

GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL

OVERSIGHT AD HOC COMMITTEE

September 4, 2025

4:00 p.m.

Committee Meeting Room

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting date, time, place, and agenda was posted online and on the bulletin board at County Square and made available to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations, and concerned citizens.

Committee Members Present:

Kelly Long, *Chairwoman*
Garey Collins, *Vice-Chairman*
Curt McGahhey
Frank Farmer

Committee Members Absent:

Steve Shaw

Staff Present:

Joe Kernell, *County Administrator*
Ted Lambrecht, *Deputy County Administrator*
Dean Campbell, *County Attorney*
Regina McCaskill, *Clerk to Council*

Terrence Galloway, *Information Systems*
Nicole Wood, *Assistant County Administrator*
Hesha Gamble, *Assistant County Administrator*
Lyndsey Sloane, *Director of Grants and Special Projects*

Others Present:

None

Call to Order:

Chairwoman Long

Innovation:

Vice-Chairman Collins

Item (3) Approval of Minutes

- a. April 30, 2025 – Oversight Ad Hoc Committee Meeting

Action: Councilor McGahhey moved to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2025, Oversight Ad Hoc Committee meeting.

Motion carried.

Item (4) Select Departments for Performance Evaluation – Phase I

Chairwoman Long stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss Phase I of the County Performance Evaluation. She stated it would be more along the lines of a workshop setting, gathering information regarding the areas to be audited. Ms. Long opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. Kernell provided an organizational chart for the committee members.

Councilor McGahhey stated he would like to look at the following:

- **Election Efficiency**
- **Contract Performance**
- **Small Spending Expenditures**

Chairwoman Long stated she would like to start the performance evaluation with the County's largest departments in an effort to determine efficiency and possible ways to save money. She suggested Information Systems and the Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Kernell stated the County's largest departments were the Sheriff's Office, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Detention Center, and Public Works. He stated Information Systems would actually be considered one of the smaller departments.

Chairwoman Long asked how many employees worked in the Clerk of Court's Office.

Mr. Kernell stated he did not have the exact number and estimated it to be about 50 employees.

Chairwoman Long stated she would like the performance review to look at the following:

- **FILOTs**
 - *What was the process?*
 - *Was it efficient?*
- **Road Money**
 - *How were the funds received?*
 - *How were they allocated?*
 - *Was the funding actually used for the roads or not?*
- **\$25 Road Maintenance Fee**
 - *What was the funding used for?*
 - *Where did the funding go?*
- **Flood Fees (Stormwater)**
 - *What was the purpose of the funding?*
 - *Where does the funding go?*

Mr. Kernell stated the monies collected from the Road Maintenance Fee were put directly into the Road Fund to be used only for roads. Stormwater fees were deposited directly into the Stormwater Fund; those funds were never commingled with any other funds, and they were only expended on stormwater-related issues. A significant portion of that money was allocated for water monitoring. Mr. Kernell stated there were several water monitoring stations throughout the County. He stated that he could provide an accounting of the dollars taken in and expended from the Road Money, including the funding used for debt service for the Woodruff Road bypass, paving, and personnel (Roads and Bridges). FILOT money was accounted for just like tax money and was put into an Infrastructure Bank fund. A company awarded a FILOT received a bill very similar to a property tax bill, and the amount was determined "by Columbia." Mr. Kernell stated the committee could decide to hire a third party to review all of Ms. Long's questions; however, the Budget Department was able to answer them.

Councilor Collins stated that, in terms of FILOTs, he wanted to know how the funding was divided and if there was an ordinance or directive that determined how the funding was allocated.

Mr. Kernell stated that the first 31% remained with the County, and the remaining funds were distributed proportionally to the taxing entities, based on millage, as set forth in the ordinance.

Councilor Collins stated that he reviewed the last six years of the County budget and noticed that the Infrastructure Bank contributions had been declining and were possibly merged with another account. Mr. Collins asked if FILOT monies could be used for pay raises.

Mr. Kernell stated the Infrastructure Bank had not been merged with any other accounts. FILOT money could be used as Council saw fit. For instance, it had been used for roads under the Prescription for Progress Road Program. He stated if money was taken from the Infrastructure Bank, Council would need to decide where to find funding for the roads.

Mr. Collins asked when it was decided that FILOT money could be used for pay raises.

Mr. Kernell stated those monies were not used for pay raises.

Mr. Collins stated he was under the impression that some of the FILOT money was used for pay raises during the last budget cycle.

Mr. Kernell stated some of the money was transferred to the General Fund to pay for Roads and Bridges personnel.

Mr. Collins asked if there was any narrative stating those funds had to remain in the Infrastructure Bank.

Mr. Kernell stated that the decision was up to Council.

Mr. McGahhey inquired about the best way to audit the Sheriff's Office for efficiencies. He was under the impression it had been done in the past.

Mr. Kernell stated a Request for Proposal (RFP) and Request for Qualifications (RFQ) would need to be put together in an effort to select a group with public safety experience, preferably Sheriff Office experience, to review such items as the number of employees, the ratio of line personnel to management, expenditures, and the overall organization. Each Sheriff had their own idea of how things should be run; Greenville County may differ significantly from other counties in the state. He stated the way things were organized in local government organizations varied greatly.

Councilor McGahhey asked Mr. Kernell if he was employed with Greenville County during the last performance review.

Mr. Kernell stated he was not; however, he had been employed with other local government entities that underwent performance reviews. He stated that the companies would examine several different matrices, such as salaries, to compare Greenville County with others. Mr. Kernell stated a good performance review should provide helpful information that could be used to make informed decisions. The committee could request specific information, such as the efficiency of a department and staffing levels.

Councilor McGahhey stated he was particularly interested in overtime usage and the efficiency of man-hours.

Mr. Kernell stated the County had been through several Sheriffs over the years. Each had a different approach; it may be helpful to get a realignment of where that department currently stood. He stated Sheriff Lewis had done a great job; however, he inherited most of his staff from the previous Sheriff. Mr. Kernell stated he had made some tremendous changes, but was limited by the budget and the number of employees.

Councilor McGahhey asked Mr. Kernell to review the procurement process and estimate the time it would take.

Mr. Kernell stated the first step would be to draft an RFP. He stated he had obtained RFPs from several governmental agencies for the Committee to review. It was important for the Committee to determine precisely what they were looking for, as that information was instrumental in drafting the RFP. He stated the RFP would include how the organization was set up, as well as the size and scope of information the Committee wanted. Mr. Kernell stated that once the RFP was completed, he would suggest leaving it out for bids for 30 days. The scope of the project and the department(s) chosen would dictate how long it would take for companies to respond. Oftentimes, bids were submitted within a week of issuing an RFP. Mr. Kernell stated once the County had received a specified number of responses, a conference would be held with the vendors to ask questions and receive information about the project. Mr. Kernell stated that he would not suggest leaving an RFP open for bids for less than 30 days, as the quality of the responses may suffer. After the conference, the Committee would evaluate the responses in accordance with county law and develop a plan to select a vendor. Mr. Kernell stated the Committee may opt to interview all or some of the vendors. After a vendor was selected by the Committee, the recommendation would be sent to full Council for final approval.

Chairwoman Long asked if three readings would be required.

Mr. Kernell stated choosing the vendor did not require an ordinance; therefore, no readings would be necessary. He stated once the bids were in, staff could award the contract very quickly. A good place to start may be a staffing review of all County departments. It was his opinion that a need for additional staff would be revealed.

Councilor Collins asked if potential vendors had to have specific qualifications to submit a bid.

Mr. Kernell stated there may be specific qualification requirements for some departments, but not all. It would be easy to “weed out” vendors who were not qualified. Staff would reach out nationwide for responses.

Councilor McGahhey asked how an RFP was sent out.

Mr. Kernell stated staff would seek out vendors and the RFP would be advertised. He stated he was a member of ICMA (International City/County Management Association) and would advertise with that organization. Local companies may also apply; however, very specialized firms may be needed for some departments.

Chairwoman Long asked Mr. Kernell if he had any recommendations for the Committee.

Mr. Kernell stated he would suggest starting with the Sheriff’s Office and EMS. Normally, he would suggest the Detention Center due to its size, but it was heavily governed by state law. For instance, the “officer per inmate” ratio was governed by state law; he felt certain that ratio was not currently met at the Detention Center. Due to a shortage of employees, they were forced to supplement their staff with overtime. The Department of Corrections completed an annual review of the Detention Center, and an employee shortage had always been a concern.

Mr. Kernell reminded the committee members that they had requested six months of P-Card statements. The information had been gathered for some time and was ready for review. He stated they had the statements as well as the backup documents for each purchase.

Councilor McGahhey asked if that information was available electronically.

Mr. Kernell stated it was not available electronically.

Councilor McGahhey asked if the County had electronic records for all P-Card purchases.

Mr. Kernell assured him the County did keep electronic records. However, those records had to be extracted and printed for the Committee's review.

Councilor McGahhey asked if the County's tracking was archaic.

Mr. Kernell stated it was not archaic. It was challenging to share the information with employees who lacked access to the system.

Councilor McGahhey asked if a company hired to perform an audit would have access to that system.

Mr. Kernell stated that the company performing the County's yearly audit had access to the system. He stated he could give Council Members access to the system, but they would have to learn how to navigate it. Any purchase made with a P-Card had a receipt attached. He hoped the Clerk to Council was a "stickler" about expense reports. Specific guidelines were in place, and if the proper documentation was not attached to the report, it would be rejected by the Finance Department.

Chairwoman Long stated that she wanted to make the right choices when selecting vendors to complete the reviews. She would like to start with the Sheriff's Office, EMS, and the Clerk of Court. Councilor Shaw was unable to attend the meeting, and she wanted to obtain his input before any final decisions were made.

Councilor McGahhey stated it was easy to see how the Sheriff's Office and EMS may be evaluated at the same time. There was no "synergy" with the Clerk of Court and those two departments. He did not want the scope to be too broad.

Mr. Kernell stated that if the Committee chose the Sheriff's Office, EMS, and Clerk of Court, two separate RFPs would need to be issued for bids. Most responses would come from accounting firms with some experience in consulting, as well as consulting firms with expertise in governmental affairs.

Councilor Farmer asked if there was an "actionable item" on the agenda.

Mr. Kernell stated that no action items were included on the agenda.

Item (6) Adjournment

Action: Councilman McGahhey moved to adjourn and the meeting adjourned at 4:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Jessica M Stone
Deputy Clerk to Council