

AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE

TO MAINTAIN A TEMPORARILY SUSPENSION OF THE REGULAR OPERATING RULES OF COUNTY COUNCIL MEETINGS TO PROVIDE FOR COUNTY COUNCIL AND OTHER COUNTY RELATED MEETINGS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a state of emergency to address the existing public health emergency associated with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19); and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the Governor of the State of South Carolina declared a state of emergency in South Carolina pertaining to the COVID-19 public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, in addition to declaring an initial state of emergency on March 13, 2020, the Governor of the State of South Carolina has issued various Executive Orders initiating, directing, and modifying further extraordinary measures designed to address the significant public health, economic, and other impacts associated with COVID-19 and to mitigate the resulting burdens on healthcare providers, individuals, and businesses in the State of South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, certain provisions of the Governor's various Executive Orders have been extended by subsequent and distinct emergency declarations set forth in Executive Order Nos. 2020-15, 2020-23, 2020-29, 2020-35, 2020-38, 2020-40, 2020-42, 2020-44, 2020-48, 2020-53, 2020-56 and most recently on September 9, 2020 in Executive Order No. 2020-59; and

WHEREAS, the County has been operating under its Emergency Operations Plan since March 17, 2020, when a local state of emergency in Greenville County was declared to address the public health emergency associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and implementation of the Plan was authorized; and

WHEREAS, federal and state guidance to mitigate the spread of the virus continue to recommend that in-person events should limit the numbers of persons and continue be conducted with distancing guidelines; and

WHEREAS, while it is imperative for local government to operate during States of Emergency, it is equally imperative that local governments continue to take steps to minimize the need for large gatherings in order to protect public health and safety and the health and safety of local government officials and staff; and

WHEREAS, due to the National, State and Local States of Emergency related to COVID-19, this Council adopted Emergency Ordinances on April 2, 2020, June 2, 2020 and July 21, 2020 and Council finds that a public emergency affecting life, health, and safety continues to exist requiring a continuation of remote meeting practices on an as needed basis.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL:

Section 1. Temporary Suspension of Certain Council Operating Rules. County Council Members are permitted to attend County Council meetings, and all County Council Standing Committee meetings, electronically (telephonically or by video conference or other virtual means) in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act. With respect to any electronic meeting, the appearance portion of regular meeting agendas for items not appearing on the agenda provided for by Council Rules is hereby suspended. Citizens may submit written public comments to the Clerk to Council which shall be distributed to the members of County Council. It is the policy of County Council for Council and its Committees to meet remotely.

Section 2. Greenville County Boards and Commissions Meetings. County Council further authorizes boards and commissions which County Council has the legal responsibility to either fill or make recommendations to be filled to meet electronically (telephonically or by video conference or other virtual means) in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

Section 3. Suspension of Conflicting Rules. During the period of effectiveness of this Emergency Ordinance, any County Council Rules, ordinances, resolutions or policies that conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are suspended and shall be superseded by this Ordinance.

Section 4. Effective Date; Expiration. This Ordinance shall be effective upon a single reading and two-thirds vote of County Council, and shall expire on November 13, 2020.

DONE IN REGULAR MEETING THIS 15th DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2020.

GREENVILLE COUNTY

Herman G. Kirven, Jr., Chairman
County Council

ATTEST:

Regina McCaskill
Clerk to Council

Joseph M. Kernell
County Administrator