



**REGULAR MEETING OF FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, JULY 13, 2026 – 1:00 P.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; Deputy Fire Chief Alex McGovern, Florence Fire Department; Chief Angela Greene, Florence Police Department; Mr. Michael Hemingway, Director of Utility Planning and Economic Development; Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning; Mrs. Jennifer Krawiec, Director of Human Resources; Mrs. Amanda Pope, Director of Marketing/Communications and Municipal Services; Mr. Adam Swindler, Director of Public Works; Mrs. Victoria Nash, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Sports Tourism; Mr. Glenn Bodenheimer, Finance Director; Ms. Sarah Hickman, Director of Water Resources and Mr. Joshua Whittington, Director of Utilities

MEDIA PRESENT

Deirdre Weaver-Currin with the Post and Courier 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 July 13, 2026 Regular meeting of Florence City Council to order at 1:01 p.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 July 13, 2026 Regular meeting was adopted.



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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Smith made a motion to adopt the minutes of the June 8, 2026 Regular Meeting and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously (7-0) adopted.

Councilman McCall made a motion to adopt the minutes of the June 15, 2026 Special Meeting and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously (7-0) adopted.

Councilman McCall made a motion to adopt the minutes of the June 22, 2026 Special Meeting and Councilman Smith seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously (7-0) adopted.

SERVICE RECOGNITIONS

Ms. Angela Greene, Police Chief, recognized Brandon Neal for 10 years of service with the Florence Police Department.

ORDINANCES IN POSITION

Bill No. 2026-25 – Second Reading

An Ordinance to rezone the parcel located at 901 Rose Street from NC-6.1 to NC-6.2, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90114-13-004.

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to adopt Bill No. 2026-25 on second reading and Councilman McKay seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2026-25 was adopted.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

Bill No. 2026-17 – First Reading

An Ordinance authorizing the execution of an amendment to extend the Lease Agreement between the City of Florence and Pee Dee Healthy Start, Inc.

Mayor Barnes said this item may be discussed in Executive Session. Without objection, this item will be discussed in Executive Session.

Bill No. 2026-27 – First Reading

An Ordinance to rezone from NC-6.1 to CR the parcel located at 107 South Homestead Drive, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90034-17-005.

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to pass Bill No. 2026-27 on first reading and Councilman McCall seconded the motion.

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning, said that the subject parcel is currently zoned Neighborhood Conservation 6.1 (NC-6.1) and is adjacent to commercially zoned properties. He noted that one residential parcel, containing a single-family home, would remain between the subject property and the existing commercial zoning. The request is to rezone the property to Commercial Reuse (CR), one of the City's least intensive commercial zoning designations. Mr. Dudley explained that the property currently contains a residence and that the Commercial Reuse zoning designation is intended to repurpose existing homes for low intensity commercial uses, primarily professional offices such as real estate, law, or



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accounting offices, with limited retail uses permitted. He reported that Planning Commission voted 5-1 to recommend approval of the rezoning request.

Pro tem Jebaily asked whether the existing home would remain on the property. Mr. Dudley responded that the applicant intends to repurpose the existing structure. Pro tem Jebaily then asked whether, if the home were demolished and replaced with a new building in the future, the project would be required to go before the Design Review Board. Mr. Dudley explained that it would not require Design Review Board approval but would be subject to the City's standard planning review for compliance with the Zoning Code. He added that the owner would still be required to meet all applicable zoning requirements, including parking, buffering, and other site development standards, regardless of whether the existing building is repurposed or replaced. Mr. Dudley explained that the required buffering would consist of a vegetative buffer, approximately 10 feet wide, between the commercial property and the adjacent residential property.

Councilman Smith asked whether the Planning Commission member who voted against the request had stated a reason for the opposition. Mr. Dudley said no specific reason was given, but discussion during the meeting focused on the residential parcel that would remain between the subject property and the existing commercial zoning. He added that the owner of the residential parcel received notice of the public hearing by mail but did not respond or attend the public hearing.

Councilman McCall asked for clarification as to whether the intervening parcel was vacant. Mr. Dudley clarified that the property contains a single family detached home.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2026-27 was passed on first reading.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 2026-32

A Resolution to proclaim August 2 - 8, 2026 as National Health Center Week in the City of Florence.

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2026-32 and Councilman Braddock seconded the motion.

Mayor Barnes presented the Resolution to Derek Brown and Sally King with HopeHealth. Mr. Brown and Ms. King thanked Council for the recognition and spoke on the importance of community health centers.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2026-32 was passed.

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Appointments to Boards and Commissions

Mayor Barnes said this item may be discussed in Executive Session. Without objection, this item will be discussed in Executive Session.

Utilities Update

Mr. Michael Hemingway, Director of Utility Planning and Economic Development, said Mrs. Amanda Pope, Director of Marketing/Communications and Municipal Services, continues to lead the City's



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communication efforts related to water and sewer infrastructure. Updates on ongoing utility projects have been regularly shared with the community through the City's social media channels.

Mr. Hemingway said contractors continue to make significant progress on several water infrastructure projects, including the 30-inch water line extension along Freedom Boulevard, the completed 24-inch water line along Progress Energy Drive serving the Florence Global Technology Park, and the GE Groundwater Treatment Plant reconstruction, which is approximately 80% complete. The contractor for the Surface Water Treatment Plant project is expected to mobilize to the site this month. City staff also continues to install SCADA systems at the City's groundwater treatment facilities to improve the efficiency of the backwash systems.

Mr. Hemingway said a pre-construction meeting was held with the South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority for the sewer upgrade project along David McLeod Boulevard. Construction of the new force main along Malden Drive is scheduled to begin this month. The Engineering Team has submitted alternatives for the proposed force main along Freedom Boulevard and East Palmetto Street for City staff's review and continues securing easements for the Jeffries Creek Phase I project by working with property owners following the June public meeting.

Mr. Hemingway said work continues with the stormwater project at Timrod Park and South Coit Street. He added that construction is also progressing well on the Pennsylvania Street stormwater project. Mr. Hemingway reported that bids for the Oakland Avenue stormwater project exceeded the available budget, and City staff is working with the South Carolina Office of Resilience (SCOR) to explore additional funding opportunities for the project.

Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager, introduced Ms. Sarah Hickman as the City's new Director of Water Resources. Mr. Davis shared that Ms. Hickman is a Florence native and has more than 17 years of experience in the water and wastewater industry. Ms. Hickman said she is excited to return to Florence and looks forward to what the City will accomplish in the future.

Councilman McCall referenced the water main break that occurred over the weekend, which has since been repaired, and asked Mr. Davis to discuss the cause of the break. Mr. Davis confirmed the water main break occurred in the Pine Forest area, specifically in the Olde Mill Subdivision. He said the City temporarily shut off water service to several homes while crews repaired the line. Mr. Davis explained that the break was caused by an outside contractor and that the City is working with the contractor through the claims process. In response to Councilman McCall's question regarding contractor accountability, Mr. Davis said that when a contractor can be identified as responsible for damaging a water line, the City seeks reimbursement for the cost of repairs, water loss, and associated labor. He added that City staff first verifies whether the contractor followed the required utility locate procedures, including contacting the City or 811 before excavation. If those procedures are followed and the contractor still damages the line, the contractor remains responsible for the repair costs.

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson asked how much longer the Pennsylvania Street stormwater project is expected to take before completion. She also requested an update on the Oakland Avenue stormwater project. Mr. Clint Moore, Assistant City Manager, said approximately one month of work remains on the Pennsylvania Street project, with most of the major improvements already completed and only minor construction remaining. Regarding the Oakland Avenue project, Mr. Moore said bids were received last week, with the lowest bid exceeding the project budget by \$1.5 million. He added that City staff is meeting with SCOR this week to discuss funding opportunities that could allow the project to move forward.



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Report on the Noise Ordinance

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning, explained that the City's noise ordinance currently exists in two places: the City's Code of Ordinances and the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). He noted that if the noise ordinance is amended, it would provide a good opportunity to consolidate it into one location and/or ensure that both the Code of Ordinances and the UDO are consistent. Mr. Dudley explained that when City staff enforce the ordinance, they typically apply the more restrictive version, as required by the City Code.

Mr. Dudley reviewed the Noise Ordinance contained in the Code of Ordinances and explained that it generally prohibits noise that negatively affects others. He said the ordinance specifically addresses noise generated by animals, landscaping equipment, construction activities, vehicles, exhaust systems, horns, drums, peddlers and hawkers, loudspeakers, amplified music, radios, and yelling or shouting. He noted that the Code of Ordinances also includes certain exceptions for public events, as well as time restrictions for construction activities and yelling or shouting. Mr. Dudley then reviewed the Noise Ordinance contained in the UDO, noting that it is more current because it was adopted in 2018 and is based on decibel (dBA) levels. He explained that the allowable noise levels vary by zoning district and include time restrictions within each district. The UDO also contains similar exceptions for construction activities, short-duration landscaping equipment, agricultural equipment, sirens, and other emergency devices. In addition, it addresses vibrations and includes conditional noise-related requirements that are incorporated throughout the UDO.

Mr. Dudley reviewed the maximum allowable noise levels by adjoining zoning district and time of day as established in the UDO. He explained that daytime hours are defined as 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., while nighttime hours are from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. Residential and agricultural districts are limited to 55 dBA during both daytime and nighttime hours. Commercial districts allow 75 dBA during the daytime and 70 dBA during the nighttime. Campus and industrial districts allow 80 dBA during the daytime and 60 dBA during the nighttime. He noted that noise is measured at the property line rather than at the business itself.

Mr. Dudley then provided an overview of common dBA levels for various sounds to illustrate what each decibel level represents. He also reviewed conditional noise-related requirements contained in the UDO, including temporary events, which are limited to 50-85 dBA depending on the time and location; industrial uses, which must mitigate noise when adjacent to incompatible uses; bars, whose requirements vary depending on the zoning district and proximity to residential areas; animal boarding and grooming facilities, which must incorporate noise-reduction materials; mobile food vendors, which are prohibited from using public address systems or creating offensive noise; and restaurants with drive-ins or drive-throughs, which are required to provide a bufferyard when adjacent to residential properties.

Mr. Dudley then discussed the noise ordinance as it relates to the Central Business District, noting that most noise complaints typically originate from the downtown area. He explained that the Central Business District is a mixed-use district that permits both residential and commercial uses. While residents who choose to live downtown should expect a higher level of activity and noise, businesses are still required to comply with the City's noise ordinance and observe quiet hours. Mr. Dudley also provided an overview of how other South Carolina municipalities address noise regulations, noting that cities such as Greenville and Aiken establish specific dBA limits in their ordinances, while Columbia, Charleston, Myrtle Beach, and Spartanburg do not include specific decibel requirements. He compared those approaches to the City of Florence's current ordinance.



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Mr. Dudley concluded by explaining the process for amending the City's noise ordinance. Because the ordinance exists in both the Code of Ordinances and the UDO, each requires a different amendment process. Amendments to the Code of Ordinances require only Council action through two readings, although a councilmember or citizen may request a public hearing prior to final adoption. Amendments to the UDO require Planning Commission to hold a public hearing and provide a recommendation to Council before Council considers the amendment through the standard two reading adoption process.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager, shared that the Police Department has secured FLOCK Safety mobile security trailers as part of the City's Safe City initiative. He explained that the trailers will enhance public safety, deter criminal activity, and be deployed at major events as well as in high-crime areas. Mr. Davis also shared that the Police Department is launching a new initiative for vulnerable adults and has partnered with community organizations, including Helping Florence Flourish and faith-based leaders, to distribute Arctic Air fans to seniors in need. Mr. Davis recognized July as Parks, Recreation and Tourism (PRT) Month and commended the PRT staff for their hard work and dedication. He also announced that Councilman McKay recently became engaged. Mr. Davis further shared that the Fireworks Over Florence event was a success, drawing more than 9,360 attendees. He acknowledged and thanked all of the participants and community partners who helped make the event successful. Lastly, Mr. Davis announced that a professional tennis tournament will be held at the Dr. Eddie Floyd Tennis Center from July 26 through August 2.

Councilman Braddock, Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson, and Councilman McKay spoke in favor of the Fireworks Over Florence event.

MAYORAL REPORT

Mayor Barnes acknowledged the passing of Senator Lindsey Graham and reflected on his distinguished career in public service. She recognized his support of the City of Florence through various funding opportunities and asked the citizens of Florence to keep Senator Graham's family in their thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Business Development Committee, Chaired by Pro tem Jebaily

Pro tem Jebaily acknowledged the passing of Attorney Mark Buyck, Jr. and reflected on his involvement in the community and his support of the City of Florence. A moment of silence was then observed in memory of Senator Lindsey Graham and Attorney Mark Buyck, Jr.

Pro tem Jebaily reported that the committee received updates on Project Urban Square, the Levy Park expansion project, recreational projects, and general utility capital infrastructure projects.

Councilman McCall asked for clarification regarding the total cost of the Levy Park expansion project. Pro tem Jebaily stated that the project is estimated to cost approximately \$18 million but noted that additional funding is needed to cover the total project cost before construction can begin.



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Community Development Committee, Chaired by Mayor Barnes

Mayor Barnes reported that the committee received an update on the demolition of 215 East Darlington Street. The committee also received updates on Building Florence Together, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects, and various other community service initiatives.

Finance, Audit and Budget Committee, Chaired by Councilman McCall

Councilman McCall reported that the committee reviewed proposed revisions to the City's Local and Minority Business Enterprise Purchasing Policy. He shared that the committee agreed it would be more appropriate for the full Council to receive a comprehensive presentation and have the opportunity to ask questions. The committee also reviewed the June monthly financial report and discussed neighborhood revitalization, affordable housing initiatives, and the importance of continuing to align financial decisions with the City's long-term priorities. Lastly, the committee received an update on the City's opioid settlement funding, including the anticipated timeline for the use of those funds.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Barnes said Council will be entering into Executive Session for a discussion and receipt of legal advice regarding proposed contractual arrangement for the lease of property as referenced in Bill No. 2026-17, for a discussion regarding appointments to city Boards and Commissions, for a discussion regarding a proposed Economic Development Project located in a downtown redevelopment district and for a discussion and receipt of legal advice regarding the noise ordinance.

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson made a motion to enter into Executive Session and Councilman McKay seconded the motion. Council voted unanimously (7-0) to enter into Executive Session at 1:55pm.

Councilman McCall made a motion to resume open session and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion. The motion carried. Council resumed open session at 3:08pm and took action on the following items:

Bill No. 2026-17 – First Reading

An Ordinance authorizing the execution of an amendment to extend the Lease Agreement between the City of Florence and Pee Dee Healthy Start, Inc.

Councilman McCall made a motion to pass Bill No. 2026-17 on first reading and to extend the lease with Pee Dee Healthy Start for a period of five years and for the sum to be negotiated with the City Manager and an annual report to Council on the economic benefits to the City of Florence and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2026-17 was passed on first reading.

Appointments to Boards and Commissions

Councilman McCall made a motion to defer Appointments to Boards and Commissions to the August 10th Regular Meeting and Councilman McKay seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Appointments to Boards and Commissions was deferred.



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ADJOURN

Without objection, the July 13, 2026 Regular meeting of City Council was adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Approved this 10th day of August 2026.

Respectfully submitted,
Casey C. Moore, Municipal Clerk