



GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes
Regular Meeting
March 18, 2025
6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers
301 University Ridge
Greenville, South Carolina

Council Members

Benton Blount, *Chairman, District 19*
Rick Bradley, *Vice-Chairman, District 26*
Liz Seman, *Chairwoman Pro Tem, District 24*
Joey Russo, *District 17*
Kelly Long, *District 18*
Stephen Shaw, *District 20*
Curt McGahhey, *District 21*
Frank Farmer, *District 22*
Alan Mitchell, *District 23*
Ennis Fant, Sr., *District 25*
Garey Collins, *District 27*
Dan Tripp, *District 28*

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting date, time, place and agenda was posted online, at 301 University Ridge, Greenville, and made available to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Council Members Absent

Joey Russo, *District 17*

Staff Present

Joe Kernell, *County Administrator*
Chris Antley, *County Attorney*
Regina McCaskill, *Clerk to Council*
Jessica Stone, *Deputy Clerk to Council*
Pam Gilliam, *Administrative Assistant*

Others Present

Steve Cole, *Executive Director, Greater Greenville Sanitation*

Council Members Remote Participation

Curt McGahhey, *District 21*

Ted Lambrecht, *Assistant County Administrator*
Hesha Gamble, *Assistant County Administrator*
Ronald Hollister, *Assistant County Administrator*
Bob Mihalic, *Governmental Affairs Officer*
Terrence Galloway, *Information Systems*

Call to Order

Chairman Blount

Invocation

Chairman Blount

Pledge of Allegiance

Item (4) **Approval of Minutes**

Action: Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman moved to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2025 – Regular Council meeting.

Motion carried.

Item (5) **Proclamations and Special Recognitions**

a. Honoring the 100th Anniversary of Greenville First Assembly of God

Councilor Farmer presented members of the Greenville First Assembly of God with a proclamation recognizing its 100th Anniversary, expressing deepest gratitude for its century of faith, service, and dedication to the well-being of the community.

Item (6) **Special Appearance**

a. SBA Reopens Deadlines for Physical Damage Loans

Arleace Green, Public Affairs Specialist for the Office of Disaster Recovery and Resilience, stated the application period for assistance with physical damage to property loans due to the effects of Hurricane Helene had been extended until April 27, 2025. She stated both homeowners and renters could apply. Another program administered by the office dealt with economic injury due to loss of revenue for businesses and non-profit agencies.

Ms. Green provided contact information for the agency.

Item (7) **Appearances – Current Agenda Items**

- **Ed Paxton** – appeared regarding item 9.a. Initiate Zoning Text Amendment / Section 8:5 (ESD-PM, Environmentally Sensitive District – Paris Mountain)

Item (8) **Public Hearings**

a. Augusta Grove 10 Investors, LLC (formerly Project Firehouse) / Fee in Lieu of Tax Agreement

This public hearing was held for the purpose of receiving comments from the public regarding an ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of a fee in lieu of tax agreement by and between Greenville County, South Carolina and Augusta Grove 10 Investors, LLC, with respect to certain economic development property in the County, whereby such property would be subject to certain payments in lieu of taxes and other matters related thereto.

There being no speakers, Councilor Collins declared the public hearing closed.

b. Greenville – Anderson Multi County Industrial Business Park Agreement Amendment / Cone Mills Acquisition Group LLC (formerly Project OTT)

This public hearing was held for the purpose of receiving comments from the public regarding an ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of the first amendment to that certain agreement for development of a joint county industrial and business park by and between Greenville County, South Carolina and Anderson County, South Carolina (Cone Mills Acquisition Group, LLC); and other matters related thereto.

There being no speakers, Councilor Collins declared the public hearing closed.

Item (9)

Consent Agenda

- a. Initiate Zoning Text Amendment / Section 8:5 (ESD-PM, Environmentally Sensitive District – Paris Mountain)**
- b. Community Project Application / Canebrake Fire District**
- c. Community Project Application / Dunklin Fire District**

Councilor Tripp requested Item 9.a. Initiate Zoning Text Amendment / Section 8:5 (ESD-PM, Environmentally Sensitive District – Paris Mountain) be pulled from the Consent Agenda. He stated he could not recall a text amendment on a Consent Agenda and suggested further discussion.

Attorney Antley stated the item in question was initially presented by Mr. Shaw and then referred to the Planning and Development Committee for consideration for initiation. The Committee sent the approval of the action forward. Mr. Antley stated if the initiation was approved by Council, the item would then go through the normal zoning ordinance process.

Councilor Tripp stated he was fine with Mr. Antley’s explanation and withdrew his request.

Action: Chairwoman Pro Tem Seman moved to approve the Consent Agenda items.

Motion carried.

Item (10)

Resolutions

- a. R.A. Greenville Brookfield Road LLC / Consent to Partial Assignment and Assumption of Fee Agreement**

Action: Councilor Collins moved for adoption a resolution approving a partial assignment of interests in the fee in lieu of tax and special source credit agreement between Greenville County, South Carolina and R.A. Greenville Brookfield Road LLC, dated as of December 6, 2022 with an effective date as of December 1, 1998, revised as of December 1, 2000.

Motion carried.

Item (11) **Ordinances – Third Reading**

- a. **Requirement to Stream to the Public All County Council and Standing Committee Meetings**

Action: Councilor Farmer moved for adoption at third reading an ordinance to require transparency for all Greenville County Council and Committee Meetings in streaming meetings to the public.

Motion carried.

Item (12) **Ordinances – Second Reading**

- a. **Zoning Ordinances**

- i. **CZ-2025-009,** Property of South Greenville Fire District, located at 40 Old Augusta Road. Ext., requesting rezoning from R-M20 to S-1. The Planning Commission and Committee recommended approval.

Action: On behalf of the Committee, Councilor Bradley moved approval of the ordinance at second reading.

Motion carried.

- ii. **CZ-2025-010,** Property of 9 Springside, LLC, located at 9 Springside Avenue, requesting rezoning from R-7.5 to R-6. The Planning Commission and Committee recommended approval.

Action: On behalf of the Committee, Councilor Bradley moved approval of the ordinance at second reading.

Motion carried.

- b. **Augusta Grove 10 Investors, LLC (formerly Project Firehouse) / Fee in Lieu of Tax Agreement**

Action: Councilor Collins moved for approval at second reading an ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of a fee in lieu of tax agreement by and between Greenville County, South Carolina and Augusta Grove 10 Investors, LLC, with respect to certain economic development property in the County, whereby such property would be subject to certain payments in lieu of taxes and other matters related thereto.

Motion carried.

c. Greenville – Anderson Multi County Industrial Business Park Agreement Amendment / Cone Mills Acquisition Group LLC (formerly Project Ott)

Action: Councilor Collins moved for approval at second reading an ordinance authorizing the execution and delivery of the first amendment to that certain agreement for development of a joint county industrial and business park by and between Greenville County, South Carolina and Anderson County, South Carolina (Cone Mills Acquisition Group, LLC); and other matters related thereto.

Action: Councilor Collins moved to amend the ordinance and agreement to reflect the red-lined changes outlined in the documents that were included in the Council agenda packet.

Councilor McGahhey inquired about the 30 year extension.

Mr. Antley stated the item was originally a Special Source Revenue Credit agreement between Greenville County and Cone Mills Acquisition Group LLC. When the agreement was approved by Council it was for 60 years, however, the MCIP agreement indicated 30 years. Mr. Antley stated since the body agreed to 60 years, a “cleanup” was needed to align the MCIP agreement with the SSRC agreement.

Motion to amend carried.

Action: Councilor Collins moved approval of the ordinance as amended.

Motion carried.

Item (13) Ordinances – First Reading

a. Zoning Ordinances

Councilor Bradley presented for first reading Zoning Dockets **CZ-2025-014** through **CZ-2025-020**.

Chairman Blount referred the items to the Planning and Development Committee.

b. Establishment of a Firearms Sign Policy for Greenville County Properties or Facilities

Councilor Shaw presented for first reading an ordinance establishing a Greenville County policy directing all Greenville County administrators and staff regarding signs, posters, bulletin boards, memorandum, and/or administrative policies or directives regarding firearms on Greenville County properties or facilities.

Chairman Blount referred the item to the Public Safety Committee.

c. Greenville County Land Development Regulations Amendment - Design Standards

Councilor Shaw presented for first reading an ordinance amending Section 10.3 (Design Standards) of the Greenville County Land Development Regulations to require new business, office, mercantile, assembly (gathering), educational, or storage uses, structures, or developments be designed and constructed compatible with the surrounding area and conform with the unique character and architectural highpoints of surrounding buildings.

Chairman Blount referred the item to the Planning and Development Committee.

d. Greenville County Budget Amendment to Provide for the Construction, Maintenance, Repair, and Capacity Enlargement of Roads and Intersections within the Bounds of Greenville County

Councilor Collins presented for first reading an ordinance amending Article V, Division 1, Section 7-61 of the Greenville County ordinances to provide that the budget policy must provide, that no less than ten (10%) percent of gross annual revenues be budgeted for the construction, maintenance, repair, and capacity enlargement of roads and intersections within the bounds of Greenville County for use by private and for-hire motor vehicles.

Councilor Tripp suggested referring the item to the Committee of the Whole as it proposed changing budget policy. Mr. Tripp stated budget issues have always been referred to the body as a whole.

Chairman Blount referred the item to the Committee of the Whole.

Item (14)

Committee Reports

There were no reports.

Item (15)

Public Comments

- **Sonny Cole** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Steve Cole** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Myron Chorbajian** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Jenny Trump** – appeared regarding zoning appeals, process, and Council responsibility
- **Michele Slade** – appeared regarding effects of zoning
- **Mary Ann Coleman** – appeared regarding zoning area plan
- **Amy Sharp** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Robert Chambers** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **David Davis** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Michael Chandler** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Ed Paxton** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Norman Chandler** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Aja Johnson** – appeared regarding Public Transit
- **Bruce Wilson** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Francis Bishop** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Kenneth Baxter** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation

- **Yvonne Reeder** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Megan Brock** – appeared regarding Bridgeway Station
- **Daniel Rumfelt** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Brian Kaien** – appeared regarding Greenville Para-transit
- **Ma'ta Crawford** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation and Public Transportation
- **Phillip Rabe** – appeared regarding Greater Greenville Sanitation
- **Dannette Vandegrift** – appeared regarding Charter School Development on Woodruff Road

Item (16)

Administrator's Report

Mr. Kernell stated as of Saturday, March 15, the County's Hurricane Helene debris collection was complete. Over 1.126 million cubic yards of debris was collected. Mr. Kernell stated the County was unable to collect any additional debris. He asked that callers inquiring about debris collection be advised to contact their trash service; callers inquiring about burning should be referred to their fire department.

Item (17)

Requests and Motions by Council Members

7:30 p.m. - Chairman Blount passed the gavel to Vice-Chairman Bradley.

a. Resolution Supporting the Greater Greenville Sanitation District

Councilor Blount introduced a resolution of Greenville County, South Carolina expressing support for the Greater Greenville Sanitation District and concern over legislation proposed in the South Carolina General Assembly which would, if enacted, purport to dissolve the district or otherwise modify its powers in a manner that would have a negative impact on the district's finances and ability to operate efficiently, and which would have a disproportionate negative impact on the most financially distressed areas of the district and the residents and businesses therein, and which would result in the termination of existing waste collection services to residents and businesses in areas outside the district, and which may result in termination of existing waste collection services to thousands of residents and businesses inside the district; and other matters related thereto.

Chairman Blount stated the reason the item was placed on the agenda was the fact that the House had already unanimously passed the bill and it was on its way to the Senate. There had been no conversation as to a contingency plan in the event the district was dissolved; the Delegation should have approached Council in an effort to discuss the situation. If the district was dissolved, 60,000 residents would lose a service that had been in place for 38 years. Those residents would not contact members of the Delegation; they would contact Council. He stated almost every call he had ever received about GGS had been positive.

Councilor McGahhey stated that while he supported the resolution, he felt it necessary for Council to look at the millage in an effort to make it fair. He stated he had received phone calls and emails both in favor and in opposition to it. Mr. McGahhey stated the public should be aware that there were possible conflicts of interests regarding some people in the Legislative Delegation.

Councilor Shaw stated he would not support the proposed resolution. It was a “state issue” and there were actually two parallel bills in the Legislature. He stated a number of the comments were focused on abolishing GGS. Mr. Shaw stated the other bill proposed modifying the district to get it back to its original purpose, in its own district. He felt the resolution was very broad and indicated Council supported everything GGS did; therefore, he could not support it.

Councilor Mitchell stated he, along with Councilor Blount and Council Fant, had a large number of residents in their districts who were serviced by Greater Greenville Sanitation. He felt blindsided by the State of South Carolina when the proposed legislation was introduced, as no one had mentioned anything to him about it. Mr. Mitchell stated he had harsh words with some of the state representatives. He could not understand how they could come into his “backyard” and tell him what they were going to do with his constituents, without saying anything beforehand. It made no sense and it was not over.

Councilor Bradley stated there was a conflict of interest with the individual who initiated the bill. The citizens of Greenville County had no input. Mr. Bradley stated he had never heard a negative comment about GGS. He was always told if something was not broken, do not fix it.

Councilor Fant stated that none of the representatives in the Greenville Delegation that were pushing for this change had any constituents that lived in Districts 19, 23 or 25. He stated 60% of Greater Greenville Sanitation’s geographical area was located in District 25. There was no call for discussion from the Delegation. Mr. Fant stated he had never received a phone call from a constituent saying they did not like Greater Greenville Sanitation and wanted it to be dissolved; however, he had received a number of calls from individuals worried that they may lose their service. He stated GGS should not operate outside of the district and compete unfairly with the private sector. Mr. Fant stated the following were major problems with the proposed legislation and the devastating impact it would have on residents and the district:

- Private companies only picked up garbage, while GGS picked up debris and everything else. In District 25, 60% of the homes were rented, as opposed to Greenville County with 40% rentals; 24 out of 100 renters have eviction notices filed on them every month. If evicted, many leave couches, TVs, and old beds on the side of the road. He stated Greater Greenville Sanitation picked up those items, while private providers did not. If left behind, landlords would be forced to take the items to one of the County’s convenience centers, adding an additional impact and causing a greater burden on the County.
- The fee structure for Greater Greenville Sanitation was based on property values. Mr. Fant stated he was vehemently opposed to a flat fee funding structure. A flat fee was a regressive tax that worked a disproportionate hardship on lower income residents, particularly senior citizens on a fixed income. He could not understand the conversation surrounding hurting private companies, as opposed to citizens.
- Mr. Fant stated he had heard no one from the “illustrious Greenville Delegation” speak with any concern about the 114 GGS employees that would potentially be without a job. Many of those employees lived in District 25.
- Greater Greenville Sanitation picked up trash from the front door for its disabled citizens; private companies did not.

Councilor Fant stated he did not need any help from the Delegation in determining what was in the best interests of his constituents. County Council handled GGS's millage, its bond issues and appointments of its commissioners; not the Delegation. Mr. Fant stated people were first, not for profit businesses.

Councilor Collins stated the State of South Carolina mandated things to the County and did not care what Council Members said. Private enterprise was not a failure in the area of garbage pickup; he had three family companies in his district that had been in the business for 75 years. Mr. Collins stated he was not in favor of the proposed resolution.

Councilor Blount stated he had heard from people who did not want to abolish GGS; they wanted to see it changed. Unfortunately, the legislation presented so far did not necessarily allow for change, prior to eliminating GGS. Mr. Blount stated he was hopeful legislation would do the right thing.

Councilor Shaw stated he disagreed as there were two bills. One of them would keep GGS in its district and not eliminate it.

Councilor Blount stated both bills had been in the House and were now in the Senate. It did not seem likely they would vote on one and not the other.

Councilor Shaw stated his point had always been that the Legislature had set forth two pathways. One was to change GGS and keep it in the district it was intended for; the other one would eliminate it.

Councilor Blount stated his intent was for Council to have time to let the process work out in a positive way, rather than a negative one that would affect all of Greenville County. He requested the proposed resolution be referred to the Communications and Governmental Affairs Committee for additional discussion and possibly assist with some of the legislation.

Councilor Seman suggested a joint committee comprised of the Roads, Infrastructure and Public Works Committee along with the Communications and Governmental Affairs Committee.

Councilor Blount stated he was fine with sending the item to the Committee of the Whole. He did not want the citizens to be "caught out of left field" and felt they should be allowed to comment on the issue.

Councilor Fant stated the issue was so politically charged and affected many people. He agreed it would be best to send the item in question to the Committee of the Whole.

Councilor Tripp stated it was important for Council to try and work with the legislators. He stated there appeared to be a lack of fairness in the pricing structure. It was also unfair for GGS to go outside of its boundaries and compete with private companies.

Vice-Chairman Bradley referred the item to the Committee of the Whole.

7:30 p.m. – Vice-Chairman Bradley passed the gavel back to Chairman Blount.

Item (18)

Adjournment

Action:

There being no further business, Councilor Bradley moved to adjourn.

The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Regina McCaskill
Clerk to Council