



Colleton County Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: May 4, 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: Councilman Taylor gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda: Chairman Biering requested a motion to approve the agenda. Councilman Frank made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Vice-Chairman Trippe. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Chairman Biering requested a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 6, 2026, and the Council Workshop of April 28, 2026. Vice-Chairman Trippe made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Councilman Frank. Discussion followed. The motion carried unanimously.

Awards and Recognitions:

a. Proclamation Honoring Civil Air Patrol and the Ace Basin Composite Squadron:

Chairman Biering read into the record the Proclamation honoring Civil Air Patrol and the Ace Basin Squadron. 1st Lieutenant Megan Atherton, ACE Basin Composite Squadron Commander, 1st Lieutenant Steve Atherton, 1st Lieutenant David Berry, Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Ruth Atherton, ACE Basin Composite Squadron Cadet Commander, Cadet Chief Master Sergeant Abigail Atherton were in attendance. Councilman Taylor made a motion approving the Proclamation, seconded by Councilman Murdaugh. Discussion followed. The motion carried unanimously.

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

Dan Sturgis: Mr. Sturgis expressed his concerns with the proposed Data Center.

Dean Harrigal: Mr. Harrigal thanked County Council and staff for their efforts in presenting the Land Use Plan updates to the community and inquired about the tentative timeline for completion of the Comprehensive Plan update. Administrator Higgs outlined the upcoming steps in the process to complete the Comprehensive Plan update.

Crawford Moore: The Mayor of Edisto Beach addressed County Council regarding the work undertaken by County Council and County staff to address budget matters and expressed support for the proposed use of general obligation bonds to improve the County's financial condition and future fiscal stability.

Brian Smith: Mr. Smith expressed his concerns with the proposed Data Center.

Administrator's Briefing: Administrator Higgs recognized Chairman Scott Biering and Councilman Phillip Taylor for their work with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources on county-related matters. He also highlighted the success of the Colleton Museum and Farmers Market during the month of April, noting strong visitor attendance and vendor participation. Administrator Higgs further announced that the Public Hearing for the Budget Ordinance, scheduled for June, will begin at **5:30 p.m.** rather than **6:00 p.m.**

Old Business

a. Second Reading of Budget Ordinance to Raise Revenue and Adopt a Budget for Operations and Debt Service for the County of Colleton, South Carolina for the Fiscal Year July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027; Authorizing Certain Carryover Funding from the Prior Budget; and Other Matters Relating Thereto: Councilman Taylor made a motion to approve the 2nd Reading of the Ordinance, seconded by Vice-Chairman Tripp. Administrator Higgs provided an update on the Budget. The motion carried unanimously.

New Business

a. First Reading of an Ordinance Imposing a Moratorium on the Consideration and Issuance of Special Exceptions, Conditional Use Approvals and all Other Land Use or Development Approvals for Data Centers: Councilman Taylor made a motion to approve the first reading of the Ordinance, seconded by Councilman Frank. The motion carried unanimously.

b. A Resolution Authorizing the Construction of a County Fire Station through the Use of the County as General Contractor and Authorizing the Procurement of Necessary Subcontracted Services and Materials, Not to Exceed \$425,000: Councilman Taylor made a motion to approve the Resolution, seconded by Councilman Frank. Discussion followed. The motion carried unanimously.

c. A Resolution to Appoint Members to Board, Commission, and Committee Vacancies:

Council proceeded with the appointment of members to various board, commission, and committee vacancies. Voting was conducted by secret ballot. The Clerk to Council tallied the ballots, and the results were verified by Administrator Higgs. Administrator Higgs announced the results. Based on the results, the following individuals were appointed:

Colleton County Board of Disabilities: Melody Cornelius

Colleton County Library Board of Trustees: Queenie Crawford, Celeste Stone, Lonnie David Martin

Councilman Murdaugh made a motion to accept the results and to approve the Resolution, seconded by Vice-Chairman Trippe. The motion carried unanimously.

Council Time: No comments were offered by Council members.

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

a. Receipt of Legal Advice Concerning Land Use Matters

The motion was seconded by Vice-Chairman Tripp. The motion carried unanimously. Council entered into Executive Session at 6:35 p.m.

Public Session: Councilman Frank made a motion to return to Public Session, seconded by Vice-Chairman Trippe. Council returned to Public Session at 7:15 p.m. Chairman Biering stated that no action was taken during Executive Session.


Adjournment: Councilman Frank made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Murdaugh. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.



COLLETON COUNTY COUNCIL


By: Scott Biering, Chairman

ATTEST:


Martha B. Thompson, Clerk to Council

Approved: 6/11/24

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