



Clarendon County Regular Council Meeting

Monday, March 9, 2026

6:00 PM

Council Chambers, 411 Sunset Drive, Manning, SC 29102

Those in attendance:

Chairman John E. Johnson III
Councilman Billy G. Richardson
Administrator Walt Ackerman
Clerk to Council, Dorothy M. Levy

Vice Chairman John P. Coker
Councilman Kurtis W. Rodine
Deputy Administrator Sharmane Y. Anderson

Absent: None

Press in attendance: Manning Times, Melissa McCoy

Others in attendance included:

George Frierson	Jason Dennis	Terry Streath	Mike Streath	Marvin Stinnie
Carole Summers	Legear McCabe	Libby McLeod	Joseph McLeod	Tyler McLeod
Tara McLeod	Hayan McLeod	Penny McLaughlin	John McLaughlin	Kathleen Gibson
Shinell Burgess	Davi Woods, Jr.	Melissa Stephens	Breanna Hodge	Levon Dingle
Kimberly Herbert	Spencer Tindal	Maureen Calvo	Jose Calvo	Jayce Scot
Vicki Fyke	Joe Witt	Franklin Colclough	Michele Demery	Daniel Demery
Christine Hale	Laura Thomas	Tiger Johnson	Kevin Gist, Sr.	Cedric Bozier
Patricia Pringle	Angel Reed	Johnny Wilson	Jennifer Powell	

And other Clarendon County Residents

Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. The Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance were recited in unison.

1. Approval of the Agenda

On motion by Councilman Richardson and seconded by Councilman Rodine, the Council voted unanimously approving the Agenda for the Regular Scheduled Council Meeting for March 9, 2026.

2. Approval of Minutes

On motion by Councilman Richardson and seconded by Councilman Rodine, the Council voted unanimously approving the minutes for the Regular Council Meeting, which was held on February 9, 2026.

3. Service Awards

Prior to the business session of the Regular Council meeting, Leonard Lowery, HR Director, had six employees for service awards for February.

Christie Hale	5 years	Shirelle Junious	15 years
Shakala Bennett	10 years	Joseph McLeod	20 years
Marvin Stinney	10 years	Michael Braxton	25 years

Chairman Johnson thanked everyone for their years of service to Clarendon County.

4. Special Recognition

Chairman Johnson stated that we would like to recognize the Clarendon County Recreation Youth Basketball Team champions.

- The Manning Small Fries Grizzlies – Coach Carmine Gamble
- The Summerton Mighty Bobcats – Coach Kevin Gist
- The Turbeville Mike Boys – Coach Chanel Burgess

Chairman Johnson stated that he would like to congratulate the kids and thank the parents as well. He stated that traveling around with sports is like having another job.

5. Public Comments:

George Frierson - stated that last week he was at the State House honoring the Reverend Jackson and his legacy to South Carolina. He stated that Reverend Jackson’s oldest son is a South Carolina resident. He continued by stating that his grandfather was a World War I Veteran and the Civil War, which started at Fort Sumter, Charleston, South Carolina, where hundreds of thousands of people died for a foolish cause.

Joe Oliver – stated that we have a war in our neighborhood with recreational vehicles at 1268 McNair Drive, Summerton, SC. He stated that he is required by law to get adequate rest when at home. He stated that he needs 10 hours of rest before leaving home because of fatigue. He continued by stating that he cannot get the amount of rest he needs because of the noise in his neighborhood. Mr. Oliver concluded that he has to go to the Magistrate's Court because he is being charged with assault and battery now, because you all who are sitting on the County Council are not willing to help the sheriff department by giving them more authority to charge, arrest, and confiscate the riders' bikes. He stated that he did not spend his hard-earned money not to be able to enjoy his home at his age.

Carole Summers – stated that she and George Summers worked on the American Revolution History in Clarendon County for over 25 years with the Swamp Fox Murals across Clarendon from Turbeville to Summerton. She stated that this year they will be having the 24th Francis Marion Symposium that brings people from over 12 states and over 50 towns across South Carolina to Clarendon County. All South Carolina counties are involved in events of the 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution this year. She concluded by inviting everyone to visit the Clarendon Archives, which holds the history and the military history.

Angela Reeds - She stated that there were two issues she observed at the last meeting that she would like to address today.

- **First**, she noted that it appears the county may be looking to reintroduce the Penny Tax. Not long ago, she said, some individuals campaigned against what she described as much-needed funding for the county. She explained that she supported the measure then and continues to support it now. She expressed hope that it is something the county can pursue again, if for no other reason than to help ensure that the people running the county receive a living wage.
- **Second**, she addressed a concern regarding references made about contributions to the county’s current Deputy Administrator, who was referred to during the meeting as the Interim Administrator. While discussing the millions of dollars secured for critical county upgrades, the work was attributed to “the staff that was here before me.” She stated that, whether intentional or not, that wording minimizes the contributions of someone who stepped up not once, but twice during pivotal periods and delivered major benefits to the county.

For clarification, she said she was referring to Sharmane Anderson, the county’s current Deputy Administrator. She added that, as a matter of basic respect, acknowledging people by name—especially when their efforts bring significant funding and improvements to the community—helps build trust, commitment, and strong leadership.

She respectfully asked that the council and the current administrator recognize Sharmane Anderson’s contributions openly and accurately, giving credit where credit is due.

6. Presentations - Request for Hospitality Fund Support

Chairman Johnson stated that we have several different requests for Hospitality Funds:

- Melissa Stephens is requesting \$6,000 to support the 2026 Juneteenth Community Festival at Harvin Haven, Alcolu, SC, scheduled for June 13, 2026.
- Johnny Wilson is requesting \$7,500 to support the 2026 Juneteenth Freedom Festival and Business Expo scheduled for June 20, 2026.
- Clarendon County Branch NAACP is requesting \$10,200 to aid in various marketing initiatives for the Briggs vs Elliott Spring Festival, which will be held May 15th, 16th, and 17th, 2026.

Vice Chairman Coker made a motion that since we gave \$5,000 last year for the Juneteenth Celebration, adding \$1,000 and split the \$6,000 equally between the two requests for the Juneteenth celebrations. It was seconded by Councilman Richardson, and the Council voted unanimously, approving splitting \$6,000 between the two requests for the Juneteenth Celebrations.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and seconded by Vice Chairman Coker, the Council voted unanimously approving \$9,500 to the Clarendon County Branch NAACP Briggs vs Elliott Spring Festival, which will be held May 15th, 16th, and 17th, 2026.

7. Presentation – County Flag

Chairman Johnson stated that Jayce Scott designed a county flag for Clarendon County and presented it several months ago. We made some changes to that sign, and now Jayce Scott is here to show the changes.

Jayce Scott stated that the flags presented tonight were made with the changes that the Council wanted to make. He stated that the flag is double-sided and ready to be flown. Jayce stated that what he is looking for tonight is a vote of approval from the Council, and what is the next step?

On motion by Vice Chairman Coker and seconded by Councilman Richardson, the Council voted unanimously approving the design as the Official Flag of Clarendon County Government.

Chairman Johnson told Jayce Scott to get with Administrator Ackerman in a week or so, and Administrator Ackerman will let him know what the next step is.

8. Board Appointment

- On motion by Councilman Richardson and seconded by Vice Chairman Coker, the Council voted unanimously approving the re-appointment of Lisa Justice to serve another term on the Development Board.
- On motion by Councilman Richardson and seconded by Vice Chairman Coker, the Council voted unanimously approving the appointments of Chris Durant and Nelson Walker to the Development Board serving a term of three years.
- On motion by Councilman Richardson and seconded by Vice Chairman Coker, the Council voted unanimously approving the re-appointment of Robert Boykin to the Development Board to serve a term of three years.

9. Ordinance 2026-01

On motion by Councilman Rodine and seconded by Councilman Richardson, the Council voted unanimously in approval to the Third and Final Reading of Ordinance 2026-01 - an Ordinance of the County Council of Clarendon County, South Carolina to Amend the County's Official Zoning Map Designation for Tap Map Parcel # 347-00-02-011-00, From Agriculture I (AG-I) to Residential Conservation (RC) and Providing an Effective Date.

10. Public Hearing – Ordinance 2026-02

An Ordinance Amending and Restating Ordinance Establishing a 1% Local Hospitality Tax on the Sales of Prepared Meals and Beverages Sold in Clarendon County, South Carolina, and other Matters Relating Thereto.

Chairman Johnson stated that the Public Hearing will now open. The Public Hearing for Ordinance 2026-02 opened at 6:38 pm.

Chairman Johnson asked if there were any comments on Ordinance 2026-02; hearing none, he stated that the public hearing would close. The public hearing closed at 6:38 pm.

11. Ordinance 2026-02

On motion by Councilman Rodine and seconded by Councilman Richardson, the Council voted unanimously in approval to the Second Reading of Ordinance 2026-02, an Ordinance Amending and Restating Ordinance Establishing a 1% Local Hospitality Tax on the Sales of Prepared Meals and Beverages Sold in Clarendon County, South Carolina, and other Matters Relating Thereto.

12. Public Hearing – Ordinance 2026-03

An Ordinance Amending the Clarendon County Unified Development Code to Authorize and Implement a Flexible Design District Zoning Designation.

Chairman Johnson stated that the Public Hearing will now open. The Public Hearing for Ordinance 2026-03 opened at 6:39 pm.

Chairman Johnson asked if there were any comments on Ordinance 2026-03; hearing none, he stated that the public hearing would close. The public hearing closed at 6:39 pm.

13. Ordinance 2026-03

On motion by Councilman Rodine and seconded by Councilman Richardson, the Council voted unanimously in approval of the Second Reading of Ordinance 2026-03, an Ordinance Amending the Clarendon County Unified Development Code to Authorize and Implement a Flexible Design District Zoning Designation.

14. Finance Report

Nelson Gibbons, Finance Director, began his report by stating the following:

- **The General Fund** expenses were 70% of the Budget. We had Expenditures of \$2,017,558, and Revenue was not available as of February 28, 2026. Revenue ending January 31, 2026, was \$6,254,024.
- **Weldon Auditorium** – there was no report for the Weldon because the Weldon is being renovated.
- **The Water and Sewer Department** had a total Revenue of \$1,073,160 for the month ending February 28, 2026, and total Expenses were \$585,859. After Depreciation, Bond Interest Expense, and Interest Income, the Water and Sewer Department ended February 2026 with a Net Utility Income of \$6,650.
- **The C-Fund Program** - for the month ending February 28, 2026, The C-Fund program had a Cash Balance of \$8,952,207, of which \$4,254,468 has been committed to remaining local paving projects and State Proviso Funds. She stated that the C-Fund Program had an Uncommitted Balance of \$4,697,739 as of the end of February 2026.
- **Fire Rescue** – expenses were 60% of the Budget. We had Expenditures of \$699,885, and Revenue was not available as of February 28, 2026. Revenue ending January 31, 2026, was \$2,337,829.

15. Administrator’s Report

Administrator Ackerman began his report by stating that the past month has been very uneventful from a weather perspective. The ice and snowstorms that plagued us in January and the first few days of February are behind us, and spring is on the horizon. With spring comes budget time, and County departments have been very busy beginning the work of preparing their budget requests for FY 26/27.

As a precursor to the budget process, a planning retreat was held February 17-18, 2026. A tremendous amount of information with Council and Department Heads. The overall theme of the retreat was incorporating long-range

planning in the budget process and scrutinizing departmental activities to ensure that we are providing services and benefits to our citizens in the most efficient and effective manner possible at the lowest possible cost.

Clarendon County recently entered into an MUO with Morris College to develop an internship program for its Criminal Justice students. The participating students will work with our detention center staff to gain practical application experience in their field. This will hopefully encourage them to become part of Team Clarendon upon graduation.

On February 20, we met with a representative of the National Park Service on plans to create a National Park site in Summerton. The park will be part of a trail of parks commemorating the historic impact of the Brown vs. Board of Education decision, of which our local case of Briggs vs. Elliott was a key driver. This is an incredible opportunity to spotlight Clarendon County as playing a pivotal role in the national Civil Rights campaign.

Administrator Ackerman continued by giving the Council an update on the following:

✓ **Facilities:**

- **EOC/Communication Center:** Design and Engineering by Caplea Coe Architects, Inc. Construction by Pyramid Contracting \$9,044,848 base bid. Pyramid's Subcontractor is still working on the building pad, the parking lot, and site work.
- **SCIIP Phase V:** Engineering by Alliance with Adam Hogan managing. AC Schultes to install a well pump. Pittsburg Tank is finishing a few items with the tank installation, then moving onto electrical, and painting should be complete by 3/23/26. B&B has finished their portion of the project and will submit a pay app to close out their portion of the project. Barwick Construction had a base bid of \$996,249, alternate 1 - \$359,590, and alternate 2 - \$197,650. RIA approval 2/20/26, and now Alliance is in the process to award the contract to Barwick Construction. Substantial completion 6/1/2026, and the completion date is 10/1/2026.
- **Public Works, Fleet Maintenance, Animal Control:** Hawkins and Kolb are still working within the public works building installation fire suppression system and installing the sheetrock. The Animal Control building is complete and is now working on electrical, plumbing, and HVAC rough-ins. We are pricing security/alarm systems for both buildings. We sent the plans to Duke Energy to price the lighting for the site. Work to have the project finished by July/August. Contract Completion date 11/24/2026.
- **Turbeville Library:** Project funded by the S.C. Legislature and the Doctors Bruce and Lee Foundation. David Dixon has stated that the Bruce and Lee Foundation has approved the plans. Chamber & Associates has a base bid of \$2,750,000. David Dixon is correcting a few items for the planning department to permit. The contractor is planning to begin work next week. Jeff has several quotes for the 3rd party inspections. We are in the process of scheduling a groundbreaking ceremony.
- **North Shore Summerton Project:** The Development Board is handling engineering through Alliance Consulting Engineering for the project. State Funding of \$700,000 for this project, and the bid came in at \$622,000 with a change order of \$5,200. Barwick Plumbing has installed the wet well. Waiting on electrical components. Pumps for the North Shore and KOA pump stations have been delivered and installed.
- **Clarendon Community Complex Renovations** – Exterior Building Services are still working on the outside of the building, tuck pointing, and gutters. Once complete with tuck pointing, the final sealant will be applied. Rewiring lights in the auditorium to begin next week.
- **Newman Branch Restoration Projects:** We received \$950,000 for this project. The project has been awarded to Ecological Associates, Inc. They have removed 82 beavers and have a total of 33 dams. They have identified about 6-7 Dams and plan to bring in equipment to remove the Dams. They have seen some areas where beavers have returned, and they are going to set traps again. We are waiting for Nick Roark to provide a cost estimate for additional work on the project. Completion date extending to 01/07/2027.
- **JC Britton Park:** adding additional outdoor facilities and enlarging the Building at JC Britton Park. Vickie is submitting this project to Congressman Clyburn. This project has been approved, and we have received funding of \$1 million. Completion date TBD.

- **The Patriot Road Well Infrastructure** – Connecting the water systems through the first water and installing an elevated 250,000-gal tank. Vickie is working with Senator Lindsey Graham's office to determine the correct grant to apply for. Completion date TBD.
- **Sheriff's Building at Manning Firing Range** – The one-time appropriation of \$373,819 allowed for protective riot gear, a moving target system, and a new building. Currently, the riot gear and moving target systems are complete. This leaves an estimated balance of \$178,233 for the building. The Sheriff has a PO on the concrete pad and the building. Completion date TBD.
- **Drainage Projects** – Hudson Road and Deal Street need to obtain easements. Padgett Highway and David Chalmers Road are out for bid. The bids will be back on 3/4/2026. Completion date TBD.

Administrator Ackerman stated that the comments that were made earlier about the last meeting by Angela Reed, I used 'staff' to encompass everyone involved in that process, from our Engineering folks to our Water and Sewer folks, to our Grants folks, and to Sharmaine Anderson. We did receive a substantial amount of Grant money, but one sign of a good leader is not to take credit for your staff's accomplishments, even if you played a major role in it. So, I was not sliding Sharmaine in any way because she played a major role in that process. I also wanted to give credit to everybody else who did their part as well. It was not a slight; please don't take it that way. I just wanted to clarify that.

16. Chairman's Report

Chairman Johnson stated that he did not have a whole lot, but he thinks it was brought up a couple of times about the vacant seat to his left. He stated that tomorrow is election day for District Two, and he urged everyone to get out and vote. He stated that before he ran for office, he said if you don't vote, then you do not have any right to complain. Chairman Johnson concluded by yielding the floor to Sharmaine Anderson.

- Sharmaine Anderson began by saying that this would be her last Council Meeting tonight. She took a moment to thank David Epperson for taking a chance on her and for recognizing her qualifications, experience, and degrees. She expressed her gratitude to the Council for being trailblazers in hiring her as the first woman and the first African American to hold this position.
- She stated that this is important because one of her grandparents actually walked by this building every day to do domestic work and would never have imagined that her granddaughter would hold the second-highest position in the county.
- She continued by stating that she would like to thank the former Administrator, Lynden Anthony, for allowing her to be herself and for setting an agenda where we accomplish things that have never been done before through Federal appropriation, and with the assistance of our state, Quadri Bell, Congressman Clyburn, Senator Graham's office, and NACO, People across the nation now know what Clarendon County has to offer.
- Ms. Anderson highlighted that Clarendon County is the first in the state to have a Wills Clinic specifically for First Responders in partnership with the Center of Air Property.
- She continued by thanking the current Administrator, Walt Ackerman, for allowing her to learn under him for the last three months, and she stated that she got several nuggets that she would take with her on her next journey.
- She concluded by thanking the amazing staff for the things that we have accomplished and the citizens of Clarendon County for allowing her to serve. She stated that she may have been the first woman of color to lead, and she prays that she will not be the last because the ceiling has now been broken.
- Ms. Anderson concluded by quoting Psalms 27:13, which says, "I will see the goodness of the Lord in the Land of the Living."

Chairman Johnson thanked Sharmane for her service to Clarendon County, and she received a standing ovation.

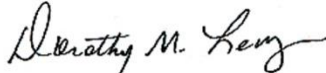
17. Adjourn

Chairman Johnson stated that we are at the end of our agenda and asked for a motion to adjourn the Council Meeting.

On motion by Councilman Richardson and seconded by Councilman Rodine, the Council voted unanimously in approval to adjourn the regularly scheduled Council Meeting.

The Council Meeting adjourned at 6:56 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dorothy M. Levy
Clerk to Clarendon County Council, CCC