9 Benton Field Road, Bluffton.

The Beaufort County Veterans Affairs Office assists veterans, their spouses and other dependents with access to government programs for which they are eligible. Veterans Affairs Counselors are available by appointment only by calling 843-255-6880.

For more information visit [www.beaufortcountysc.gov/veterans-affairs](http://www.beaufortcountysc.gov/veterans-affairs).

Those seeking services should also refer to the Federal Benefits Handbook for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors, available by visiting [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov).

## BEAUFORT COUNTY COUNCIL RECOGNITIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS

### October

The Young Marines received a Proclamation presented by Council Vice Chairman McElynn to recognize Red Ribbon Week.

The Beaufort County Department of Veterans Affairs received a Proclamation presented by Council Member Bartholomew to recognize Operation Green Light.

The Penn Center received a Proclamation presented by Council Member Glover to recognize its 162nd Anniversary.

Members of the Beaufort County Youth Conference Ambassadors received a Proclamation presented by Council Member Glover recognizing their outstanding performance and commitment.

### November

Staff from Nexus Care of Beaufort County received a Proclamation presented by Council Member Dawson to mark 50 years of service to the Beaufort community.





## HILTON HEAD ISLAND AIRPORT AWARDED \$300,000 INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT

The Hilton Head Island Airport has been awarded \$300,000 via a competitive grant through the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This funding is intended to modernize critical components of airport owned air traffic control towers.

The \$300,000 investment will enable the airport to rehabilitate and upgrade essential building components, including the roof, carpet, HVAC systems, bathrooms, security system, exterior doors, lightning protection, and tower antennas. These upgrades will improve safety and functionality for airport staff and travelers alike, ensuring the facility continues to meet the needs of the growing Hilton Head Island community.

Hilton Head Island Airport is a vital asset for the region, connecting residents and visitors to destinations nationwide while supporting the local economy. This funding marks a significant step toward maintaining a safe, efficient, and modern facility to serve the Lowcountry.

“We’re thankful for this funding at the Hilton Head Island Airport. The project will improve the quality of the ‘work life’ at the Tower, which translates into continued excellent service for the flying public. The Tower staff deserves these upgrades,” said Jon Rembold, Airports Director for Beaufort County.

The funding is part of a \$20 million FAA initiative to modernize airport-owned air traffic control towers across the country. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law prioritizes investments in regional airports like Hilton Head Island, which support local economies, commercial and cargo flights, emergency services, and flight training.

For more information about the Hilton Head Island Airport please visit [hiltonheadairport.com](http://hiltonheadairport.com).

## BEAUFORT COUNTY WINS MULTIPLE AWARDS AT SOUTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES AWARD PRESENTATION

South Carolina Association of Counties hosts a yearly award luncheon and this year Beaufort County won in multiple categories.

“We couldn’t be more grateful for the recognition Beaufort County has received at this year’s South Carolina Association of Counties Award Luncheon,” said County Administrator Michael Moore. “These awards are a testament to our team’s commitment to innovation, collaboration, and serving our community. From empowering women leaders to strengthening regional emergency response and coroner services, these projects demonstrate how we are continuously working to improve the quality of life for our residents and ensure efficient use of resources.”

Beaufort County was recognized in the following categories:

- Winner of 2024 Barret Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Awards: Strengthening Regional Coroner Capacity (Beaufort & Charleston) Beaufort and Charleston Counties
- Winner of 2024 Barret Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Awards: Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, and Horry Counties 911 Service Coverage
- Honorable Mention of 2024 J. Mitchell Graham/Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Award for Emerging Leader’s Annual Women’s Conference







# Beaufort County SOUTH CAROLINA

## DID YOU KNOW?

### Our Register of Deeds Offers a Free Filing Alert Service to Help Property Owners Protect Themselves Against Fraud

Beaufort County Register of Deeds (ROD) Patsye Greene wants to remind all County homeowners that the County ROD offers a service to provide property owners with e-mail alerts anytime a document affecting a name or a specific property is recorded by the County Register of Deeds.

The property alert service immediately sends an email notification whenever a document is recorded with the owner's name or property ID (District/Map/Parcel) and is free of charge to homeowners. Property owners should contact law enforcement if there is reason to believe fraud has occurred. Depending on where a homeowner lives, the proper authorities may be the:

**Beaufort County Sheriff's Office**

(843) 255-3200  
2001 Duke St, Beaufort

**Town of Port Royal Police Department**

(843) 986-2220  
1748 Paris Ave, Port Royal

**City of Beaufort Police Department**

(843) 322-7900  
1901 Boundary Street, Suite 102, Beaufort

**Town of Bluffton Police**

(843) 706-4550  
101 Progressive St, Bluffton

It's important to note: this service cannot prevent fraud; however, it is important to be notified early in case someone may be trying to steal your property without your knowledge. Otherwise fraud on real property may not be discovered until owners seek to sell their home.

The public is encouraged to sign up for this free service by visiting the Beaufort County Register of Deeds website and following the links to register.

There is no limit to the number of subscribers for a particular property legal description or party name.

This service is for individuals who want to know if fraudulent activity has occurred under their name or on property located in Beaufort County. Owners may also wish to register the name or legal descriptions for property of elderly loved ones to help protect them from scams.

The Property Alert Service is for any type of land owned in Beaufort County, whether occupied or vacant.

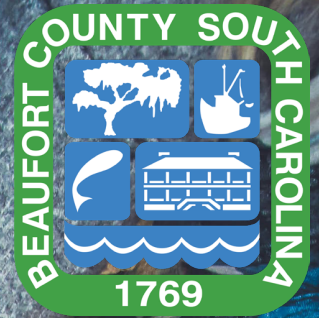
Any document with a party name and/or legal description pertaining to real property is included.

More than 70,000 documents are recorded annually at the Beaufort County Register of Deeds Office. The only time recordings can be refused is when statutory guidelines are not met.

For more information, call Beaufort County Register of Deeds at 843-255-2555.

# EXPERIENCE. LEARN. GROW.

*Looking for a unique and immersive work environment that provides real-world experience?*



## The Beaufort County Internship Program:

- Is open to high school and higher education students (*must be 16 or older*)
- Offers a variety of positions to fit different interests and career tracks
- Offers year-round opportunities
  - Pays up to \$15/hour



Apply today at  
[www.governmentjobs.com/careers/beaufortcountysc](http://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/beaufortcountysc)  
or scan the code to view openings!

*Family members of County staff and/or Board Members may be allowed to intern, but may not be placed under direct supervision or within the same department as other members of their family.*





## DEPARTMENTS DOING GOOD



### Nexus Care Celebrates 50 Years of Service to Beaufort County Residents

The Beaufort County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Department, operating as Nexus Care of Beaufort County, celebrated its 50th anniversary with a ceremony attended by staff members and department directors, including Founding Director William “Skeet” Von Harten (1974); Douglas “Bud” Boyne (1974-2017); Steven Donaldson (2018-2023); and current director Rebecca Whitt Burgess (2023-present).

Since its beginning in 1974, several programs and services have been designed to help individuals, families, and the community. For some, these programs and services are a requirement of the law; for others, they are a requirement for life. The department’s mission is to reduce the negative impact of alcohol and drugs in Beaufort County by providing its citizens with person-centered prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery services.

Resources for those seeking help with overcoming drug and alcohol misuse include telehealth counseling, disaster distress helpline, recovery groups and referrals to Narcotics.com, Addictions.com, Rehabs.org and AA.org. Anyone interested in more information about services can visit the website, contact the Beaufort office at (843) 255-6000, located at 1905 Duke Street, or the Bluffton office at (843) 255-6020, located at 4819 Bluffton Parkway.

### Disabilities and Special Needs Provides a Plethora of Care

The Beaufort County Disabilities and Special Needs Department offers a variety of services to individuals, including early intervention for young children, case management, a day program and employment opportunities for adults, residential living that accommodates 44 individuals in 11 homes, supervised independent living for six additional individuals, and foster home care.

With the main office located at 100 Clear Water Way, Beaufort, the BCDSN currently serves over 880 individuals and families. Case management is provided to over 770, and early intervention services are provided to over 180.

Case management services are provided by trained professionals with knowledge of the medical, social, and educational services available. Through assessment, case managers learn about an individual’s specific needs in order to provide them with effective and appropriate resources, allowing the individual to remain in a community-based environment. Case management services include intake for eligibility categories (intellectual disability, related disability, high-risk infants, autism spectrum, head injury, spinal cord injury or similar disability). Different types of case management we offer are State-funded, Medicaid-targeted and Home and Community Based Waivers.

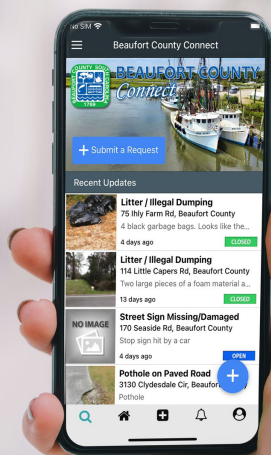
Learn more or apply for services by visiting [beaufortsc.gov/dsn](http://beaufortsc.gov/dsn) or calling 843-255-6300.



# live. work. play.

## SEE A PROBLEM? REPORT IT!

The BC Connect mobile app is available now.



The Beaufort County Connect mobile app allows citizens to submit non-emergency requests directly to various county departments and receive notifications, status updates and comments in real time from county personnel.

## See a Problem?

Report it with BC Connect, the mobile app that lets you submit requests directly to Beaufort County! Available now on the App Store or Google Play!

## Stay Informed!

Sign up for our email list at [www.beaufortcountysc.gov](http://www.beaufortcountysc.gov) to have announcements and news from Beaufort County Government delivered to your inbox.

Or follow us on social media!



@ beaufortcountysc



@ bftcountysc



@ beaufortcountysc



@ beaufortcountytv



Beaufort County

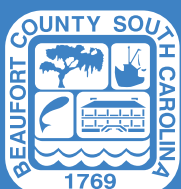


Beaufort County Government

## Join the Team!

Looking for a new opportunity?  
Visit <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/beaufortcountysc> to see all openings and apply today!

***New this Year: Internships for students 16 and older!***



Beaufort County Government  
100 Ribaut Road Beaufort, SC 29902  
[www.beaufortcountysc.gov](http://www.beaufortcountysc.gov)  
843-255-2000

