



Colleton County Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: February 9, 2026

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, the news media was notified, and notice was posted 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Call to Order: Chairman Biering called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Chairman Scott Biering, Council Vice-Chairman Bubba Trippe, Councilman Steve Murdaugh, Councilman Johnny Frank, and Councilman Phillip Taylor were present. Chairman Biering declared a quorum was present.

Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance: Vice-Chairman Trippe gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda: Councilman Frank made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Councilman Murdaugh. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Chairman Biering requested a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 5, 2026. Councilman Trippe made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Councilman Murdaugh. The motion carried unanimously.

Awards and Recognitions: Robert Benfield with the South Carolina Association of Counties presented the following Risk Management Awards to George Welch, Risk Management Director, and Larry Lightsey, Tax Collector:

- Lowest Workers' Compensation Lag Time Award
- Sustained Excellence in Risk Management Award
- Outstanding Safety Achievement Award – awarded to Larry Lightsey and his staff for their work to enhance the safety and security of Colleton County Tax Collector employees

Appearances & Public Presentations:

- a. **Friends of Colleton County Animal Shelter:** Tammy Varn with Friends of Colleton County Animal Shelter addressed Council and provided an update on the organization's services supporting the Colleton County Animal Services Department.

- b. Pillars4Hope:** Nakeya Hammonds thanked Council for approving the Opioid Recovery Funds and entrusting them to Pillars4Hope and provided Council with an update on the programs Pillars4Hope offers to the public. Ms. Hammonds also introduced Billie Smith, the Opioid Coordinator. Ms. Smith spoke about the programs and resources offered by Pillars4Hope to the public.

Public Comment: (3 minutes per person/max time 20 minutes)

Frank Santorella: Mr. Santorella spoke about the need for Council to continue to pursue fiscal opportunities for Colleton County.

Glen Strickland: Mr. Strickland read a resolution that was recently approved by the Colleton County Legislative Delegation.

Pam Sheaf: Ms. Sheaf spoke about issues with Volunteer Lane.

Natalee Marick: Ms. Marick stated that she is a resident of Beaufort County and spoke about her concerns with the Data Center and its effects on the environment.

Felicia Johnson: Felicia Johnson expressed concern with a dangerous ditch near her house and the need for more streetlights on her street.

Bill Reeside: Bill Ree-Side addressed Council, introduced himself, and announced his intention to seek election to South Carolina's First Congressional District.

Shelley Perkins: Ms. Perkins stated that she is a resident of Charleston County, plans to move to Colleton County, and expressed concerns regarding the proposed data center.

Administrator's Briefing: Administrator Higgs provided Council with an update on ongoing CPST projects.

New Business

- a. First Reading by Title Only of an Ordinance to Provide for the Issuance and Sale of Not Exceeding Fifteen Million Dollars (\$15,000,000) Aggregate Principle Amount of General Obligation Bonds of Colleton County, South Carolina in One or More Series, to Prescribe the Purposes for Which the Proceeds Shall be Expended, to Provide for the Payment Thereof, and to Provide for Other Matters Related Thereto:** Councilman Murdaugh made a motion to approve the 1st Reading of the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Frank. Discussion followed. The motion carried unanimously.
- b. First Reading by Title Only of an Ordinance Authorizing the Dissolution of Colleton County's Interest in a Portion of Real Property Identified as TMS #132-00-00-028:** Councilman Murdaugh made a motion the approve the 1st Reading of the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Trippe. Discussion followed. The motion carried unanimously.

- c. **A Resolution Authorizing the County Administrator to Expend Funds from the 911 Revenue Account for APCO Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Instructor Training and Dispatcher Certification:** Councilman Trippe made a motion to approve the Resolution, seconded by Councilman Frank. The motion carried unanimously.
- d. **A Resolution of Colleton County Council to Approve the Renaming of Colleton County Fire-Rescue Station No. 1 in Honor of Former Fire Chief Barry W. McRoy:** Councilman Frank made a motion to approve the Resolution, seconded by Councilman Trippe. Discussion followed. The motion carried unanimously.

Council Time: During Council Time, Councilman Taylor provided informational remarks regarding the introduction of House Bill H.5091, which would allow animal control officers to carry firearms. He also discussed the closure of convenience sites during inclement weather and requested that the County consider opening an additional day to make up for the closures.

Councilman Murdaugh discussed Volunteer Lane and the history of issues associated with the road. He also spoke about the Colleton County Comprehensive Plan, including how the Plan identifies and defines preserved lands, and referenced the location of the Ace Basin in that context. He further discussed the proposed data center project.

Chairman Biering invited citizens to contact him and other Council members to discuss their concerns. He stated that County Attorney Sean Thornton has Council's full support and thanked him for his service to the County. Chairman Biering read the following prepared statement:

County Council is aware of the Resolution that the Colleton County Legislative Delegation passed last week. County Council takes pride in its long history of cooperative work with our Delegation, and we look forward to that continuing as we move forward. We look forward to working together on the issues we currently face and many.... many more.

As most know, we are in the middle of litigation, and we are under legal guidance from our legal counsel. While we are not able to answer and comment on many of your questions and concerns, we greatly appreciate your understanding while we navigate the legal process.

Executive Session: Councilman Frank made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss the following topics:

- a. Receipt of Legal Advice Related to Bonds and Millage Levy
- b. Receipt of Legal Advice Regarding Crosby and Singleton vs. Colleton County

The motion was seconded by Councilman Murdaugh. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Session: Council returned to public session. No action was taken in Executive Session.

Adjournment: Councilman Frank made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Trippe. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 p.m.



COLLETON COUNTY COUNCIL

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Scott Biering', written over a horizontal line.

By: Scott Biering, Chairman

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Martha B. Thompson', written over a horizontal line.

Martha B. Thompson, Clerk to Council

Approved: 3/2/24

Handwritten text, possibly a date or reference number, including "21-17A".



Handwritten signature or scribble.

Faint, illegible text at the bottom of the page, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side.