



GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes
Regular Meeting
June 3, 2025
6:14 p.m.

Council Chambers
301 University Ridge
Greenville, South Carolina

Council Members

Benton Blount, *Chairman, District 19*
Rick Bradley, *Vice-Chairman, District 26*
Liz Seman, *Chairwoman Pro Tem, District 24*
Joey Russo, *District 17*
Kelly Long, *District 18*
Stephen Shaw, *District 20*
Curt McGahhey, *District 21*
Frank Farmer, *District 22*
Alan Mitchell, *District 23*
Ennis Fant, Sr., *District 25*
Garey Collins, *District 27*
Dan Tripp, *District 28*

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting date, time, place and agenda was posted online, at 301 University Ridge, Greenville, and made available to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Council Members Absent

Frank Farmer, *District 22*

Council Members Remote Participation

Garey Collins, *District 27*

Staff Present

Joe Kernell, *County Administrator*
Chris Antley, *County Attorney*
Regina McCaskill, *Clerk to Council*
Jessica Stone, *Deputy Clerk to Council*
Pam Gilliam, *Administrative Assistant*
Terrence Galloway, *Information Systems*

Ted Lambrecht, *Deputy County Administrator*
Ronald Hollister, *Assistant County Administrator*
Hesha Gamble, *Assistant County Administrator*
Nicole Wood, *Assistant County Administrator*

Others Present

Sheriff Hobart Lewis, *Greenville County Sheriff's Office*

Call to Order

Chairman Blount

Invocation

Councilor Long

Pledge of Allegiance

Item (4) **Approval of Minutes**

a. May 20, 2025 – Regular County Council Meeting

Action: Councilor Seman moved to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2025 – Regular County Council meeting.

Motion carried.

Item (5) **Proclamations and Special Recognitions**

a. Fatherhood Month

Councilor Long presented a proclamation celebrating fatherhood and proclaiming June 2025 as Elevate Fatherhood Month in Greenville County.

b. Honoring Spero Financial's 90th Anniversary

Councilor Mitchell presented a proclamation to Spero Financial in honor of its 90th Anniversary in Greenville County.

Item (6) **Appearances – Current Agenda Items**

- **Audrey Pasin** – appeared regarding Item 8.b. Zoning Text Amendment / Section 8:5 Environmentally Sensitive District – Paris Mountain (CZ-2025-028)

Item (7) **Public Hearings**

a. FY 2026 Greenville County Budget

A public hearing was held for the purpose of receiving comments from the public regarding an ordinance adopting the County of Greenville FY2026 Budget.

- **James Bowers** – appeared in favor of the proposed
- **Camille Loomis** – appeared in favor of the proposed
- **Summer Meares** – appeared in favor of the proposed
- **Dorothy Waldrop** – appeared in favor of the proposed
- **Yvonne Reeder** – appeared in favor of the proposed
- **Rebecca Howard** – appeared in favor of the proposed
- **Kyle Matthews** – appeared in favor of the proposed
- **Adam Hayes** – appeared in favor of the proposed

- **Dianne Vreeland** – appeared in opposition to the proposed
- **Audrey Pasin** – appeared in opposition to the proposed
- **James Vaughan** – appeared in opposition to the proposed

There being no other speakers, Vice-Chairman Bradley declared the public hearing closed.

b. Glassy Mountain Fire Service Area / General Obligation Bond Request

A public hearing was held for the purpose of receiving comments from the public regarding an ordinance to provide for the issuance and sale of not exceeding \$1,100,000 Greenville County, South Carolina, General Obligation Bonds (Glassy Mountain Fire Service Area Project), Series 2025b; to prescribe the purposes for which the proceeds shall be expended; to provide for the payment thereof; and other matters related thereto.

There being no speakers, Councilor Russo declared the public hearing closed.

Item (8) **Ordinances – Third Reading**

a. Zoning Ordinances

- i. **CZ-2025-022,** Property of Cole Emma II, LLC, located at 12 Old Chick Springs Road (Council District 18), requesting rezoning from R-20 to R-10.

Action: Vice-Chairman Bradley moved adoption of the ordinance at third reading.

Motion carried.

- ii. **CZ-2025-025,** Property of James A. Boling, Jr., located at 3835 E. North Street (Council District 22), requesting rezoning from O-D to C-1.

Action: Vice-Chairman Bradley moved adoption of the ordinance at third reading.

Motion carried.

- iii. **CZ-2025-027,** Property of Sagar S. Gandhi, located at 1421 Old Gunter Rd., (Council District 25), requesting rezoning from R-S to AG.

Action: Vice-Chairman Bradley moved adoption of the ordinance at third reading.

Motion carried.

b. Zoning Text Amendment / Section 8:5 Environmentally Sensitive District – Paris Mountain (CZ-2025-028)

Action: Vice-Chairman Bradley moved for adoption at third reading an ordinance to amend Section 8:5 (ESD-PM, Environmentally Sensitive District-Paris Mountain) of the Greenville County Zoning Ordinance.

Motion carried by a roll call vote of nine (Russo, Long, Blount, Shaw, McGahhey, Mitchell, Seman, Bradley and Tripp) in favor and three (Farmer, Fant and Collins) absent.

c. Brookfield Special Tax District / Millage Request

Action: Councilor Russo moved for adoption at third reading an ordinance to approve the Brookfield Special Tax District Commissioners' request for an increase to its current ad valorem property tax millage levy.

Motion carried.

Item (9) **Ordinances – Second Reading**

a. Glassy Mountain Fire Service Area / General Obligation Bond Request

Action: Councilor Russo moved for approval at second reading an ordinance to provide for the issuance and sale of not exceeding \$1,100,000 Greenville County, South Carolina, General Obligation Bonds (Glassy Mountain Fire Service Area Project), Series 2025b; to prescribe the purposes for which the proceeds shall be expended; to provide for the payment thereof; and other matters related thereto.

Motion carried.

b. FY 2026 Greenville County Budget

Action: Vice-Chairman Bradley moved for approval at second reading an ordinance adopting the County of Greenville FY 2026 Budget.

Action: Vice-Chairman Bradley moved to amend the ordinance to reflect the following changes:

- *Reduce Infrastructure Bank FILOT Revenue by \$12,000,000*
- *Reduce Infrastructure Bank Transfer out to Road Program by \$8,500,000*
- *Reduce Road Program Transfer in from Infrastructure Bank by \$8,500,000*
- *Reduce Road Program Expenditures by \$4,000,000*

Chairman Blount stated he wanted to address the people who spoke about the school budget, as well as the other taxing entities that could have been affected by the FILOT discussion that was in the news. He stated there would be no impact to the upcoming budgets for those entities.

Councilor Tripp stated it appeared as if there would be no harm to the school district and other taxing entities for FY 2026; he inquired about the plan for FY 2027.

Chairman Blount stated it would be up to Council moving forward into the next budget cycle.

Councilor Tripp stated there was an ordinance being circulated that would reduce funding for schools, cities, and fire districts on new FILOT projects going forward. He stated they were being told they were okay, but for next year they were not.

Chairman Blount stated he spoke with the Superintendent of Greenville County Schools as well as one of the school board members. They requested prior notification if there were to be any changes to the FILOT structure, in order to give them time to figure out what they would need to do on their end.

Councilor Tripp inquired about the rationale for the ordinance that would reduce FILOT monies for the schools and other taxing entities. He asked who would be carrying the ordinance.

Chairman Blount stated it was his understanding the ordinance was coming from staff.

Councilor Tripp stated he wanted to make it clear that those taxing entities would not be harmed for FY 2026; however, their budgets could be reduced in FY 2027.

Councilor McGahhey stated the proposed amendments took the budget back to what it was the previous year, in regard to FILOT payments. He stated funding for the schools and the fire departments would not change. Moving forward, it was important for Council to prioritize road safety for school buses, Greenlink buses and the citizens of Greenville County. Mr. McGahhey stated that currently, the County took 31% of FILOT monies and the remainder was sent to the other taxing entities. Moving forward, there would be more money coming in as there were more people moving to Greenville County; there would actually be more money for the schools next year. He stated the schools would receive the same amount of money as last year, but and the County would retain more of the new FILOT funding. Mr. McGahhey stated the schools were “not getting a haircut” as it was referred to earlier. The County was not taking money from the schools next year; it was not going to give them as much from the FILOT pots as in previous years.

Mr. McGahhey stated everyone had to “tighten” their belts. Everyone had to tighten their belts at home and businesses had to follow suit. It was important to prioritize the budget; the County could not fund everything. He stated the school district could not rely on monies from the FILOTS and should be able to work within its budget. The County was not going to reduce school funding; however, the County would be taking a “larger chunk of the money” that the schools would have been given from the FILOT funds. He stated the schools were “in great shape” and were “going to do fine.”

Councilor Tripp asked what percentage of the FILOT monies the County would retain going forward.

Chairman Blount stated the proposed ordinance regarding the new amount had only been internal; he had not seen it.

Councilor McGahhey stated the new amount would only apply to new FILOTs. The County would not be taking money from the taxing entities; they would simply receive less.

Action: Councilor Seman called for the question.

Without objection, the motion to call for the question carried.

Motion to amend carried by a roll call vote of eight (Russo, Long, Blount, Shaw, McGahhey, Seman, Bradley and Collins) in favor, three (Mitchell, Fant and Tripp) in opposition and one (Farmer) absent.

Action: Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman moved to allow for amendments at third reading.

Motion carried.

Action: Vice-Chairman Bradley moved to approve the budget as amended.

Motion carried by a roll call vote of seven (Russo, Long, Blount, Shaw, McGahhey, Seman and Bradley) in favor, three (Mitchell, Fant and Tripp) in opposition and two (Farmer and Collins) absent.

Item (10) **Committee Reports**

a. Planning and Development Committee

i. Reconsideration of PP-2025-015 (Bellewyn)

Chairman Blount stated the item was defeated in Committee of the Whole.

No action was taken.

Item (11) **Public Comments**

- **Frank Tamurello** – appeared regarding cellphone towers
- **Ruby Bonner** – appeared regarding Affordable Housing
- **Joshua Good** – appeared regarding Affordable Housing
- **Joseph Kass** – appeared regarding Affordable Housing
- **Dianne Vreeland** – appeared regarding Laurens Electric
- **Jerry Wilson** – appeared regarding District 25 safety issues and beautification
- **Latonya Phillips** – appeared regarding Habitat for Humanity
- **Sheila Dogan** – appeared regarding Affordable Housing

Item (12) **Administrator's Report**

Mr. Kernell stated the next session of the Citizens Academy was scheduled for Tuesday, June 10. He stated the participants would visit the VSC (Vehicle Service Center) and then proceed to Twin Chimneys for lunch.

Item (13)

Requests and Motions by Council Members

- Councilor Fant stated adequate funding for Workforce Housing was still missing from the proposed FY 2026 budget. He was distressed that Council continued to hijack and promote a false narrative of what Workforce Housing really was, and did nothing to correct the narrative with their constituents. It should not be lost on anyone that for the first time in nine years, Council did not even have a Workforce Housing Ad Hoc committee to address issues and make recommendations. Mr. Fant stated when Council continued to spew utter disdain and vitriolic hate for a commitment to Workforce Housing, such as calling it a scam, they were turning their backs on law enforcement officers, firefighters, EMTs, school teachers and nurses; those people were a valuable asset to the community. He stated he had requested staff to “scour every pot of funding” to find a way to put the \$2 million back for Workforce Housing that was initially removed from the budget. Mr. Fant stated he had also requested staff to leave the 1.5 mill reduction in the budget in order for his colleagues to be able to say they had reduced taxes. The 1.5 mill reduction would calculate to approximately \$6 for every \$100,000. He asked what had happened to the commitment to follow the words of scripture in Matthew 25:40, which read, “In as much as you do it unto the least of these my brethren, you do it unto me.” Mr. Fant stated he found it unconscionable that Council was operating with an inoperable spiritual gyroscope and was refusing to provide funding that would assist seniors on fixed incomes make needed safety repairs to their homes.

Item (14)

Adjournment

Action: There being no further business, Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman moved to adjourn.

The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Regina McCaskill
Clerk to Council