

## **REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

### **Tuesday, August 12, 2025, at 6:00 P.M.**

Chairman Scott Biering called the meeting to order with Council Members Bubba Trippe, Steve Murdaugh, Phillip Taylor, and Johnny Frank were in attendance.

Councilman Taylor gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **Approval of Agenda**

Councilman Murdaugh made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilman Trippe and the motion carried unanimously.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Regular Meeting, July 8, 2025

Councilman Murdaugh moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on July 8, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor and the motion carried unanimously.

Special Meeting, July 16, 2025

Councilman Murdaugh moved to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting held on July 16, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor and the motion carried unanimously.

Special Meeting, July 30, 2025

Councilman Murdaugh moved to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting held on July 30, 2025. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor and the motion carried unanimously.

#### **Awards and Recognitions**

Proclamation; Recognizing the Outstanding Service of Colleton County Fire-Rescue, Colleton County Sheriff's Office, South Carolina Highway Patrol, Other First Responders and Hospital Staff in Response to the Tragic Accident on Interstate 95.

Chairman Biering read the Proclamation; Recognizing the Outstanding Service of Colleton County Fire-Rescue, Colleton County Sheriff's Office, South Carolina Highway Patrol, Other First Responders and Hospital Staff in Response to the Tragic Accident on Interstate 95 into the record. Councilman Murdaugh made a motion to approve the proclamation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Frank and the motion carried unanimously.

Council commended the professionalism, bravery, and collaborative efforts of all agencies involved, expressing gratitude for their tireless work and dedication to the citizens of Colleton County.

#### **Appearances & Public Presentation**

## Community Innovations; Shiela Keaise; Colleton Voice-Winners

Ms. Sheila Keaise, founder of Community Innovations, introduced the organization, explaining its focus on children, teens, and adults through four pillars: health, mentoring, education, and parenting. She highlighted key programs, including "Raising Highly Capable Kids," the "Colleton Voice," the "Literary Tea with Palmetto State Authors," the "Family Fun Zone" (formerly family carnival), the "Young Authors Program," and the "CI Leadership Awards." Community Innovations also conducts "Christmas with Seniors," where they spend time with elderly individuals, and a mentoring program for young people.

Sheila Keaise introduced the 2025 Colleton Voice Winner, Miss. Jasmine Cheryl. Ms. Sheila Keaise gave a little background on Miss. Jasmine Cheryl, advising that she is 12 years old, and hails from Kenya.

Miss Jasmine Cheryl introduced herself to Council and graced the audience along with Council by singing "The Truth by Megan Woods".

Council commended Miss. Jasmine Cheryl on a job well done.

### **Public Comments (3 minutes per person/max time 20 min.)**

Frank Santorella addressed the Council and spoke about the positive impact that the power plant will have on Colleton County.

Sue Keith addressed the Council to inform them of the upcoming Legislative Delegation meeting on September 29, 2025 at the Colleton County Memorial Library.

Herbert Hires Jr. and Mrs. Devin Martin addressed the council regarding recent dog attacks on their cows, which caused significant damage to their livestock. They expressed frustration with animal control's response, stating that the officers felt their hands were tied and that little action was taken to prevent further attacks. Philip Adams and Michael Adams echoed these concerns, emphasizing the financial and emotional toll of the attacks and questioning the lack of effective enforcement of existing animal control ordinances.

Colette Bailey, a goat farmer and dog breeder, presented South Carolina ordinances related to aggressive dogs, highlighting that current laws allow for prosecution of owners with fines and jail time. Colette Bailey questioned why these laws were not being enforced, citing the recent pit bull attacks and the broader issue of dog fighting in the state. Colette also questioned whether the Sheriff's office should be handling certain types of call as opposed to Animal Services.

Councilman Murdaugh made a motion to raise a Point of Privilege, to address the immediate needs in the room. The motion was approved by Council.

Councilman Murdaugh wanted to first address the concerns over animal control. He advised that the Ordinance received by Ms. Colette Bailey is in fact a Colleton County Ordinance. Councilman Murdaugh advised the public that their message is being heard and that Councilman Trippe is having

a meeting with animal control to address the various issues. Councilman Murdaugh also reassured the public that he had full confidence that Councilman Trippe and his committee would come back to Council with good recommendations to come to a resolution.

Several members of Council provided their personal opinions on the proposed power plant project at Canadys, acknowledging the concerns of residents living near the river but also noting the positive impacts. Councilman Murdaugh emphasized the importance of the project for the county's infrastructure and growth, highlighting that while there are risks, technology like carbon mapping can help mitigate potential issues related to methane gas leaks. Councilman Murdaugh also advised that Dominion Energy and Santee Cooper shouldn't be criticized for the route they have chosen, they should be applauded, because they chose a route that specifically went around the Ace Basin. Councilman Murdaugh advised the public to always be leery of the message that is being received. Councilman Taylor concurred with Councilman Murdaugh. He also advised that Council had already expressed their consent to the project several weeks ago, and explained if something was needed in writing, then we should direct the Administrator to move forward. Councilman Trippe concurred with all of Council as well as being 100% in support of the plant coming to Colleton County. Councilman Frank advised that when the County gets power, it doesn't just come from the Canadys power plant, it comes in from Georgia and all over the place. Councilman Frank reiterated that a lot of people utilize this power and reminded the public of the tax loss the County took when the SCEG plant shut down. Councilman Biering also expressed that he would take a point of privilege as well, by concurring with everything that has been stated by Council tonight. Councilman Biering wanted to make aware that no major energy production has made an investment in this state in seven years. Councilman Biering also advised that the pipeline would run through Santee Coopers' existing right-a-ways, and that the tax revenue that can come from this is not only life-changing, but also generational changing for Colleton County.

### **Administrator's Briefing**

County Administrator Thomas Higgs gave his briefing, advising Council that both regional partners at Dominion and Santee Cooper have reached out asking for a letter of support as they work through FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission). He advised that if there was no objection from Council the County would proceed with sending the letters out

The County Administrator then addressed the recent livestock incidents, expressing condolences and detailed staff efforts to address deficiencies in Animal Services. Mr. Higgs announced an expedited Public Health and Safety Committee meeting scheduled for the following evening, August 13, 2025, at 5:30 PM to review Title Six, which covers animal control. Mr. Higgs stressed the importance of equipping staff with the necessary tools to prevent future occurrences so that Animal Services can complete the job required for the citizens of Colleton County.

### **Public Hearing**

Councilman Taylor made a motion to open Public Hearing. Councilman Murdaugh second the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Biering opened the floor for the public to speak on; Ordinance 25-O-07, Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of a Fee In Lieu of Tax and Special Source Credit Agreement by and

Between Colleton County, South Carolina and Banks Construction Company (Which was Previously Known to the County as Project Star) with respect to certain Economic Development Property in the County, Whereby Such Property will be Subject to Certain Payments in Lieu of Taxes, Including the Provision of Certain Special Source Credits; and Others Matters Related Thereto.

No Comments were received.

Councilman Taylor made a motion to close Public Hearing. Councilman Murdaugh second the motion, and the motion carried unanimously

### **Old Business**

3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Ordinance 25-O-06, To Amend Title 10 - Vehicles and Traffic, Chapter 10.04 Truck and Bus Restrictions, of the Colleton County Code of Laws to Prohibit No Through Traffic on Approved Colleton County Roads.

Councilman Trippe moved to approve 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading Ordinance 25-O-06, To Amend Title 10 - Vehicles and Traffic, Chapter 10.04 Truck and Bus Restrictions, of the Colleton County Code of Laws to Prohibit No Through Traffic on Approved Colleton County Roads. The motion was seconded by Councilman Murdaugh. The motion carried unanimously.

3<sup>rd</sup> Reading Ordinance 25-O-07, Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of a Fee In Lieu of Tax and Special Source Credit Agreement by and Between Colleton County, South Carolina and Banks Construction Company (Which was Previously Known to the County as Project Star) with respect to certain Economic Development Property in the County, Whereby Such Property will be Subject to Certain Payments in Lieu of Taxes, Including the Provision of Certain Special Source Credits; and Others Matters Related Thereto.

Councilman Murdaugh moved to approve 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading Ordinance 25-O-07, Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of a Fee In Lieu of Tax and Special Source Credit Agreement by and Between Colleton County, South Carolina and Banks Construction Company (Which was Previously Known to the County as Project Star) with respect to certain Economic Development Property in the County, Whereby Such Property will be Subject to Certain Payments in Lieu of Taxes, Including the Provision of Certain Special Source Credits; and Others Matters Related Thereto. The motion was seconded by Councilman Frank. The motion carried unanimously.

### **New Business**

Resolution 25-R-47, To Change the Regular County Council Meeting Date to the First Monday of Each Month

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 25-R-47, To Change the Regular County Council Meeting Date to the First Monday of Each Month. The motion was seconded by Councilman Trippe.

Councilman Trippe asked the Chairman to explain the change in the date. Chairman Biering explained that the change aims to increase public participation by allowing citizens to attend both city and county meetings, and to ensure public input is received before votes are cast. Chairman Biering also made an amendment to specify that the September meeting would be held on the second Monday due to Labor Day. Councilman Taylor amended his motion to include that next Council meeting to be held on the second Monday in September. The motion carries unanimously.

**Resolution 25-R-48, To Approve a Joint Use Agreement between Colleton County and the Ruffin Community Center for Recreation Improvements.**

Councilman Trippe moved to approve Resolution 25-R-48, To Approve a Joint Use Agreement between Colleton County and the Ruffin Community Center for Recreation Improvements. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution 25-R-49, To Approve a Joint Use Agreement between Colleton County and the Cottageville Community Center for Recreation Improvements**

Councilman Trippe moved to approve Resolution 25-R-49, To Approve a Joint Use Agreement between Colleton County and the Cottageville Community Center for Recreation Improvements. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution 25-R-50, To Declare Surplus Equipment and to Authorize the Sale in Accordance with County Policy.**

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 25-R-50, To Declare Surplus Equipment and to Authorize the Sale in Accordance with County Policy. The motion was seconded by Councilman Trippe. The motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution 25-R-51, To Approve the Purchase of a 2026 Kenworth Roll-Off Container Truck for the Solid Waste C&D Landfill.**

Councilman Frank moved to approve Resolution 25-R-51, To Approve the Purchase of a 2026 Kenworth Roll-Off Container Truck for the Solid Waste C&D Landfill. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution 25-R-52, To Approve Appointment to the Lowcountry Workforce Board**

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 25-R-52, To Approve Appointment to the Lowcountry Workforce Board for member Kimberly Alexander. The motion was seconded by Councilman Murdaugh. The motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution 25-R-53, To Authorize Acceptance and Budgeting of Various Grants for FY 25-26**

Councilman Trippe moved to approve Resolution 25-R-53, To Authorize Acceptance and Budgeting of Various Grants for FY 25-26. The motion was seconded by Councilman Taylor. The motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 25-R-54, To Authorize the Acceptance and Budgeting of Funds for the School Resource Officer Grant Received for FY 25-26 by the Colleton County Sheriff's Office

Councilman Taylor moved to approve Resolution 25-R-54, To Authorize the Acceptance and Budgeting of Funds for the School Resource Officer Grant Received for FY 25-26 by the Colleton County Sheriff's Office. The motion was seconded by Councilman Trippe. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Murdaugh provided his objection to the County paying for a Resource Office at the new Charter School. Councilman Murdaugh advised that the Charter School should be responsible for providing their own Resource Officer just like the private schools have to provide.

Councilman Frank wanted clarification from the County Administrator if the Grant provided a match by the County. County Administrator advised that no match was required.

#### **Items for Information and Public Record**

Councilman Biering advised there were no items for information and public record on the agenda.

#### **Council Time**

Councilman Frank addressed the need for public education, whether it be the positive or negative aspects of the Canadys plant. County Administrator addressed Council advising that the County is currently working with Santee Cooper, Dominion and the pipeline company and will be working closely with the delegation to make sure the public is fully informed. Councilman Trippe invited all to the Emergency Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting that is being held on August 13th at 5:30pm. Councilman Murdaugh wanted to clarify that not all members of Council would be present at that meeting due to the structure of the meeting and how they are designed to only have three members of Council on each. Councilman Murdaugh advised that he was not on that committee, but that Councilman Trippe would bring all information back to the full Council for discussion.

#### **Executive Session**

Councilman Frank made a motion to move into Executive Session to discuss the following: Matters Concerning Economic Development in relation to Project Fanatic, Project Craft, Project Badger, Project Quail, and FILOT Fees; along with Personnel and Contractual Matter related to the Office of County Administrator. Councilman Murdaugh seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Frank made a motion to exit Executive Session. Councilman Murdaugh seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

**Items discussed in Executive Session**

Economic Development Project Manager Donna Lamb appeared before Council to discuss matters concerning Economic Development.

Councilman Biering advised that no other action was taken during Executive Session

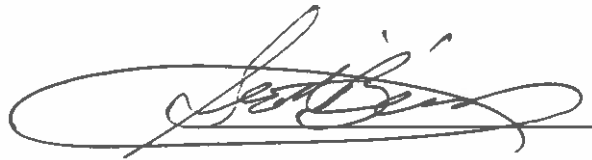
**Adjournment**

Councilman Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Trippe seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously

The full County Council meeting is available at the link below:

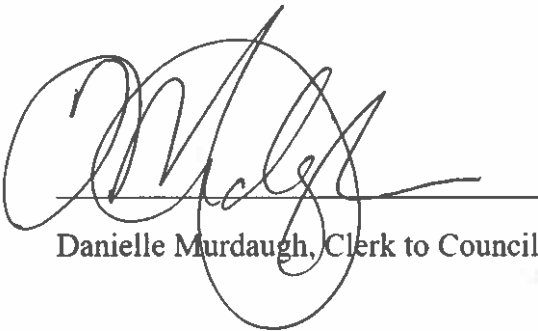
<https://www.youtube.com/live/aeAd3dmB4k0?si=4BxX5q5x5KK67IIB>

This 12th day of August 2025.



Scott Biering, Chairman

ATTEST:



Danielle Murdaugh, Clerk to Council