



**SPECIAL MEETING OF FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2026 – 11:00 A.M.
CITY CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
324 WEST EVANS STREET
FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Lethonia Barnes, Mayor Pro Tempore George Jebaily, Councilman Chaquez T. McCall, Councilwoman LaShonda NeSmith-Jackson, Councilman Bryan A. Braddock, Councilman J. Lawrence Smith, II and Councilman Zach McKay

ALSO PRESENT

Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager; Mr. Ronald Scott, City Attorney; Mr. Clint Moore, Assistant City Manager of Development; Mrs. Casey Moore, Municipal Clerk; Ms. Patrice Rankin, Assistant City Clerk; Mrs. Amanda Pope, Director of Marketing/Communications and Municipal Services and Mr. Glenn Bodenheimer, Finance Director

MEDIA PRESENT

Curtis Graham with WBTW News 13, Deirdre Weaver-Currin with the Post and Courier, Katherine Schreiner with WMBF News and Emmy Ribero with the Morning News were present for the meeting.

Notices of this regular meeting of City Council were provided to the media and individuals requesting a copy of the agenda informing them of the date, location and time of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Barnes called the June 15, 2026 Special meeting of Florence City Council to order at 11:01 a.m.

INVOCATION

Mayor Barnes gave the invocation for the meeting. The pledge of allegiance to the American Flag followed the invocation.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Without objection, the agenda for the June 15, 2026 Special meeting was adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

Bill No. 2026-26 – First Reading

An Ordinance to amend the budget for the City of Florence, SC for Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2026 and ending June 30, 2027.



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Mayor Barnes said this item may be discussed in Executive Session.

Without objection, this item will be discussed in Executive Session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Barnes said Council will be entering into Executive Session to receive legal advice regarding Bill No. 2026-26.

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to enter into Executive Session and Councilman Smith seconded the motion. Council voted 6-1, with Councilman McCall voting against the motion to enter into Executive Session at 11:04 a.m.

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson made a motion to resume open session and Councilman McKay seconded the motion. The motion carried. Council resumed open session at 12:05pm and took action on the following items:

Bill No. 2026-26 – First Reading

An Ordinance to amend the budget for the City of Florence, SC for Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2026 and ending June 30, 2027.

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to pass Bill No. 2026-26 on first reading and to appropriate \$265,000 from the General Fund's unassigned fund balance for expenditures not currently included in the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 budget to provide \$100,000 in funding for Florence Regional Airport and \$165,000 for Pee Dee Regional Transportation Authority (PDRTA) and Councilman McCall seconded the motion.

Councilman Braddock explained that this ordinance stems from actions taken at the June 8th Regular meeting, when Council adopted the budget for Fiscal Year 2026–2027 budget. Following that approval, Council was notified that it had lost its appointments to the Airport Authority. He said that when Council appropriates funding to an organization, it should have representation within that entity to ensure accountability, understand how funds are used, and answer to constituents regarding those expenditures. Councilman Braddock noted that he and other councilmembers have since spoken with members of the state legislature, who acknowledged that the change in Airport Authority appointments had not been communicated to Council beforehand and understood Council's response. He said he was informed that the legislature intends to pursue a process that would restore representation from both city and county councils on the Airport Authority. He also clarified that, contrary to some perceptions on social media, Council was not taking funding away from the Florence Regional Airport to give it to PDRTA. Rather, Council was reclaiming the funding until a mechanism was established that would allow it to exercise appropriate oversight and accountability regarding how the funds are spent. Councilman Braddock emphasized that Council fully supports both the Florence Regional Airport and PDRTA, recognizing the significant economic development benefits they provide to the community. He added that Council also supports other community initiatives and continues to explore opportunities to fund them in the future. He concluded by reiterating that whenever Council allocates public funds, it must be able to ensure accountability and transparency in their use.

Pro tem Jebaily clarified that the funding being considered for PDRTA represented an additional \$165,000 beyond the amount already appropriated to the organization.

Councilman Smith concurred with Councilman Braddock's comments.



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Mayor Barnes acknowledged that Council is often faced with difficult decisions and commended her fellow councilmembers for their commitment to serving the community. She emphasized that Council's work is not about individual interests, but about doing what is best for the citizens of Florence. Mayor Barnes said Council remains willing to collaborate, find solutions, and work together to strengthen the community, adding that the decision was made out of a genuine commitment to and love for the City of Florence.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2026-26 was passed on first reading.

ADJOURN

Without objection, the June 15, 2026 special meeting of City Council was adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

Dated this 13th day of July 2026.

Respectfully Submitted:

Casey C. Moore
Municipal Clerk