



**REGULAR MEETING OF FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
MONDAY, MAY 12, 2025 – 1:00 P.M.  
CITY CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
324 WEST EVANS STREET  
FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mayor Lethonia Barnes, Mayor Pro Tempore George Jebaily, Councilman Chaquez T. McCall, Councilman Bryan A. Braddock, Councilwoman LaShonda NeSmith-Jackson, Councilman J. Lawrence Smith, II and Councilman Zach McKay

**ALSO PRESENT**

Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager; Mr. Ronald Scott, City Attorney; Mrs. Casey Moore, Municipal Clerk; Mr. Clint Moore, Assistant City Manager of Development; Chief Shannon Tanner, Florence Fire Department; Chief Allen Heidler, Florence Police Department; Mr. Michael Hemingway, Director of Utility Planning and Economic Development; Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning; Mr. Adam Swindler, Director of Public Works; Mrs. Jennifer Krawiec, Director of Human Resources; Mrs. Amanda Pope, Director of Marketing/Communications and Municipal Services; Mr. Joshua Whittington, Director of Utilities; Mrs. Victoria Nash, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Sports Tourism; Mr. Glenn Bodenheimer, Interim Finance Director and Ms. Patrice Rankin, Administrative Coordinator

**MEDIA PRESENT**

Abby Ann Ramsey with the Post and Courier and Taylor Ford with the Florence Morning News were present for the meeting.

Notices of this regular meeting of City Council were provided to the media and individuals requesting a copy of the agenda informing them of the date, location, and time of the meeting.

**CALL TO ORDER**

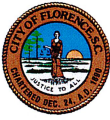
Mayor Barnes called the May 12, 2025 Regular meeting of Florence City Council to order at 1:00pm.

**INVOCATION**

Pastor Tommy Milo gave the invocation for the meeting. The pledge of allegiance to the American Flag followed the invocation.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson made a motion to adopt the minutes of the April 7, 2025 Investiture Ceremony and the minutes of the April 14, 2025 Regular Meeting and Councilman McCall seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously (7-0) adopted.



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 12, 2025**

**ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA**

Pro tem Jebailly made a motion to add Bill No. 2025-22 and Resolution No. 2025-17 to the May 12, 2025 regular meeting agenda and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion. These items were added to the agenda by unanimous vote (7-0).

**SERVICE RECOGNITIONS**

Mr. Allen Heidler, Police Chief, recognized Steven Martin for 10 years of service with the Florence Police Department.

Mr. Allen Heidler, Police Chief, recognized Martin Dickerson for 10 years of service with the Florence Police Department.

**SPRING 2025 CITY UNIVERSITY GRADUATION**

Mrs. Amanda Pope, Director of Marketing/Communications and Municipal Services and Mayor Barnes presented the Spring 2025 City University participants with their certificates of completion. Mrs. Pope said this is the third year and the fifth graduation class for City University. City University was established in 2023 and is held in the spring and fall of each year. Each session lasts seven weeks and is held once a week. Participants have the opportunity to learn about city operations and visit different city facilities.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**A public hearing will be held to receive input on the City of Florence Fiscal Year budget 2024-2025.**

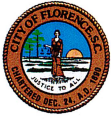
Mayor Barnes opened the public hearing at 1:26pm.

Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager, presented a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 totaling \$145,011,050. The budget reflects the City's commitment to financial responsibility, transparency, and alignment with Council's strategic priorities, while addressing ongoing challenges related to revenue shifts and state and federal legislative impacts. Notable budget items include: a proposed 7.5 millage increase; 30 FLOCK cameras; a new police K-9; Mobile data terminals for police; a downtown police officer; Sports complex upgrades; funding for a water leak crew and support for water quality improvements.

Mr. Glenn Bodenheimer, Interim Finance Director, explained that the 7.5 mill increase, up from an initial proposal of 5 mills, will generate approximately \$529,000 in additional property tax revenue, primarily designated for the new FLOCK cameras. The City's proposed operating millage would increase to 71.6 mills, with debt service remaining at 4 mills, resulting in a total tax levy of 75.6 mills.

Pro tem Jebailly confirmed with Mr. Bodenheimer that the 7.5 mill increase is included in the total budget amount.

Mr. Chris Handley, representing Helping Florence Flourish, acknowledged a \$10,000 allocation in the proposed budget and shared a handout outlining the organization's services, including home repair assistance. He expressed appreciation and noted that additional support would be beneficial for ongoing community repair efforts.



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 12, 2025**

Ms. Linda Johnson, representing Meals on Wheels, shared that the organization has increased its service from 150 to 220 homebound seniors aged 60 and over. She expressed appreciation for the City's past support and requested that funding be continued and increased to meet the growing demand.

Mayor Barnes closed the public hearing at 1:31pm.

**A public hearing will be held to receive input on the allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds awarded from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.**

Mayor Barnes opened the public hearing at 1:33pm.

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Planning Director, stated that the exact amount of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding is expected to be announced on May 14, 2025. However, he noted that ongoing federal budget discussions could potentially reduce or eliminate this funding. Despite the uncertainty, the City is proceeding with planning efforts and anticipates receiving a confirmed amount on the scheduled date. CDBG funds are used to support initiatives within the City's designated CDBG target areas. To qualify for funding, a project must meet one of the following three national objectives: benefit low and moderate income (LMI) persons; aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight; and meet a need having a particular urgency. For Fiscal Year 2024-2025, the City's CDBG allocation was \$325,064.

There being no one signed up to speak, the public hearing was closed at 1:35pm.

**ORDINANCES IN POSITION**

**Bill No. 2025-08 – Second Reading**

**An Ordinance to adopt the updated Downtown Design Standards for the City of Florence.**

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson made a motion to adopt Bill No. 2025-08 on second reading and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Council voted (6-1) in favor of the motion, with Councilman McCall voting against. Bill No. 2025-08 was adopted.

**Bill No. 2025-14 – Second Reading**

**An Ordinance to amend the Unified Development Ordinance regarding setbacks for communication towers.**

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson made a motion to adopt Bill No. 2025-14 on second reading and Councilman Braddock seconded the motion.

Pro tem Jebaily asked if the amendment included the exceptions for utility companies. Mr. Dudley responded yes and read the amendment in its entirety.

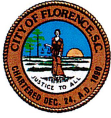
Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-14 was adopted.

**Bill No. 2025-15 – Second Reading**

**An Ordinance to amend the Summersett Acres Planned Development on Jefferson Drive.**

Councilman McCall made a motion to adopt Bill No. 2025-15 on second reading and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion.





**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 12, 2025**

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-15 was adopted.

**Bill No. 2025-16 – Second Reading**

**An Ordinance to annex and zone NC-6.2 the property located at 1006 West Marion Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90060-13-005.**

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to adopt Bill No. 2025-16 on second reading and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-16 was adopted.

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES**

**Bill No. 2025-17 – First Reading**

**An Ordinance to raise revenue and adopt a budget for the City of Florence, South Carolina, for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026.**

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to pass Bill No. 2025-17 on first reading and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Mr. Glenn Bodenheimer, Interim Finance Director, presented the proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget totaling \$145,011,050. Initial requests exceeded projected revenues by approximately \$6.5 million. The shortfall was addressed through a proposed 7.5 mill increase (raising approximately \$1.75 million); attrition savings and extended hiring timelines; operational and capital funding adjustments and use of approximately \$1.1 million from the 30% extra fund balance for early capital purchases

The City of Florence will maintain the fourth-lowest gross millage in the state and the second-lowest effective millage, at 26.5 mills. Mr. Bodenheimer also highlighted the general fund's total revenues and expenditures, community programs funding, hospitality fund expenditures, and the water and sewer utilities enterprise fund.

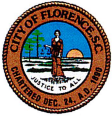
Councilman Braddock said he supported the increase from 5 mills to 7.5 mills to fund additional FLOCK camera. He noted state appropriation cuts impacted funding for public safety and asked Chief Heidler to share the success of the FLOCK cameras. Chief Heidler confirmed that FLOCK cameras were installed throughout the city between March and July 2024. Between July 2024–March 2025, the cameras helped locate fugitives, stolen vehicles, missing persons, and solve over 120 crimes. Initial funding for the cameras, approximately \$400,000 came from state appropriations through Senator Mike Reichenbach.

Mr. Davis confirmed the City requested \$16 million in state funds for public safety and utilities, which is no longer available due to the state cutting all appropriations. Some needs will now be funded through the proposed millage increase.

Councilman Braddock emphasized the state's funding cuts leave cities responsible for filling the gap.

Councilman McCall asked about the maximum millage allowed. Mr. Bodenheimer explained the maximum allowable is 11.7 mills, based on a three-year look-back. The proposed 7.5 mill increase preserves future flexibility. A lower increase, such as 5 mills, would have resulted in lost millage capacity.





**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 12, 2025**

Councilman Smith confirmed with Mr. Bodenheimer that the City of Florence would remain one of the lowest-millage municipalities, even with the increase.

Pro tem Jebaily asked Mr. Davis to explain the purpose of the proposed berm at the Sports Complex. Mr. Davis said the Sports Complex has experienced gunfire from adjacent County properties during baseball games. In response, a 10-foot berm with vegetation is planned to provide protection. The berm will cost \$150,000–\$200,000, and installation is expected to begin within two weeks. Pro tem Jebaily also asked if FLOCK cameras could be placed in high-crime areas outside city limits. Chief Heidler responded that some border areas fall within city jurisdiction, allowing camera placement. New cameras will also include mobile units. Chief Heidler noted that the County currently has about 18 FLOCK cameras spread across Florence County.

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson inquired whether the County would use its own cameras or would the City's cameras only be utilized. Chief Heidler wasn't certain but noted that the County had also anticipated state appropriations that are no longer available. When she asked if the shootings happened in County areas, Chief Heidler confirmed that recent shooting incidents occurred in County areas, though some adjacent areas are within city limits.

Councilman Smith asked about the projected completion date for the berm. Mrs. Victoria Nash, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, estimated it would take about four weeks to complete.

Mayor Barnes reiterated Council's commitment to reducing crime and support for the FLOCK cameras. She urged community members to seek peaceful solutions to conflict.

Mr. Davis thanked staff for their dedication and teamwork in presenting a balanced budget.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-17 was passed on first reading.

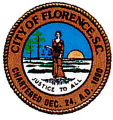
**Bill No. 2025-18 – First Reading**

**An Ordinance to amend the budget for Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025.**

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to pass Bill No. 2025-18 on first reading and Councilman McCall seconded the motion.

Mr. Glenn Bodenheimer, Interim Finance Director, explained that, as previously noted, capital asset items were removed from the upcoming budget to be purchased instead through an early purchase ordinance. The City of Florence follows a fund balance policy that designates 30% of the fund balance as unable to be spent each fiscal year. This reserve allows the City to continue operating for approximately three months in the event of an emergency or disruption in cash flow, without halting essential services. The proposed ordinance recommends using the excess fund balance to make certain capital purchases planned for the next fiscal year during the current fiscal year instead. By making these purchases early, the City was able to balance the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget. It also allows staff to begin reaching out to vendors for quotes sooner. Given the current economic uncertainty, the City believes that securing these capital assets earlier could result in better pricing and cost savings. The total amount allocated for these early capital purchases is \$1,111,600.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-18 was passed on first reading.



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 12, 2025**

**Bill No. 2025-19 – First Reading**

**An Ordinance to amend the Unified Development Ordinance regarding cemetery preservation.**

Councilman Smith made a motion to pass Bill No. 2025-19 on first reading and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion.

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Planning Director, explained that the proposed amendment pertains to the presence of graves or cemeteries on properties slated for development. As the City's boundaries continue to expand, many new subdivisions are being built on land that may include old family burial plots or neglected cemeteries of which have fallen into disrepair or are potentially abandoned. Mr. Dudley noted that a current moratorium is in place for developments where cemeteries are suspected, and this amendment aims to address that issue. The proposed amendment would be added to the City's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and apply to graves, cemeteries, graveyards, and similar sites. It would require that the presence and boundaries of any such sites be verified by a professional archaeologist hired by the applicant or by other methods approved by the Planning Director. The archaeologist or qualified professional would be responsible for identifying the approximate boundaries of the cemetery and providing historical context. Their final report must include all relevant documentation such as maps showing the location and orientation of graves, the cemetery's position in relation to known landmarks, a description of the fieldwork and research methods used, and coordinates of the boundary aligned with the South Carolina 83 State Plan Coordinate system. Mr. Dudley also reviewed the specific survey requirements outlined in the amendment. Planning Commission voted (6-1) to recommend this proposed amendment.

Councilman Braddock asked whether the property could be made exempt from taxes. Mr. Dudley responded that he was unsure and would follow up with the County for clarification. Councilman Braddock also inquired whether the cost of the required survey would vary based on the size of the property, to which Mr. Dudley confirmed that both the size of the area and the cemetery itself would affect the cost.

Councilman Smith asked who would be responsible for maintaining the cemetery, and Mr. Dudley clarified that maintenance would be the responsibility of the cemetery owner.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-19 was passed on first reading.

**Bill No. 2025-20 – First Reading**

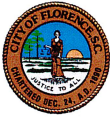
**An Ordinance to rezone 1203 Sopkin Avenue from CA to NC-6.1.**

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson made a motion to pass Bill No. 2025-20 on first reading and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Planning Director, explained that the property was formerly the site of a church, which is why it is currently zoned as Campus District. It has since been converted into a privately owned event and community center. The current owner is requesting that the zoning be changed to Neighborhood Conservation 6.1, a designation that permits only single-family detached homes. The owner is considering subdividing the existing structure and notes there is sufficient space on the parcel to accommodate an additional small home. Planning Commission voted unanimously (8-0) to recommend this rezoning request.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-20 was passed on first reading.





**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 12, 2025**

**Bill No. 2025-21 – First Reading**

**An Ordinance to annex and zone NC-6.3 1.467 acres of the lot located at Toscana Drive, a portion of Florence County Tax Map Number 00100-01-101.**

Councilman Braddock made a motion to pass Bill No. 2025-21 on first reading and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning, reported that a 1.467-acre unzoned county parcel, part of a commercial property, is proposed for annexation into the city and rezoning to Neighborhood Conservation 6.3 (NC-6.3), allowing residential development including townhomes. While the applicant plans townhomes, all NC-6.3 uses would be permitted. Local residents oppose the plan, citing concerns about property values, traffic, safety, and the proposed density compared to the neighboring single-family Villa Toscana development. Planning Commission initially deferred the request on March 11, 2025, but later voted (4-2) to recommend the annexation and zoning request on April 8, 2025.

Mayor Barnes inquired whether townhomes could be built on the currently unzoned property. Mr. Dudley clarified that townhomes are not permitted under the county's unzoned designation, though multifamily, commercial, and industrial uses are allowed.

Councilman Braddock mentioned that some concerns from Villa Toscana residents might be mitigated by creating a private gated community. He also noted that, under current county zoning, something such as a mobile home park could potentially be developed on the site.

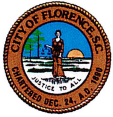
Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson asked about the remaining 3 acres of the property not included in the annexation. Mr. Dudley explained that while the entire parcel is unzoned, only the 1.467 acres proposed for annexation is undeveloped; the rest is already developed commercially.

Councilman McKay asked if the same person owns both the parcel in question and the nearby strip mall. Mr. Dudley said they are owned separately, but the applicant has an option to purchase the undeveloped parcel. Councilman McKay also asked about traffic mitigation, such as speed bumps. Mr. Dudley said the development's 25-unit size wouldn't trigger a traffic study but suggested that staff could discuss traffic-calming measures like speed bumps with the developer.

Mr. Kent Wenzl, President of the Villa Toscana Homeowners Association, spoke in opposition to the zoning request. He emphasized that Villa Toscana is surrounded by residential areas, with only one commercial property near its entrance, and noted that the neighborhood has maintained the right-of-way along Toscana Drive for over 20 years. Wenzl expressed concern that introducing rental units would alter the community's character. While the idea of converting the neighborhood into a private community has been considered, the HOA lacks the funds to maintain the streets. He acknowledged that residents had the opportunity to voice their concerns at the Planning Commission and suggested that rezoning the property for commercial use, rather than residential, might better address traffic issues.

Councilman Braddock explained that the city does not control how a property is annexed; the process is initiated by the property owner. If the zoning designation is altered, the applicant could withdraw the request. He advised the Villa Toscana neighborhood to consider reallocating funds for future road maintenance and cautioned that if the property remains unzoned in the county, a different type of development, not necessarily townhomes, could still be built.

Ms. Gloria Lussier, a Villa Toscana resident, opposed the zoning request, expressing concern that rental units would lack a vested interest in the community.



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 12, 2025**

Councilman Braddock spoke in favor of property owner rights, saying that the applicant is entitled to decide how to use the property. He suggested the neighborhood could consider purchasing the land or becoming a private gated community but emphasized that since they don't own the property, they cannot dictate its use.

Pro tem Jebaily asked whether the NC-6.3 zoning requires townhomes or single-family homes to be individually owned or if apartments or rental units are allowed. Mr. Dudley explained that while townhomes must demonstrate they can be subdivided for individual ownership, the city code does not require this subdivision to happen. The city cannot control whether units are rented or owned but can regulate how parcels are divided. Pro tem Jebaily clarified that approval of the request does not guarantee individual ownership of townhomes, meaning one owner could rent out all units. He expressed concern about spot zoning, as the proposed multifamily development differs from the surrounding single-family homes. He noted past council denials of similar requests and said he is opposed to supporting the request due to spot zoning.

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson concurred with Pro tem Jebaily and spoke in opposition of the request.

Councilman Smith asked what uses are allowed under NC-6.3 zoning. Mr. Dudley explained it permits various housing types, including single-family attached and detached homes, as well as multifamily units like duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes. Councilman Smith also clarified that the property below is commercially developed but unzoned in the county.

Councilman McCall acknowledged the city's growth and expressed concern about the "not in our backyard" argument often voiced against new residential developments. He feels the city has missed development opportunities and wants to balance neighborhood interests with property rights to avoid hindering progress.

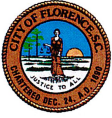
Ms. Lussier responded that the neighborhood's opposition isn't "not in our backyard" but concerns over the density of 26 homes on 1.4 acres and the fact they would be rental units. She noted the HOA has recently prohibited future rentals, citing that rental properties have caused about 90% of neighborhood issues. She argued the proposed development would change the community's character.

Another resident spoke against the zoning request, noting that the community shared their concerns at the Planning Commission. He emphasized that residents have maintained the right-of-way at the neighborhood entrance and off Old Ebenezer Road, pointing to a sketch showing these entrances and a brick wall they maintain. He mentioned the sketch omits a third entrance that would lead to the proposed development. While acknowledging surrounding growth, he expressed worry about increased traffic.

Mayor Barnes asked Mr. Dudley again for the recommendation from Planning Commission. Mr. Dudley said Planning Commission voted (4-2) to recommend the annexation and zoning request.

Pro tem Jebaily asked Mr. Dudley about easements related to the community's concern over the brick wall at the neighborhood entrance. Mr. Dudley explained that the neighborhood was developed in phases, and since 2005 and 2008, all neighborhood streets, including those leading to Palmetto Street and Old Ebenezer Road, have been conveyed to the City as public rights-of-way. The City controls ingress and egress permits. Pro tem Jebaily asked if an ingress/egress onto the public right-of-way is part of the annexation request, and Dudley said it would be addressed during the development approval process. The City generally grants encroachments following city and state regulations and sees no reason this development would be denied. Pro tem Jebaily confirmed that approval could impact the brick wall and require a new entrance, which Mr. Dudley agreed would be handled per city ordinances.





**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 12, 2025**

Councilman McCall asked if the developer plans to build 26 units. Mr. Dudley said it's believed to be 25 units but no full development plan has been submitted yet, so the maximum number is unconfirmed. Councilman McCall asked if the number of units could be reduced after review, and Mr. Dudley said it's possible. When asked if the City can limit units after zoning approval, Mr. Dudley said no, not under current city ordinances.

Another resident opposed the request, expressing concern about the high number of proposed units and the costly maintenance of neighborhood entryways. She noted that Rutledge Manor, a nearby neighborhood, received extra 10-foot buffer zones to prevent high-density development and suggested the same buffer be applied along Villa Toscana's and the Reserves' property lines to reduce the number of units allowed.

Mayor Barnes asked Mr. Dudley if the Council could impose such buffer zones and how that would work. Mr. Dudley responded that if NC-6.3 zoning is approved, the development must follow the city's Unified Development Ordinance standards, and the Council does not have authority to add special requirements. He added that a 10-foot buffer is already required for the proposed townhome development.

Pro tem Jebaily asked if there is an alternative zoning designation. Mr. Dudley said NC-6.3 is the only zoning designation that allows townhomes.

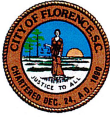
Councilman Braddock pointed out that concerns focus on what the developer can do, not what the neighborhood could do, reiterating the option for the neighborhood to become a private community. He agreed with Councilman McCall that by not being proactive, the neighborhood risks allowing affordable homes it might not want. He suggested residents mitigate concerns on their end.

Councilman Smith asked if further discussion could occur at second reading, and Mr. Davis confirmed it could. Mayor Barnes noted any further talks should happen between the neighborhood and the developer. Councilman Smith asked if such discussions have taken place. Mr. Dudley said the Planning Commission initially deferred to allow discussion, but wasn't sure if it occurred. Mr. Wenzl confirmed a discussion happened. He asked the developer about building single-family homes, but the developer said only 5 or 6 would be possible, which wasn't viable. The developer also offered to maintain the east side of Toscana Drive, about 800 feet. Mr. Wenzl noted the developer has not yet purchased the property.

Mayor Barnes said a meeting with the developer could be arranged between first and second readings to discuss possible concessions, or Council could vote today.

Pro tem Jebaily expressed concern over the lack of alternative zoning options, doubting that discussions with the developer would lead to meaningful changes. Mr. Dudley added that any zoning change requires the applicant's or property owner's approval, and city code mandates the city take action on the request rather than deferring it without their consent.

Council voted (5-2) in favor of the motion, with Pro tem Jebaily and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson voting against the motion and Mayor Barnes, Councilman McKay, Councilman Smith, Councilman Braddock and Councilman McCall voting in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-21 was passed on first reading.



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 12, 2025**

**Bill No. 2025-22 – First Reading**

**An Ordinance to remove the language of “returns” as identified in SC Act 176 as adopted by the City of Florence in Ordinance No. 2023-37.**

Mayor Barnes said Mr. Joe McMillan signed up to speak on this item. Mr. McMillan spoke in favor of removing the language of “returns” in Ordinance No. 2023-37 and expressed how it would be beneficial for numerous small businesses.

Mayor Barnes said this item will be discussed in Executive Session. There being no objection, this item was discussed in Executive Session.

**INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS**

**Resolution No. 2025-12**

**A Resolution to adopt the Community Development Block Grant Budget for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.**

Mayor Barnes said without objection, this item will be deferred. Without objection, this item will be deferred.

**Resolution No. 2025-15**

**A Resolution to name the amphitheater located in the Florence Veterans Park after Colonel Barry Wingard.**

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2025-15 and Councilman McCall seconded the motion.

Mayor Barnes and Pro tem Jebaily presented the Resolution to the family of Colonel Barry Wingard. The Wingard Family thanked Council for the recognition.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2025-15 was passed.

**Resolution No. 2025-16**

**A Resolution of City Council approving Downtown Redevelopment Grants for Fourth Quarter.**

Mayor Barnes said this item may be discussed in Executive Session. Without objection, this item will be discussed in Executive Session.

**Resolution No. 2025-17**

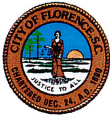
**A Resolution to proclaim May 2025 as Lupus Awareness Month in the City of Florence.**

Councilman McCall made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2025-17 and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion.

Mayor Barnes, Councilman McCall and Councilman Smith presented the Resolution to Rosalind Davis. Ms. Davis thanked Council for the recognition.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2025-17 was passed.





**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 12, 2025**

**REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**Appointments to Boards and Commissions**

Mayor Barnes said this item may be discussed in Executive Session. Without objection, this item will be discussed in Executive Session.

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager, announced that the Wetting Down Ceremony for the new fire apparatus is scheduled for May 21st at 2:00pm. at Fire Station #6. The \$1.2 million in funding for the apparatus was provided by the state. He also noted that the Line Drive Concert Series will take place on May 17<sup>th</sup> at Carolina Bank Field. Additionally, Mr. Davis informed Council that the City will no longer require tax returns be submitted for business license renewals.

**MAYORAL REPORT**

Mayor Barnes spoke on the state and federal grant funding cuts. She expressed her disappointment with state appropriations not being approved and said she hopes that the state legislation will reconsider their decision to not include appropriations for the upcoming fiscal year. Mayor Barnes also spoke on Council's commitment to crime prevention. She urged the community to seek alternate ways to resolve conflicts. Mayor Barnes commended city staff and Council for their hard work with the budget process and addressing infrastructure needs.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Business Development Committee, Chaired by Pro tem Jebaily**

Pro tem Jebaily said the committee received an update regarding Project Urban Square. The committee also received an update from AECOM regarding the city's sewer master plan. Pro tem Jebaily said it's his understanding that all of the city's master plans will be reviewed with Council. Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager, responded yes; all of the city's master plans will be reviewed at a future work session. Pro tem Jebaily expressed his excitement with the city's finalized master plans to address infrastructure needs. Pro tem Jebaily acknowledged Councilman Braddock's resignation from the committee and thanked him for his service to the Business Development Committee.

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to appoint Councilman McKay to the Business Development Committee and Councilman Braddock seconded the motion.

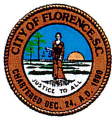
Councilman McCall asked if "action can be taken" must be noted on the agenda in order to vote for a committee appointment. Mr. Ron Scott, City Attorney, said it can be noted but a vote can still occur if it is not.

The motion carried unanimously (7-0).

Councilman McKay was appointed to the Business Development Committee.

**Community Development Committee, Chaired by Mayor Barnes**

Mayor Barnes said there is no report at this time.



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 12, 2025**

**Finance, Audit and Budget Committee, Chaired by Councilman McCall**

Councilman McCall said the committee reviewed the financial statements for February 2025. The committee received a budget overview and discussed community programs funding. Also discussed was the early purchases ordinance and Councilman Braddock expressed his concerns regarding SC Act 176 to the committee.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mayor Barnes said Council will be entering into Executive Session for a discussion on downtown redevelopment grants as outlined in Resolution No. 2025-15, for a discussion regarding appointments to Boards and Commissions, for a discussion of the redevelopment of a property located in the downtown central overlay district and to receive legal advice on Bill No. 2025-22.

Councilman McCall made a motion to enter into Executive Session and Councilman Smith seconded the motion. Council voted unanimously (7-0) to enter into Executive Session at 3:27pm.

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson made a motion to resume open session and Councilman McKay seconded the motion. The motion carried. Council resumed open session at 4:43pm and took action on the following items:

**Resolution No. 2025-16**

**A Resolution of City Council approving Downtown Redevelopment Grants for Fourth Quarter.**

Pro tem Jebailly made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2025-16 and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2025-16 was passed.

**Bill No. 2025-22 – First Reading**

**An Ordinance to remove the language of “returns” as identified in SC Act 176 as adopted by the City of Florence in Ordinance No. 2023-37.**

Councilman Braddock made a motion to propose an ordinance to remove the language of “returns” as identified in SC Act 176 as adopted by the City of Florence in Ordinance No. 2023-37 as it applies to the process of obtaining and renewing a business license and Councilman McCall seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion.

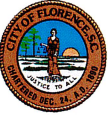
**Appointments to Boards and Commissions**

Mr. Davis presented the packet of appointments to Boards and Commissions to Council.

**Planning Commission**

Councilman McKay made a motion to reappoint Charlie Abbott to Planning Commission and the motion carried unanimously. Charlie Abbott was reappointed to Planning Commission for a term to begin immediately and expire on June 30, 2027.





**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING – MAY 12, 2025**

**Civic Center Commission**

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson deferred her nomination to the Board.

**Design Review Board**

Councilman McCall deferred his nomination to the Board.

Councilman McKay deferred his nomination to the Board.

**Construction and Maintenance Board of Adjustments and Appeals**

Mayor Barnes deferred all nominations to the Board.

**Veterans Park Committee**

Councilman McKay deferred his nomination to the Board.


**Resilience and Sustainability Advisory Committee**

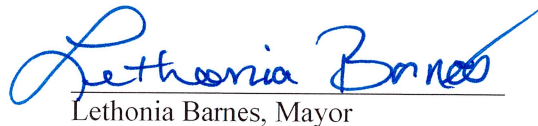
Councilman McKay deferred his nomination to the Board.

**ADJOURN**

Without objection, the May 12, 2025 Regular meeting of City Council was adjourned at 4:47pm.

Dated this 9<sup>th</sup> day of June 2025.

  
Casey C. Moore, Municipal Clerk

  
Lethonia Barnes, Mayor