



**REGULAR MEETING OF FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL  
MONDAY, JUNE 9, 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 Chaequez 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, Curtis Graham with WBTW News 13 and Tonya Brown with WPDE News Channel 15 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**

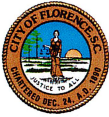
Mayor Barnes called the June 9, 2025 Regular meeting of Florence City Council to order at 1:00pm.

**INVOCATION**

Mayor Barnes gave the invocation for the meeting. The pledge of allegiance to the American Flag followed the invocation.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to adopt the minutes of the May 7, 2025 Budget Work Session and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously (7-0) adopted.



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Councilman Braddock made a motion to adopt the minutes of the May 12, 2025 Regular Meeting and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously (7-0) adopted.

**SERVICE RECOGNITIONS**

Mr. Allen Heidler, Police Chief, recognized Marshall McKeever for 40 years of service with the Florence Police Department.

**SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS**

**Bullard Personal Protective Equipment – To recognize the Florence Fire Department for a recent lifesaving event.**

Representatives with Bullard Personal Protective Equipment recognized the Florence Fire Department for a lifesaving event that occurred on January 30, 2025. Captain Jacob Shuler received special recognition for his efforts in saving the life of a four-year-old and was presented two awards on behalf of Bullard Personal Protective Equipment.

**Ann Huyler, South Carolina Forestry Commission – To present the 45<sup>th</sup> Tree City and 18<sup>th</sup> Growth Award.**

Mr. Adam Swindler, Director of Public Works, introduced Ms. Ann Huyler from the South Carolina Forestry Commission, who presented the City of Florence with its 45<sup>th</sup> Tree City Award and 18<sup>th</sup> Growth Award. She noted that only the City of Columbia surpasses Florence in Tree City years by one, and Florence leads the state in Growth Awards. The next closest cities in 2024 are the City of Conway with five years and the Town of Patrick. Ms. Huyler also announced a tree giveaway event on October 4<sup>th</sup> at the City Center Farmers Market and applauded the City of Florence for its commitment and dedication to urban forestry.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

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

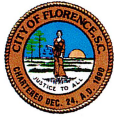
Mayor Barnes opened the public hearing at 1:42pm.

There being no one signed up to speak, the public hearing was closed at 1:43pm.

**APPEARANCES BEFORE COUNCIL**

**Shelly Williams**

Ms. Shelly Williams, a community activist and civil rights advocate, addressed the City Council to voice concerns about police conduct and city operations. She described a troubling incident on April 26, 2025, in which her son was allegedly attacked by Florence Police officers during a traffic stop. She also claimed that one officer previously followed her son home and noted that the department arrested more minorities that day than other regional law enforcement agencies combined. She called for accountability and action from Council regarding the matter. Mayor Barnes confirmed she previously met with Ms. Williams, who left that meeting early, and explained that the incident is under investigation by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division (SLED). As such, the City cannot take further action until the investigation concludes.



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**Tammy Broach**

Ms. Tammy Broach appeared before Council regarding the unsafe and unsanitary conditions of an abandoned property at 600 Ivanhoe Drive, which she said has been neglected for about eight years. While referring to the property as an eyesore, her main concerns were safety, sanitation, and the potential for homelessness or illegal activity. She noted that she and her neighbors have repeatedly reported the issue and shared photos with the Council. Ms. Broach questioned why the City hasn't coordinated with the Darlington County Sheriff's Office to serve the property owner, who lives in that county. She urged the City to enforce its property maintenance code to address the violations.

Pro tem Jebaily thanked Ms. Broach for sharing her concerns about this property and noted that derelict properties are a broader issue across the city. He highlighted the difficulty the City faces in dealing with uncooperative property owners and asked Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager to explain the City's capabilities and limitations in such cases. Mr. Davis explained that while the City has reviewed this and other vacant properties, enforcement becomes challenging when owners live outside city limits, as is the case here, with the property owner residing in Society Hill. Although the City has no jurisdiction there, an active summons has been issued and city staff is working with the Society Hill Police Department to serve it. Mr. Davis confirmed that city codes allow legal action against negligent property owners, but jurisdictional challenges remain.

Mayor Barnes concurred with Pro tem Jebaily and thanked Ms. Broach for sharing her concerns.

**ORDINANCES IN POSITION**

**Bill No. 2025-17 – Second 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 adopt Bill No. 2025-17 on second reading and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

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

**Bill No. 2025-18 – Second 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 adopt Bill No. 2025-18 on second reading and Councilman McKay seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-18 was adopted.

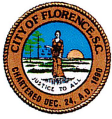
**Bill No. 2025-19 – Second Reading**

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

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

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-19 was adopted.





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**Bill No. 2025-20 – Second Reading**

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

Councilman Braddock made a motion to adopt Bill No. 2025-20 on second reading and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-20 was adopted.

**Bill No. 2025-21 – Second 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 adopt Bill No. 2025-21 on second reading and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

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 adopted.

**INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES**

**Bill No. 2025-23 – First Reading**

**An Ordinance amending the Business License Ordinance of the City of Florence, South Carolina to update documentation that may be required by the City as part of the initial registration and annual renewal of business licenses, and other matters relating thereto.**

Councilman Braddock made a motion to pass Bill No. 2025-23 on first reading and Councilman McCall seconded the motion.

Mr. Glenn Bodenheimer, Interim Finance Director, said the proposed ordinance amendment would specify that state and/or federal income tax returns are not required for the initial registration and renewal of a business license. Although the current ordinance, in line with Act 176, allows the city to request such documents, the proposed amendment would formally adopt the City Manager's current policy, which directs city staff not to request or require state and/or federal income tax returns for business licenses.

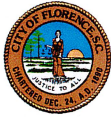
Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-23 was passed on first reading.

**Bill No. 2025-24 – First Reading**

**A Series Ordinance providing for the issuance and sale of not exceeding fifteen million one hundred thousand dollars (\$15,100,000) Hospitality Fee Revenue Bonds of the City of Florence, South Carolina to be designated Series 2025 and other matters relating thereto.**

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





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**INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS**

**Resolution No. 2025-12**

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

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2025-12 and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning, said the City received an allocation of \$344,189 for FY 2025-2026. Eligible projects must benefit low and moderate income (LMI) persons, aid in the prevention or elimination of slums and blight and meet a need having a particular urgency (referred to as urgent need). Two public hearings and community meetings were held to gather input. Based on this feedback and past program success, the proposed budget includes: \$68,837 for planning and administration, \$190,352 for emergency rehabilitation, \$60,000 for down payment assistance, and \$25,000 for My Brother's Keeper.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2025-12 was passed.

**Resolution No. 2025-18**

**A Resolution recognizing the Florence-Darlington Technical College Baseball Team for Advancing to the NJCAA Division I World Series.**

Councilman Smith acknowledged that the Florence Darlington Technical College Baseball Team was unable to attend today's meeting due to traveling from the NJCAA Division I World Series and asked for Resolution No. 2025-18 to be deferred.

Councilman NeSmith-Jackson made a motion to defer Resolution No. 2025-18 and Councilman McKay seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2025-18 was deferred.

**Resolution No. 2025-19**

**A Resolution honoring Cru Wine & Tap for their contributions to the efforts to revitalize downtown Florence.**

Councilman Smith made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2025-19 and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion.

Mayor Barnes and Councilman McCall presented the Resolution to Mr. Bryan Holt, owner of Cru Wine & Tap. Mr. Holt thanked Council for the recognition.

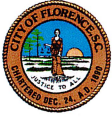
Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2025-19 was passed.

**Resolution No. 2025-20**

**A Resolution to recognize June 2025 as Homeownership Month in the City of Florence.**

Councilman McCall made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2025-20 and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Mayor Barnes presented the Resolution to Mr. Cliff McBride. Mr. McBride thanked Council for the recognition.



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Pro tem Jebaily asked Mr. McBride to speak about his organization. Mr. McBride explained that he works with South Carolina Legal Services, a statewide nonprofit law firm that assists low-income individuals with civil legal issues. His work primarily focuses on housing matters, such as evictions, foreclosures, and mobile home disputes, advocating for tenants. The organization also addresses issues related to credit, school matters, and domestic relations. Mr. McBride praised the City of Florence for its efforts in addressing housing concerns.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2025-20 was passed.

### **Resolution No. 2025-21**

**A Resolution of Recognition for Bishop Donald Jackson on the occasion of his retirement from Francis Marion University after 31 years of dedicated service.**

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2025-21 and Councilman McCall seconded the motion.

Mayor Barnes and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson presented the Resolution to Bishop Donald Jackson. Bishop Jackson thanked Council for the recognition.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2025-21 was passed.

### **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.

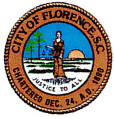
### **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager, announced that the City of Florence has been officially ranked the third best place to live in South Carolina by U.S. News & World Report. He stated that this recognition reflects the city's collective effort, vision, and commitment to creating a vibrant, welcoming, and progressive community. Mr. Davis thanked the Council for their leadership and for helping make Florence not just a great place to live, but one of the top destinations in the state.

### **MAYORAL REPORT**

Mayor Barnes shared that she, along with Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager, and Mr. Michael Hemingway, Director of Utility Planning and Economic Development, traveled to Washington, D.C. last week to meet with federal legislators and lobbyists regarding funding opportunities for the City of Florence. She noted the City was praised for its professionalism and dedication. She also thanked Councilman McKay for arranging a prior meeting with Senator Lindsey Graham, which helped prepare for the D.C. visit. Additionally, she announced a Crime Prevention and Community Development meeting with local church leaders, nonprofits, and businesses, scheduled for Monday, June 16, 2025, in Council Chambers.

Councilman Braddock highlighted the new steel sculpture fountain on Coit Street, created to honor Florence's steel industry. He noted that Florence ranks first in the nation for steel production and encouraged everyone to visit the sculpture.



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**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

Pro Tem Jebaily said the committee discussed the City's ongoing projects and noted that an updated letter was received from the STYX Company regarding the current status of Project Urban Square.

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

Mayor Barnes said the committee discussed the possibility of conducting a study on juvenile crime, as well as the idea of establishing a Youth Council.

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

Councilman McCall said the committee reviewed the Hospitality Fund projects presented to Council today. The committee also discussed the policy outlined in Bill No. 2025-23.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mayor Barnes said Council will be entering into Executive Session to receive legal advice on the issuance and sale of Hospitality Fee Revenue Bonds and for a discussion regarding appointments to city Boards and Commissions.

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to enter into Executive Session and Councilman McCall seconded the motion. Council voted unanimously (7-0) to enter into Executive Session at 2:24pm.

Councilman McCall made a motion to resume open session and Pro tem Jebaily seconded the motion. The motion carried. Council resumed open session at 2:50pm and took action on the following items:

**Bill No. 2025-24 – First Reading**

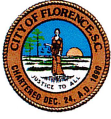
**A Series Ordinance providing for the issuance and sale of not exceeding fifteen million one hundred thousand dollars (\$15,100,000) Hospitality Fee Revenue Bonds of the City of Florence, South Carolina to be designated Series 2025 and other matters relating thereto.**

Councilman McCall made a motion to pass Bill No. 2025-24 on first reading and Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson seconded the motion.

Mr. Glenn Bodenheimer, Interim Finance Director, said the proposed ordinance sets the terms for the issuance and sale of the Hospitality Fee Revenue Bonds for the City of Florence. The bond funds would support projects discussed at the May 7, 2025 Budget Work Session to include: a new arena at Pearl Moore Basketball Center, new football fields, and new tennis courts at the Florence Tennis Center. Mr. Bodenheimer said the bond issuance is capped at \$15,100,000, though the City may not issue the full amount.

Council voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2025-24 was passed on first reading.





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**Appointments to Boards and Commissions**

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

**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 made a motion to appoint Curtis Sturgeon to the Veterans Park Committee and the motion carried unanimously. Curtis Sturgeon was appointed to the Veterans Park Committee for a term to begin immediately and expire on June 30, 2029.

**Resilience and Sustainability Advisory Committee**

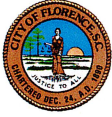
Councilman McKay made a motion to appoint William Edwards to the Resilience and Sustainability Advisory Committee and the motion carried unanimously. William Edwards was appointed to the Resilience and Sustainability Advisory Committee for a term to begin immediately and expire on June 30, 2027.

Councilman McKay made a motion to appoint Chris Cawthon to the Resilience and Sustainability Advisory Committee and the motion carried unanimously. Chris Cawthon was appointed to the Resilience and Sustainability Advisory Committee for a term to begin immediately and expire on June 30, 2027.

**Housing Authority Board of Commissioners**

Councilwoman NeSmith-Jackson made a motion to clarify and confirm that the Assisted Commissioner serving on the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, as per state law, shall not be appointed to a specific term of office but shall serve until a new appointee is named at the Mayor's discretion and Pro tem Jebailly seconded the motion.

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

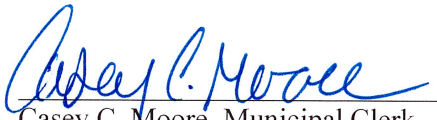


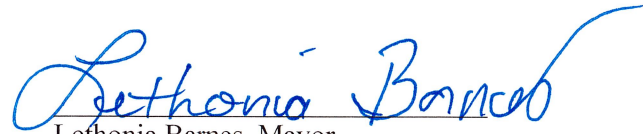
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**ADJOURN**

Without objection, the June 9, 2025 Regular meeting of City Council was adjourned at 2:57pm.

Dated this 14<sup>th</sup> day of July 2025.

  
Casey C. Moore, Municipal Clerk

  
Lethonia Barnes, Mayor