



# GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes  
Committee of the Whole Meeting  
February 17, 2026  
4:30 p.m.

Committee Meeting Room  
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*

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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**

**Alan Mitchell**, *Council District 23*

## **Staff Present**

**Joe Kernell**, *County Administrator*  
**Chris Antley**, *County Attorney*  
**Regina McCaskill**, *Clerk to Council*  
**Bob Mihalic**, *Governmental Affairs Officer*  
**Terrence Galloway**, *Information Systems*

## **Others Present**

**Attorney Rivers Stilwell**, *Maynard Nexsen*

## **Call to Order**

Chairman Blount

## **Invocation**

Councilor Long

**Item (3)**

**Approval of Minutes**

**a. February 3, 2026 – Regular Committee Meeting**

**Action:** Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman moved to approve the minutes of the February 3, 2026, Regular Committee meeting.

Motion carried.

**Item (4)**

**Board and Commission Policy Revisions**

*Councilor McGahhey and Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman had reviewed the County's current Board and Commission Policy and offered possible amendments.*

Section 1: Application Cycles

Section 2: Posting Vacancies on the County's Website

Section 3: Applications

Councilor Fant suggested a January – February (July – August) application period. In the past, individuals were appointed and only had 30 days to complete any necessary training. He stated the January – February application period would provide additional time for orientation and training.

Councilor McGahhey stated the only issue he could see with a January – February application period would be the vacancies would have to be posted by December 15, and June 15 for the proposed July – August application period. He asked if that would be a problem.

Councilor Collins stated it seemed a bit redundant to name the cycles by months. He preferred using the terms "Spring Cycle" and "Fall Cycle."

Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman stated they could use "First Cycle" and "Second Cycle."

Councilor Collins stated "Spring Cycle" and "Fall Cycle" seemed fine to him, unless using months to identify the cycles had come particular meaning.

Chairwoman Seman stated using months to identify the cycles was probably easier for the public to relate to as far as deadlines were concerned; the names would need to be word-smithed.

Chairman Blount stated it was probably important to list the actual date for the public so they could start making plans to apply.

Councilor McGahhey asked if all the seats were filled in March.

Ms. McCaskill stated approximately half of the vacancies were filled in the Spring and the other half in the Fall. The actual names given to the application periods were immaterial.

Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman suggested the policy simply state applications would be accepted in January and February, and again in July and August, with no formal names for the cycles.

#### Section 4: Requirements for Applicants

Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman stated she appreciated the nod to meeting attendance for applicants as cited in Section IV. While Council loved for applicants to attend a meeting, it should not be a disqualifier. The proposal to give special consideration to applicants who had attended a meeting, rather than those who had not, was a good compromise, given that some boards did not meet in the period leading up to the application period.

Councilor McGahhey stated applicants should not be a party to any active legal action against the County of Greenville or the board or commission to which the applicant was applying, as cited in Section IV. He stated it was critical for a board to be able to function correctly without being under legal suit by one of its own members.

Ms. McCaskill stated the issue arose a few years ago when Ms. Seman chaired the Board and Commission Ad Hoc Committee. At that time, tort claims were discussed as being considered a legal action. She asked if Mr. Antley would like to weigh in on the issue.

Councilor Seman stated she was still in favor of keeping the proposed language. A claim may be "minimus" but it was still a claim.

#### Section 12: Vacancies Due to Unexpired Terms

Councilor McGahhey stated in regard to unexpired terms, the replacement should be from the same district to maintain representation. He stated if there were no applicants from the same district, they would obviously choose candidates from other districts.

Chairman Blount stated the policy included language indicating that, for all board appointments, district representation across the board was needed, to the fullest extent possible. He stated he was concerned a situation might arise, for example, in which three board members were from the same district, and two were up for reelection. According to the proposed amendment, a member from the same district would fill the unexpired term. Mr. Blount stated that was not the way it had been done in the past.

Councilor McGahhey stated he would prefer not to have multiple people from a single district, even with regular vacancies.

Chairman Blount stated he raised the issue to be fair to the citizens. For instance, if an individual was qualified for a position but did not live in the district where the vacancy was, they would not need to apply, as they were ineligible to serve.

Vice-Chairman Bradley stated, in that situation, those individuals could apply for other boards.

Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman stated it may also help in situations where some members have served on boards with no term limits for extended periods. She stated, for example, there was one board whose members included several from her district. They were all really good, but it may be beneficial to encourage more applicants from different districts.

Chairman Blount stated in the event there were no additional applications, those positions could still be filled. He stated it had been an issue during the last cycle; they had to fill positions without regard to representation. He asked if they needed to consider additional language to address the issue.

Mr. Antley stated the language created some confusion because it used the phrase “insofar as possible.” The interpretation had always been a qualifications matter. For instance, an application was received from a particular district, which would bring the board closer to broad representation; however, the applicant was wholly inappropriate for the board. Mr. Antley stated the question was whether the individual should be put on the board just because of where they reside. He stated the phrase “insofar as possible” should be viewed within the confines of qualifications. He suggested further discussion regarding Council’s intent on the issue.

Councilor McGahhey suggested amending the language to read “insofar as possible and duly qualified.”

Mr. Antley stated it was important to ensure board members were qualified, as some seats had very specific requirements.

Chairman Blount suggested adding the phrase under the section on boards with fewer than twelve members.

Councilor McGahhey stated he was prepared to rewrite Section 14 to include language about being duly qualified or found to be qualified by Council.

Councilor Collins stated the South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 6-29-310, states the following regarding the appointment of members to the Planning Commission:

*“In the appointment of planning commission members, the appointing authority shall consider their professional expertise, knowledge of the community, and concern for the future welfare of the total community and its citizens. Members shall represent a broad cross-section of the interests and concerns within the jurisdiction.”*

Mr. Collins stated there may be instances in which no applications were received for all district vacancies. He stated the intent to represent all districts would apply more to 12-member boards.

Councilor McGahhey asked how the district representation did not fit the Planning Commission.

Councilor Collins stated if multiple districts were represented on a board, it could be presumed an applicant replacing an individual for any reason would need to be from the same district. Unless specifically annotated in the “selection rules”, they would need to defer to the statute for the Planning Commission.

Chairman Blount stated that was the way it was currently handled with the Planning Commission. If a member was unable to fill their term, their replacement had to be from the same district.

Councilor Collins stated the statute did not designate a specific area. He stated he was aware of how it was done in the past, but he did not want to be held to that rule. Currently, his district was not represented on the Planning Commission.

Chairman Blount stated if a vacancy existed for District 27 and there was a legitimate candidate, that individual would more than likely be appointed.

Vice-Chairman Bradley stated the Planning Commission would not have full representation, as it was a nine-member board.

Councilor McGahhey stated the state statute could serve as a guideline in the policy specifically for the Planning Commission.

Mr. Antley stated if Council was voting to fill a seat, the preference would be to fill the seat with an individual from the same district as the previous member. The state statute was meant to prevent a concentration of one type of member, such as a realtor or developer. He stated as long as Council adhered to those recommendations, they were within the confines of state law. If Council only elected members from the same district to fill vacancies, it could cause problems.

Chairman Blount stated there could possibly be a “hybrid” approach to handling the issue.

Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman stated it was similar to the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee with its qualifiers.

Councilor McGahhey asked Mr. Collins to provide the statute language he had referenced for inclusion in the policy.

#### Further Discussion

Ms. McCaskill stated if the application periods were to be backed up, the timeline for interviews and appointments would also need to be adjusted accordingly.

Councilor McGahhey stated he was glad Ms. McCaskill had brought up the issue of interviews and appointments. Interviews for the Spring Cycle would need to be held in March, and for the Fall Cycle in September.

Ms. McCaskill stated interviews for the Spring Cycle would actually be in April, and for the Fall Cycle in October.

Councilor McGahhey stated he would get together with the Clerk to work out the timeline, as there were other agenda items to discuss and time was of the essence.

Councilor Collins stated he did not see a provision stating board members appointed by Council were not entitled to a stipend.

Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman stated only gubernatorial appointees received stipends.

Councilor Shaw asked if they were making amendments.

Chairman Blount stated they were working through the policy and planned to present it for approval at a later date.

Councilor Shaw stated, without argument, he planned to vote against the recommendation a board member could not be a party to a lawsuit against Greenville County. He stated he did not feel it was a “good idea, or legal idea.”

Councilor McGahhey asked Mr. Shaw if he would be willing to state the reason why.

Councilor Shaw stated he would do so when Council debated the issue.

Councilor McGahhey stated they were currently debating the policy.

He stated Ms. McCaskill had indicated it was “probably not legal.”

Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman stated Ms. McCaskill had not indicated the proposed was not legal.

Councilor Shaw stated Ms. McCaskill had indicated the legality of the proposed had been discussed previously. He asked her to repeat what she had said.

Ms. McCaskill stated when the issue was discussed years earlier, the County Attorney at that time noted tort claims were actions against the County just as a regular lawsuit. The way it was written would include tort claims.

Councilor Shaw stated it was broader than someone just having an issue against the County. He stated an individual could legitimately have a claim against the County and want to serve on a board; he would not want to take that right away from them.

Mr. Antley stated the County’s insurance handled most tort claims. Individuals with a claim against the County were given a Tort Claim Form. There was a two-year statute of limitations for tort claims, which could be extended for one year. He stated when the Legal Department received a call from an attorney representing a client who wanted to settle, the County’s insurance company handled those claims, and no full lawsuits were filed. Mr. Antley stated Mr. Tollison, the previous County Attorney, was more than likely simply letting them know about tort claims. He added a tort claim could be something as simple as someone tripping and falling on County property.

Councilor McGahhey stated he and Ms. Seman would review Council’s recommendations for the policy and resubmit them for the next Committee of the Whole meeting.

**Item (5)**                    **Executive Session** (legal matter)

**Action:**                    Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman moved to go into Executive Session for the receipt of legal advice where the legal advice related to a pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the County in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the County of a claim; Case #: 2023-CP-23-04287.

Motion carried and the Committee of the Whole entered Executive Session at 4:58 p.m.

**Reconvened**

The regular meeting of the Committee of the Whole reconvened at 5:57 p.m.

Mr. Antley reported the Committee of the Whole, on February 17, 2026, went into Executive Session for the receipt of legal advice with a legal advice related to a pending claim that was covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the County in other adversary situations involving Case #: 2023-CP-23-04287.

Mr. Antley stated no action was taken during the Executive Session.

**Item (6)**                    **Executive Session** (legal matter)

Councilor Shaw asked who had placed the item in question on the agenda. He stated he did not have “ultimate say” in what items were put on the agenda.

Chairman Blount stated he had put the item on the agenda, as Mr. Shaw had emailed Ms. McCaskill requesting it be added.

Councilor Shaw stated he had requested the item be placed on the agenda “with a condition,” and the Chairman had refused.

Chairman Blount stated Mr. Shaw’s condition would have to be voted on by Council.

**Point of Order:** Councilor Tripp stated Council was unable to go into Executive Session to receive legal advice without someone in attendance to provide it.

Councilor Shaw asked to what rule Mr. Tripp was referring.

Chairman Blount stated receipt of legal advice was the purpose of an Executive Session.

Councilor Shaw stated it was “broader than that,” and Councilor McGahhey had submitted the allowable reasons for executive session during the previous Committee of the Whole meeting.

Councilor Tripp stated Mr. Shaw had wanted to talk about the lawsuit, but did not want the County Attorney to be present. Unfortunately, Council could not discuss the lawsuit in Executive Session without the presence of an attorney.

**Action:** Councilor Shaw stated he respectfully disagreed and withdrew the item.

**Item (7)** **Adjournment**

**Action:** Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman moved to adjourn.

Motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Regina McCaskill  
Clerk to Council