



COLLETON COUNTY COUNCIL
Public Health and Safety Committee Meeting
Tuesday, August 13, 2025, at 5:30 P.M.

MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chairman Bubba Trippe called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for being in attendance.

2. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance

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

3. Roll Call Committee Members

Council Members Scott Biering and Phillip Taylor were in attendance with Chairman Bubba Trippe.

4. Approval of Agenda

Councilman Taylor made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Councilman Biering, and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Citizen Comment Period*

Mark Filion addressed the ongoing animal problem in Colleton County, emphasizing that Animal Services' hands are tied due to current regulations. He stated that the core issue is not with the animals or Animal Service, but with irresponsible owners, citing a case involving Adams's cows where ownership was disputed. Filion advocated for solutions like registering and microchipping animals to definitively link them to owners, thereby enforcing accountability.

Kay Herndon presented the severe financial impact on the Adams family, whose cattle were mauled, noting their significant monetary investment in the animals. She highlighted that the damaged cattle, some of which had lost ears and suffered utter injuries, would be difficult to sell at their original value, resulting in estimated losses of \$8,000 to \$10,000. Murdaugh questioned why existing laws, if present, were not being utilized to prevent such incidents and support affected owners.

6. Discussion of Colleton County Ordinance Title 6, Chapter 6.04 "Animal Care and Control Regulations"

The Committee expressed empathy for those affected by the animal attacks, acknowledging the distress caused by property and animal loss. They emphasized the importance of consulting experts and staff trained in relevant fields for policy development, rather than relying on

informal opinions. Council conveyed their hope that the county administrator would share insights to help the committee find a respectful and effective path forward for all involved.


County Administrator Thomas Higgs advised that his team met with Animals Services today to go over the changes that would need to be implemented and what that would look like going forward. Mr. Higgs emphasized the importance of accountability and transparency within Animal Service operations, stating that new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) amendments will make these a reality. Mr. Higgs also highlighted the implementation of a report system for every call, similar to police reports, to enhance accountability and follow-up, and mentioned the continued use of body cameras as a significant tool. He also recommended improving pet ownership accountability through measures like microchipping or documentation to help track dog owners, as current difficulties in identifying owners hinder proper law enforcement. Mr. Higgs addressed concerns about the safety of animal control officers, noting that they do not fall under the Sheriff's office and lack law enforcement powers, such as NCIC data, which compromises their safety when responding to unknown situations.

Councilman Taylor suggested taking some of these issues to the South Carolina Association of Counties to seek state-level policy positions, including potential certification or NCIC access, to empower animal control officers.

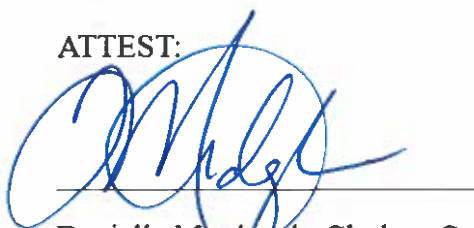
7. Adjournment

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

This 13th day of August, 2025.


Bubba Trippe, Chairman

ATTEST:



Danielle Murdaugh, Clerk to Council