



Clarendon County Regular Council Meeting

Monday, April 13, 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

Vice Chairman John P. Coker
Councilman Kurtis W. Rodine
Clerk to Council, Dorothy M. Levy

Absent: None

Press in attendance: Manning Times, Melissa McCoy
The Item, Alaysha Maple

Others in attendance included:

Gene Benfield	Julius Adger	May Jones	Chip Jones	Melissa Jones	Robin Staton
Eric Staton	Leo W. Frazier	Brenda Frazier	Edna Ellis	Debra Billie	Kathleen Gibson
Terrey Streath	Marie Dukes	Chuck Dukes	Mike Streath	Jacob Edwards	Skippy Osborne
Jennifer Johnson	Lou Murray	Legear McCabe	Mary Ford	Cynthia Mack	Kim Jones
Kay Hale	David Woods, Jr.	Melissa McCoy	Marie Land	William Blair	Alex Feagin
Jennifer Powell	Maureen Calvo	Kurston Jacobs	Jose Calvo	Patricia Pringle	Barbara Miller
Ann Plowden	Willie Briggs	Delaney K. Frierson		Jacqueline Blackwell	
Moses Levy, Jr.	Edgar O. Hodge	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 April 13, 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 March 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.

Jane Lambert	5 years	Ashley White	5 years
William Rowe	5 years	Thomasena Hall	20 years
Mary Baker	5 years		

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

4. Presentation of Clarendon County Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025 Audit Report

Ms. Lori Salley, McGregor & Company, presented the Council with a summary of the Audited Financial Statements for Fiscal Year 2024/2025. She began by giving Council an Unmodified Opinion of the Audit. Ms. Salley stated that an Unmodified Opinion is a clean opinion, which is a good summary. She continued by

stating that Clarendon County's net position as of June 30, 2025, was \$32 million, representing an increase of \$1.8 million over the previous year. Ms. Salley stated that the Governmental Funds have a Fund Balance of 39.9%.

Ms. Salley continued by stating that in planning and performing the audit of the financial statements of Clarendon County for the year ended June 30, 2025, we considered the County's internal control to determine Our auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the financial statement and not to provide assurance on internal control. During our audit, we determined that there was no material weakness, and this is a clean report.

Ms. Salley continued her presentation by stating that the Magistrates are to report any overages over \$100 in the account on an annual basis to the Court Administration. Overages for the Magistrate totaled \$4,366. We recommend that overages be investigated and reported periodically to the Court Administration.

Ms. Salley concluded her presentation by stating that a vehicle was purchased by Fire Rescue, and it did not go through Procurement.

Chairman Johnson thanked Ms. Salley for the audit.

On motion by Vice Chairman Coker and seconded by Councilman Richardson, the Council voted unanimously to accept the audit that was presented by Ms. Salley.

5. Public Comments:

Julius Adger – began by requesting the Council to pave Adger Road. He stated that there is one way in and one way out. He continued by stating that when it rains, the water backs up and floods out in one section. He concluded by stating that the water looks like fungus.

Edgar O'Neil Hodge, Jr. – began by asking the Council who gave them the authority to close the Archives. He stated that an auditor needs to go through the contents in the Archive to determine the historic value. He continued by stating that information is being discarded, and we need more information about the Archive.

Joe Oliver – stated that the Council is in a position to help people. He stated that the Sheriff's Department is dedicated and that they are doing a fantastic job. He continued by stating that he is being taunted at his home. Mr. Oliver stated that the noise ordinance isn't any good and he has the right to protect his family and his home.

George Frierson - stated that he is a historian and an Accounting education. He stated that he is running for Clarendon County Councilman for District Three, and he believes that he can do a better job than Councilman Coker. He continued by stating that he has his eyes on Chairman Johnson.

Lee Reeves, Jr. – stated that he is the President of the Historic Society, and he is not fond of housing records in an under-disclosed house for three years. He asked the Council to grant them a year's extension and a moratorium on all issues regarding the Archives. This will give them time to explore grants for funding and fundraising opportunities.

6. Proclamation

On motion by Councilman Rodine and seconded by Vice Chairman Coker, the Council voted unanimously approving a Proclamation declaring the Month of April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

7. Resolution 2026-02

On motion by Councilman Richardson and seconded by Vice Chairman Coker, the Council voted unanimously approving a Resolution Affirming the Discontinuance of Use of Certain Real Property of Clarendon

County for Fire Protection Purposes.

8. Resolution 2026-03

Administrator Ackerman stated that this Resolution authorizes an agreement between the Manning Times and Clarendon County regarding the County Archives and other matters related. He stated that he believes in trying to prevent problems by being proactive.

- Councilman Richardson stated that we need to take care of the major damage to the building and leave the Archive open.
- Administrator Ackerman stated that the building needs a new HVAC system. The brick external need a lot of work, and the building is a good storm away from significant damage.
- Councilman Richardson stated that we have a problem. We have lost the trust of the people, and no one believes what we say. He continued by stating that money is tight, and this is a historic building.
- Administrator Ackerman stated that this building is not ADA accessible inside or outside.
- Councilman Richardson stated that he is asking the Council to table this issue, get more information, and to gain back the trust of the people.
- Administrator Ackerman stated that a lot of people are spreading things that are not true. He continued by stating that there is a lot of money out there for non-profit. He continued by stating that if the Historic Society takes over the Archive, they can get grants to operate.
- Vice Chairman Coker stated that we can move the items to the Manning Times until the building is fixed.
- Councilman Johnson stated that all he has heard is to save the building. He stated that the building has to be repaired, and none of the information has been digitized.

On motion by Vice Chairman Coker and seconded by Councilman Rodine, the Council voted two in favor of and one opposing the Resolution Approving an Agreement between Clarendon County and Clarendon Newspaper, Inc. regarding the County Archives and Other Matters Related Thereto.

9. Ordinance 2026-02

On motion by Councilman Richardson and seconded by Vice Chairman Coker, the Council voted unanimously in approval to the Third and Final 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.

10. Ordinance 2026-03

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

11. Budget Presentation

Mr. Gibbons, Finance Director, began his presentation by stating that for First Reading, the budget is 31.4 million dollars in Revenue. He continued by stating that in South Carolina, the boat tax revenue will be reduced to 6%. He continued by stating that he would recommend that Clarendon County go ahead and reduce the boat tax to 6%. Mr. Gibbons continued by stating that there is a placeholder of \$720,000 for employees' pay raises. He stated that for the First Reading, the General Fund is out of balance by \$405,000.

Mr. Gibbons continued by stating that the Fire Rescue budget at this time is in balance at 9.9 million dollars. He continued by stating that there would be a budget workshop on April 28, 2026, at 6 pm.

- Vice Chairman Coker asked how long the reduced boat tax would be in effect.
- Mr. Nelson stated that he will be 3 years.
- Vice Chairman Coker asked when will the 6% go into effect.
- Mr. Nelson responded by stating that it will go into effect in the coming year.

- Administrator Ackerman stated that it will change on January 1, 2027.

Mr. Gibbons further stated that to date, we have reduced our expenditures from last Fiscal Year by \$933,000. We are also going through a salary study through a third party, and that compensation study is still ongoing.

12. Ordinance 2026-04

On motion by Councilman Richardson and seconded by Councilman Rodine, the Council voted unanimously approving the First Reading of Ordinance 2026-04 – an Ordinance To Provide For A Levy of taxes for County Purposes of Clarendon County, C., for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2026 and Ending June 30, 2027, to Direct the Expenditures of said taxes and other funds for Clarendon County, and to Provide for other matters related thereto including the Administrative Accountability Procedures to be followed during Implementation of the Budget (Operating and Capital) for Clarendon County for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2026 and Ending June 30, 2027.

13. Ordinance 2026-05

Administrator Ackerman presented the Council with Ordinance 2026-05 – an Ordinance Amending the Clarendon County Unified Development Code regarding Administrative Approval of Manufactured Homes within the Performance Zone and Other Matters Related Thereto. He stated that if someone wants to place a mobile home on their property and meets all the criteria for doing so, they must go to the Planning Commission, and it could be approved by the Planning Commission staff. But if you do not meet the criteria, you will still have to go to the Planning Commission.

On motion by Councilman Rodine and seconded by Councilman Richardson, the Council voted unanimously approving the First Reading of Ordinance 2026-05 - an Ordinance Amending the Clarendon County Unified Development Code regarding Administrative Approval of Manufactured Homes within the Performance Zone and Other Matters Related Thereto.

14. Finance Report

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

- **The General Fund** expenses were 79% of the Budget. We had Expenditures of \$2,456,312 and Revenue of \$6,033,190 as of March 31, 2026.
- **Weldon Auditorium** – there was no report for the Weldon because the Weldon is being renovated.
- **The Water and Sewer Department** had total Revenue of \$1,226,000 for the month ending March 31, 2026, and total Expenses were \$676,165. After Depreciation, Bond Interest Expense, and Interest Income, the Water and Sewer Department ended March 2026 with a Net Utility Loss of \$5,707.
- **The C-Fund Program** - for the month ending March 31, 2026, The C-Fund program had a Cash Balance of \$8,708,724, of which \$5,145,309 has been committed to remaining local paving projects and State Proviso Funds. She stated that the C-Fund Program had an Uncommitted Balance of \$3,563,414 as of the end of March 2026.
- **Fire Rescue** – expenses were 71% of the Budget. We had Expenditures of \$1,006,874, and Revenue was \$481,051 as of March 31, 2026.

15. Administrator's Report

Administrator Ackerman began his report by stating that the budget process has gone into full swing, and the amount of work involved in creating a high-quality budget is tremendous. I want to formally commend our County Departments for their outstanding work in preparing their budgets. A new process was introduced this year, which requires significant details in the planning process. Once the departments complete their portion, the finance staff and I begin the fine-tuning process.

He continued by stating that he wanted to introduce everyone to the newest member of our Department Head Team, Donald Ricks. Donald is our new Procurement Director. He has extensive experience in procurement and will

do great things for the County.

The Capital Projects Committee met today, and here is a summary of the discussion by projects:

✓ **Facilities:**

- **EOC/Dispatch Communication Center:** Design and Engineering by Caplea Coe Architects, Inc. Construction by Pyramid Contracting \$9,044,848. Pyramid's Subcontractor has parking lots and site work up to grade. They are now starting work on the footers and CMU block. They will be pouring the slab within the next two weeks. Completion Date 12/18/2026.
- **SCIIP Phase V:** Engineering by Alliance with Adam Hogan managing. AC Schultes is installing the pump well and will schedule with Barwick to install. Pittsburg Tank has started painting the tank, which should be completed by 4/13/26. B&B has finished their portion of the project and will submit pay app #8 to close out their portion of the project. The 2.5% retainage will be held until final samples are collected and passed. Final Well house, Barwick Construction had a base bid of \$996,249, and contracts have been signed. State date for Barwick Plumbing is 4/1/2026. Substantial completion 6/1/2026, with a completion of 10/1/2026.
- **Public Works, Fleet Maintenance, Animal Control:** Hawkins and Kolb are still working within the public works building installing ceiling grids, and the Animal Control Building has masonry work on going for the kennels. We are pricing security/alarm systems for both buildings. We will need to get pricing for fencing, a concrete pad, and a containment area for fuel tanks. Contractor plans 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. Chamber & Associates has a base bid of \$2,750,000. The building pad and foundation work have begun. The groundbreaking Ceremony is set for April 17 @10 am.
- **Summerton North Shore Project:** The Development Board is handling engineering through Alliance Consulting Engineering for the project. We received \$700,000 for this project, and the bid came in at \$622,000 with a change order of \$5,200. Santee Electric is waiting for the electrician to install the conduit to install power. The generator arrives mid-March. Completion date 04/30/2026.
- **Clarendon Community Complex Renovations** – Exterior Building Services are pressure-washing the outside of the building and applying the final sealant. Once completed, they will begin to clean the interior and plan to have interior finished by mid-April. Completion date 5/31/2026.
- **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. There are some areas where beavers have returned, and are going to set traps again. They continue to maintain the stream. Completion date extending to 01/07/2027.
- **JC Britton Park:** Senator Clyburn's office approved a \$1 million grant. A development team has been organized to work on the design of the project, and they have several ideas as follows. Pickle Ball courts, Tennis Courts, and New Track Lighting. New Restrooms will be near the courts. Also adding additional parking. The meeting will be next Thursday.
- **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. The riot gear and moving target systems are complete. 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 ready to begin construction. The Goldman Site contractor has a base bid of \$62,000 for this project. The start date is TBD. Completion date TBD.

16. Chairman's Report

Chairman Johnson thanked everyone for coming to the Council meeting.

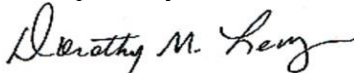
17. Adjourn

Chairman Johnson 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 7:11 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dorothy M. Levy
Clerk to Clarendon County Council, CCC