

ORDINANCE NO. 2018 / 16

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PLACEMENT OF A QUESTION ON THE OFFICIAL BALLOT FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION TO BE CONDUCTED NOVEMBER 6, 2018, CONCERNING A PROPOSITION AUTHORIZING BEAUFORT COUNTY TO ISSUE GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS TO ACQUIRE LANDS FOR PRESERVATION AND TO PAY CERTAIN COSTS AND DEBT SERVICE RELATED THERETO.

WHEREAS, Beaufort County has experienced a very high rate of growth during the last decade and the Beaufort County Council recognizes the need to preserve land that has scenic, natural, recreational, rural, and open space character which is deemed essential to the County's quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Beaufort County has created a citizen advisory board known as the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Board for the purpose of identifying and evaluating potential lands for preservation based upon an official criteria and ranking system established for the County; and

WHEREAS, Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Board has requested that the County conduct a referendum, that, if favorably approved by the citizens of Beaufort County, would allocate 1.823 mills in ad valorem taxes for the express purpose of continuing the acquisition of lands for conservation and recreation purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Board has additionally requested that an amount not to exceed twenty percent (20%) of the total amounts borrowed under this referendum be allowed for use in the making of improvements, outside the scope of general property maintenance, to those lands which have been acquired by the County under previous rural and critical lands purchases and all such lands acquired under this current proposed borrowing; and

WHEREAS, Beaufort County forecasts that a levy of 1.823 mills as requested by the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Board will raise sufficient revenue to finance the issuance of \$25,000,000 in general obligation bonds; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of Beaufort County Council that at the time of this borrowing, the anticipated repayment shall never exceed more than 1.823 mills; and

WHEREAS, the purposes of the bond proceeds are to provide for and protect natural areas and open space, to protect water quality, to preserve land for recreational activities, to preserve farm and forest land, to preserve the rural character of Beaufort County and to protect other environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands, marsh lands and headwater areas.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Beaufort County Council that pursuant to the provisions of Title 4 of the *Code of Laws of South Carolina*, 1976, as amended, the Beaufort County Council hereby directs the Beaufort County Board of Elections and Registration to print on the official ballot to be used in the General Election to be held on November 6, 2018 the following public question:

OFFICIAL BALLOT, REFERENDUM
GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS, NOT TO EXCEED \$25,000,000
FOR LAND PRESERVATION TO PROTECT NATURAL LAND, FARMLAND AND
WATER QUALITY

NOVEMBER 6, 2018

“Shall Beaufort County, South Carolina, issue general obligation bonds, not to exceed \$25 million, for the purpose of land preservation, by purchasing open land in Beaufort County in order to protect water quality, protect local waterways such as the Port Royal Sound, and local creeks and rivers such as the Okatie, Broad and May Rivers, wildlife areas, wetlands, natural lands, farmland, coastal areas, shellfish beds, and nursery areas for recreational and commercial fisheries, and beaches, and provide buffers for the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort. All expenditures shall be subject to an annual independent audit and an amount not to exceed twenty percent (20%) of the funds created by this referendum may be used to improve existing and newly acquired open space and natural areas protected under this program?”

If the voter wishes to vote in favor of the question, place a check or cross mark in the square after the words “In favor of the question”; if the voter wishes to vote against the question, place a check or cross mark in the square after the words “Opposed to the question.”

YES	In favor of the question	[]
NO	Opposed to the question	[]”

If this question is approved, then Beaufort County will be authorized to issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$25 million. The bond funds will allow Beaufort County to continue to preserve open land as well as making certain limited improvements to such lands. Bond funds may be used only for the purposes stated in the ballot question. None of the funds may be used for any other purpose, or for administrative expenses of Beaufort County. However, the County shall be permitted to expend bond funds to engage a qualifying organization(s) in the management of the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Program. An annual audit will verify that the funds are used as required by law.

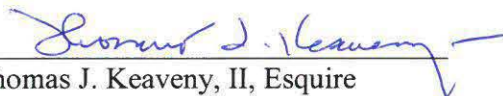
BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that certified copies of this Ordinance be forwarded to the Beaufort County Board of Elections and Registration, Clerk of Beaufort County, Mayors and Clerks of Beaufort County municipalities, Beaufort County Legislative Delegation, Beaufort County Council, Director of Finance, Planning Director, Director of Parks and Recreation, County Auditor, and the Chairman of the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Land Preservation Board.

Adopted this 29th day of May, 2018.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BEAUFORT COUNTY

BY: 
D. Paul Sommerville, Chairman

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


Thomas J. Keaveny, II, Esquire
Beaufort County Attorney

First Reading: April 23, 2018

Second Reading: May 14, 2018

Public Hearing: May 29, 2018

Third and Final Reading: May 29, 2018

Chronology

- Third and final reading approval occurred May 29, 2018 / Vote 11:0
- Public hearing held May 29, 2018
- Second reading approval occurred May 14, 2018 / Vote 11:0
- First reading approval occurred April 23, 2018 / Vote 5:4
- Natural Resources Committee discussion and recommendation to approve ordinance on first reading occurred April 16, 2018 / Vote 3:2