

Walterboro City Council

Regular Meeting

City Hall

June 3, 2025

Minutes

A Regular Meeting of Walterboro City Council was held at City Hall on Tuesday, June 3, 2025, at 6:15 P.M., with Mayor Bill Young presiding.

Present: Joined in the meeting were: Mayor Bill Young, Councilmembers: Carl Brown, Judy Bridge, Paul Siegel, James Broderick, Greg Pryor, and Ladson Fishburne. City Manager Jeff Molinari, Assistant City Manager Ryan McLeod, City Clerk Adrienne Nettles, City Attorney Brown McLeod, Finance Director Amy Risher, members from the Colleton County School Board, and members from the Libertas Academy.

Call to Order:

With the above-mentioned Councilmembers present, Mayor Young called the meeting to order and invited everyone to join in as he gave the invocation. Councilmember Bridge led the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag.

Public Input on Agenda Items:

Glenn Nixon, Colleton County School Board Trustee stated I am here this evening to express my concerns about the new charter school. This new school will affect Black Street Early Childhood Center, the church that it backs up to, and the homes in the surrounding area. I am concerned about the impact it will have on the water and sewer capacity as well. The proposed charter school will also take a good bit of funding away from the public school. I ask that the City think long and hard before annexing this property into the city.

Sharon Witkin, Colleton County School Board Trustee stated I am concerned about the impact the charter school will have on the school district, such as enrollment, deductions in resources, and laws that apply to public schools do not apply to charter schools. The addition of this charter school will make the job of the Colleton County School District more difficult. I also ask that the city closely review the water and sewer needs as well.

Destiny Grant, Director of Libertas Academy Colleton Charter School stated Libertas is a public school and we are opening for the 2025-2026 school year. As we are looking to expand, we are excited about the potential to annex into the city. We are deeply committed to working with the City of Walterboro and the Colleton County School District. Libertas is not here to operate in isolation but as a proud and permanent member of the community. We are excited to help the families of Colleton County.

Fredrick Jackson stated good evening, I just want to express my feelings about the charter school. I, myself, am enrolling my child into Libertas. I believe there is a lot going on within the school district that needs to be corrected. So many parents are trying to find better schools for their kids. There is a need for this school. I believe that every parent should have a choice on where they want to send their kids, and I don't think that right should be taken, or anyone has to vote on where their child goes to school.

Public Hearing:

1. **Ordinance # 2025-06**, AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CITY GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 AND MATTERS RELATING THERETO (Second and Final Reading).
2. **Ordinance # 2025-07**, AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CITY ENTERPRISE FUND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 AND MATTERS RELATING THERETO (Second and Final Reading).

Councilmember Bridge stated before I go over the budget summary, I want to thank our City Manager and Finance Director for the work that has gone into the budget, as well as the department heads.

Budget Summary:

- \$15,808,489 total City Budget.
- 9,641,632 General Fund Budget.
- 6,166,866 Enterprise Fund Budget.
- No ad valorem property tax increase.
- No business license rate increase.
- Proposed 5% increase in water and wastewater rates.
- Property and casualty insurance (SCMIRF) rates increased by .61%, workers' comp insurance (SCMIT) decreased by 15.2%.
- No change in PEBA health insurance rates (employer).
- PEBA health insurance (employee) increased by \$36.76 per subscriber per month.
- Merit increases for city employees.

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of Council I am going to give the highlights:

Mayor and City Council

- 2025 Election.

City Manager

- Status quo.

Finance

- Status Quo.

Public Works

- Status Quo.

Planning and Development

- \$25,000 allocated for demolition of substandard properties.

Police

- Reinstatement of one (1) patrol position.
- Purchase of two (2) new police vehicles.

Judicial

- Status quo.

Fire

- Purchase of new Fire Pumper Truck (anticipated delivery in FY 2027-2028).

Parks

- Status quo.

Tourism

- Status quo.

Walterboro Wildlife Center

- Status quo.

Water

- Lease purchase – backhoe and dump truck

Utility Support

- 2025 bond payment – debt service on wastewater treatment plant expansion.

Sanitation

- Debt service for 2024 garbage truck.

Sewer

- Status quo.

Sewer Support

- Status quo.

3. **Ordinance # 2025-08**, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WALTERBORO, SOUTH CAROLINA, AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE FEE SCHEDULE FOR THE UTILITY SUPPORT DEPARTMENT (Second and Final Reading).

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of Council we need to update and codify the Comprehensive Fee Schedule for the Utility Support Department to reflect the proposed increase in Water and Wastewater rates.

4. **Ordinance # 2025-09**, AN ORDINANCE PURSUANT TO TITLE 5, CHAPTER 3, SECTION 5-3-150, SUBSECTION 3, OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, AS AMENDED, TO ANNEX AN AREA KNOWN AS TMS # 163-03-00-051 INTO THE CITY OF WALTERBORO, A SOUTH CAROLINA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (Second and Final Reading).

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of Council you have in your agenda packet an ordinance, map, and annexation petition for a small parcel located on Godley Street. This will consolidate two lots. When we get to the second and final reading, staff recommends approval of the annexation.

Old Business:

1. **Ordinance # 2025-06**, AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CITY GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 AND MATTERS RELATING THERETO (Second and Final Reading).

Councilmember Brown asked The General Assembly on the PEBA Health Insurance, do we need to include that?

City Manager Jeff Molinar stated no, we will just absorb that into the budget. It is kind of a challenge because our PEBA Health Insurance operates on a calendar fiscal year January to December, and our budget is July 1st to June 30th. We won't have a final number from PEBA until August, but compared to the overall scope of our budget it is a small number. It is about an \$11,000 difference. That is something we can absorb into our budget.

Motion: Councilmember Bridge; Seconded by Councilmember Siegel

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

2. **Ordinance # 2025-07**, AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CITY ENTERPRISE FUND BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 AND MATTERS RELATING THERETO (Second and Final Reading).

Motion: Councilmember Bridge; Seconded by Councilmember Broderick

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

3. **Ordinance # 2025-08**, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF WALTERBORO, SOUTH CAROLINA, AMENDING THE COMPREHENSIVE FEE SCHEDULE FOR THE UTILITY SUPPORT DEPARTMENT (Second and Final Reading).

Motion: Councilmember Brown; Seconded by Councilmember Pryor

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

4. **Ordinance # 2025-9**, AN ORDINANCE PURSUANT TO TITLE 5, CHAPTER 3, SECTION 5-3-10, SUBSECTION 3, OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, AS AMENDED. TO ANNEX AN AREA KNOWN AS TMS # 163-03-00-051 INTO THE CITY OF WALTERBORO, A SOUTH CAROLINA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (Second and Final Reading).

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated this is a small annexation. As you see in your agenda packet it is a triangular piece that will consolidate one lot into the city limits. Both properties are owned by the same person. The Planning Commission has reviewed it and made a zoning recommendation. Staff recommends approval of the annexation.

Motion: Councilmember Siegel; Seconded by Councilmember Pryor

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

New Business:

1. **Ordinance # 2025-10**, AN ORDINANCE PURSUANT TO TITLE 5, CHAPTER 3, SECTION 5-3-10, SUBSECTION 3, OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, AS AMENDED. TO ANNEX AN AREA KNOWN AS TMS # 180-00-00-107 INTO THE CITY OF WALTERBORO, A SOUTH CAROLINA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION (Introduction and First Reading).

Councilmember Broderick stated I have been doing a lot of thinking about this ordinance. While I am open to a discussion of a charter school in our community, I just do not feel that this annexation is a benefit to the city.

Mayor Young stated we have a copy of the plans and do have some concerns. I have a concern about the pump station and sewer line. It is a force main, also who is going to maintain the line and pump station. It is my understanding that the city is not going to maintain the pump station. I

also have a concern about the traffic flow. There also looks like a good bit of drainage on the map and a retention pond. Those are just some concerns I have about the site and current plan.

Councilmember Brown asked if the charter school is already operating here?

Destiny with Libertas stated yes, that is correct.

Councilmember Brown asked without a doubt you all are moving to this site that's already been approved of by the state officials?

Destiny stated yes.

Councilmember Brown stated I am very torn on how I am going to vote.

A motion to approve Ordinance # 2025-10, Ladson Fishburne, James Broderick, second. Carl Brown, Judy Bridge, Paul Siegel, Greg Pryor, Ladson Fishburn in favor, Mayor Bill Young and James Broderick opposed. Motion carries.

2. Consideration of rescheduling the July 1, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting.

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of Council this is going to be the week of the 4th of July. We have done the meeting either way and just wanted to get your feedback, if Council wants to reschedule that meeting. The meeting will be rescheduled to July 8, 2025.

Motion: Councilmember Brown; Seconded by Councilmember Pryor

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

City Manager's Report:

1. Consideration of bids for Water Tower Park.

City Manager Jeff Molinari stated Mr. Mayor and members of Council you have in your agenda packet a memo and supporting documentation about the Water Tower Park. On May 12, 2025, the city received four (4) bids for the construction of Water Tower Park. The city's landscape architect, the LandPlan Group South recommends award to the low qualified bidder, Wildwood Contractors, Inc. (Walterboro, SC) in the amount of \$368,425.45. The project will be funded by the following sources:

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| PARD Grant | \$40,000.00 |
| ARPA | \$30,399.50 |
| ARPA Interest | \$148,071.00 |
| Future General Obligation Bond | <u>\$149,954.95</u> |
| Total | \$368,425.45 |

Motion: Councilmember Brown; Seconded by Councilmember Bridge

Discussion: None

Carried: All ayes

A motion was made to go into Executive Session by Councilmember Brown, seconded by Councilmember Pryor. Mayor Young explained that City Council would be going into Executive Session to discuss Receipt of Legal – Real Estate matter, the expansion/provision of services encouraging the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, and Personnel Matter: Appointment to The Tree Protection Committee.

Executive Session:

1. Receipt of Legal Advice – Real Estate Matter.
2. The expansion/provision of services encouraging the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body.
3. Personnel matter: Appointment to The Tree Protection Committee.

A motion to come out of Executive Session was made by Councilmember Broderick, seconded by Councilmember Bridge. All in favor, motion carries.

Open Session:

A motion to appoint Robert Franklin to the Tree Protection Committee was made by Councilmember Broderick, seconded by Councilmember Brown. All in favor, motion carries.

There being no further business to consider, a motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Broderick, seconded by Councilmember Brown and passed unanimously. Mayor Young adjourned the meeting at 8:02 P.M. Notice of the meeting was distributed with the agenda packets, to all local media, posted on City Hall bulletin board and posted on the City's website at least twenty-four hours prior to meeting time.

Respectfully,

Adrienne Nettles
City Clerk