



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Tuesday, Jan. 18, 2011

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Note: Maps attached of the new parking rates, parking time limits

Coin-only parking meters return to Bay Street

Twenty-four coin-only parking meters, each serving two spaces, and seven single-space meters will be installed this week on Beaufort's Bay Street and the electronic pay stations relocated to parking lots downtown.

The Beaufort City Council approved the change Tuesday after last week adjusting the time limits for parking downtown as well as some of the rates.

The double-space meters already are in use downtown, such as on West, Scott and Port Republic streets. Patrons select which parking space they are in – to the left or to the right – and then add coins to buy time. Last week, the City increased time limits for Bay Street parking to three hours at \$1 per hour.

“We are moving the electronic kiosks to the main parking lots at the Downtown Marina, the library and the Waterfront Park playground, and we are ready to go with the double-space meters,” Beaufort City Manager Scott Dadson said.

“For those people who appreciated the convenience of paying for parking with a (debit or credit) card or dollar bills, it will take some adjusting to going back to carrying coins in the car – or they can still use the kiosks in the lots. We heard from the merchants and others that they wanted to simplify the parking meters as much as possible, so we are making these changes,” he said.

Using the double-space meters will reduce some of the visual clutter from the meter poles, Dadson said, and also will reduce the City's overall cost.

Instructions how to use the double-space meters will be visible through the top dome, and also will be placed on the outside of the meter. The time limit for each parking space will be posted on the pole beneath the meter, representatives of Lanier Parking Solutions said.

Other parking changes effective immediately include:

Bay Street, from Carteret to Newcastle at the Downtown Marina, now provides three-hour parking, increased from the two-hour limits previously. The rate remains \$1 per hour.

As patrons park farther from Bay Street, though, the cost drops:

- 75 cents per hour on Port Republic, Charles, West, Scott and Carteret streets
- 50 cents per hour for meters on Craven Street.

Time limits change for other locations beyond Bay Street, with the thinking that as patrons park farther from the prime waterfront locations of Bay Street, they get more time at cheaper rates:

- Four hours per parking space on Port Republic, Charles, West, Scott and Carteret streets, at 75 cents per hour
- No limit on parking (but still 50 cents per hour) for metered spaces on Craven Street between Scott and Newcastle streets
- No time limit on parking at the Marina lot (at \$1 per hour)
- Two hour limits per space (and \$1 per hour) for parking lots at the downtown library and the waterfront playground.

"We've spent a lot of time listening to the downtown merchants, especially those on Bay Street, and we've listened to people who visit downtown as tourists and also locals," said Beaufort City Manager Scott Dadson. "I think Council is making changes in a meaningful, measured way that will continue to help revitalize one of our shopping districts."

Parking tickets remain at \$10 if paid within a week.

END