



Chester County Council Meeting

R. Carlisle Roddey Government Building
1476 J A Cochran Bypass | Chester, SC 29706
Monday, April 21, 2025 | 6:00 PM

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Pete Wilson, Vice Chair Erin Mosley, Councilman Bobby Raines, Councilman Corey Guy, Councilman John Agee, County Administrator Brian Hester, County Attorney Nicole Workman, Clerk to Council Kristie Donaldson

Absent: Councilman William Killian and Councilman Mike Vaughn

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:02pm and declared a quorum of council present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

The allegiance was recited and invocation given by Councilman Guy.

Chairman Wilson stated that we needed to add the Needs Assessment Public Hearing to the agenda. Vice Chair Mosley motioned to add, seconded by Councilman Raines. Vote 5-0 to add.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) April 7, 2025 County Council Meeting

Councilman Guy motioned to approve, seconded by Councilman Raines. Vote 5-0 to approve.

b) April 14, 2025 Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes

Councilman Raines motioned to approve, seconded by Councilman Guy. Vote 5-0 to approve.

4. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

Mary Robinson of 628 Lancaster Hwy. Apt 319 addressed Council asking for donations toward building new schools in Chester County.

Major Brad Whitesides with Chester County Sheriff's Office addressed Council praising the hard work of the first responders during the recent school bus accident that happened on I-77 on Thursday, April 17, 2025.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

Chairman Wilson opened the public hearing and stated that no one had signed up to speak. He then offered for anyone present to speak, no one wished to speak. Chairman Wilson closed the public hearing.

a) Ordinance 2025-10 To amend Chapter 2 – Article VI- Boards, Committees, Commissions and Districts, Division 1. Generally- Section 2-266- Boards and Commissions appointed by Council; residency; vacancy; quorum; compensation by providing for revisions of the membership and operation of boards and commissions; and Section 2-267- Personnel handbook, of the Code of Ordinances of Chester County, South Carolina to amend the ordinance numbering for Section 2-267; and to provide for other related matters.

b) *Needs Assessment Public Hearing

6. ORDINANCES | RESOLUTIONS | PROCLAMATIONS

- a) 2nd Reading Ordinance 2025-10 To amend Chapter 2 – Article VI- Boards, Committees, Commissions and Districts, Division 1. Generally- Section 2-266- Boards and Commissions appointed by Council; residency; vacancy; quorum; compensation by providing for revisions of the membership and operation of boards and commissions; and Section 2-267- Personnel handbook, of the Code of Ordinances of Chester County, South Carolina to amend the ordinance numbering for Section 2-267; and to provide for other related matters.
County Attorney Nicole Workman explained that the ordinance expanded guidance on meeting procedures, notice requirements for open positions, and membership criteria. It also included updates such as the renumbering of a section related to the personnel handbook, relocating it under the departmental section since it pertained to employees rather than boards and commissions. Vice Chair Mosley motioned to approve, seconded by Councilman Raines. Vote 5-0 to approve.
- b) Proclamation in Honor of South Carolina Stewardship Week
Chairman Wilson presented a proclamation honoring Soil and Water Stewardship Week to be observed April 28-May 5, 2025.

7. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Hester provided an update on several matters during his administrator's report. He first noted that Vista Properties had withdrawn their rezoning application for a 45.09-acre subdivision due to inability to comply with developmental agreement terms. He mentioned the upcoming first reading of the budget ordinance on May 5 and highlighted a successful budget workshop. Administrator Hester also briefed on the recent tragic bus accident on I-77. He expressed condolences to the Gonzalez-Linares family and praised the extraordinary response of first responders. Mr. Hester detailed the remarkable coordination between Chester County's emergency services and surrounding counties, emphasizing the professionalism and seamless teamwork displayed during the incident. He specifically commended various personnel, including local firefighters, EMS workers, law enforcement, and volunteers from Lancaster, Union, and other counties. Administrator Hester noted that 38 people were transported to the hospital within one hour, which he described as an incredibly efficient response. He stressed that despite the chaos, Chester County's emergency personnel demonstrated calm, courage, and exceptional skill in managing the complex and tragic situation.

8. CONSENT AGENDA

Councilman Guy motioned to approve, seconded by Vice Chair Mosley. Vote 5-0 to approve.

- a) 2nd Reading of CCMA25-13 Daniel Duncan request Tax Map #079-01-10-005-000 located at 610 Saluda Road, Chester, SC 29706 from General Commercial District (GC) to Limited Commercial District (LC). The Planning Commission voted 5-0 to approve.
- b) 2nd Reading of CCMA25-15 Andrew Cope request Tax Map # 079-01-08-004-000 located of Parkway Drive, Chester, SC 29706 to be rezoned from Limited Industrial District (ID-2) to Multi-family Residential District (RG-1). The Planning Commission voted 5-0 to approve.

9. OLD BUSINESS

- a) 2nd Reading of CCMA25-14 Kimberly Zarko requests a portion (1.5 acres) of Tax Map #040-00-00-078-000 located at 1937 Baton Rouge Road, Chester, SC 29706 from Rural Two District (R2) to Rural One District (R1). The Planning Commission voted 5-0 to deny.
Planning Director Jeremy Ward reported that he had presented new information to the Planning Commission regarding a rezoning request. The applicant had originally sought to rezone 1.5 acres of her

3.9-acre property from R2 to R1 in order to build a stick-built house for her daughter on a newly created rear lot. At the initial Planning Commission meeting, the commission had discussed the zoning precedent in the West Chester area and recommended that the applicant divide the land into two nearly two-acre lots instead of pursuing rezoning. The applicant had agreed, and the commission voted to recommend denial of the rezoning request. Mr. Ward explained that it was later discovered—after consultation with the surveyor—that the original survey was incorrect, and the applicant did not have enough usable land to create two two-acre lots. This new information was presented at the most recent Planning Commission meeting, and the four members present believed that, had they known this earlier, it could have altered their recommendation. They asked Mr. Ward to share this with the Council. He concluded by offering to answer any additional questions.

Councilman Agee motioned to override the Planning Commission and approve the rezoning, seconded by Councilman Raines. Vote 5-0 to approve the rezoning.

10. NEW BUSINESS

a) Community Development Block Grant Program and Priority Needs List Review

Grazier Rhea, Catawba Regional Council of Governments

Ms. Rhea presented an overview of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. She explained that it was a federal program administered through the South Carolina Department of Commerce to provide assistance to local governments for economic and community development, particularly benefiting low and moderate-income people.

Ms. Rhea detailed the program's five categories: community infrastructure, community enrichment, local priorities, program ready to go, and business development. She outlined the funding amounts available for each category, ranging from \$150,000 to \$1 million, with a required 10% match. She reviewed Chester County's 2024 priority needs list, which included upgrades to water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer infrastructure, renovation and construction of facilities, and the upgrade of sidewalks.

Ms. Rhea also discussed potential projects, including improvements to senior services facilities and infrastructure upgrades. She emphasized the importance of serving low and moderate-income areas and encouraged the county to consider various potential projects for future CDBG grant applications.

b) Approval of Chester County 2025 Priority Needs List

The following changes were made to the priority needs list from council suggestions:

Upgrade of water and sewer lines to serve the Chester County Board of Disabilities, upgrades to the Senior Services facility, and Item 10 (Sidewalk upgrades for Gayle Mill Village) was moved to Item 3.

Councilman Agee motioned to approve the 2025 Priority Needs list with the changes made, seconded by Councilman Guy. Vote 5-0 to approve.

c) Consideration and Discussion of Chester County Subdivision Ordinances

Jeremy Ward, Planning Director

Planning Director Jeremy Ward presented the third draft of the county's subdivision ordinances, focusing on creating a unique, comprehensive policy that protects rural heritage while promoting responsible development. He proposed expanding subdivision classifications, increasing minor subdivisions from 9 to 12 lots, and introducing new guidelines for gravel streets that would allow up to 6 houses on a single road (8 for family subdivisions). Director Ward highlighted the ordinance's key objectives, including establishing 20% open space requirements, adding outdoor amenity area specifications, and introducing the concept of conservation subdivisions. Councilman Raines and Councilman Agee expressed interest in the rural conservation subdivisions and requested a draft of text allowing rural conservation subdivisions with special approval as a short-term measure. Director Ward also emphasized the collaborative process, noting over 300 hours of review involving planners, citizens, and county officials. The draft aimed to balance affordable housing needs with infrastructure maintenance concerns, emergency vehicle access, and the preservation of Chester County's rural character. Chairman Wilson expressed deep reservations about the proposed subdivision ordinance changes, cautioning that the dramatic expansion of minor

subdivision allowances from nine to twelve lots and increasing gravel road house limits could overwhelm Chester County's infrastructure and create unintended long-term development challenges. Administrator Hester wanted to confirm that the proposed ordinance would set standards for non-engineered gravel roads to prevent situations where emergency vehicles might be unable to reach residents or could potentially be damaged while attempting to access a property. After discussion on gravel streets and minor subdivisions, the Council did not reach agreement on any option but decided to continue the matter in further discussions.

d) **Selection of Grievance Committee Members**

Nicole Workman, County Attorney

Attorney Workman addressed Council stating that due to the updates made to our grievance policy at the last council meeting Council must appoint members to serve on the grievance committee. Mrs. Workman stated that in accordance with county policy, the committee consists of seven members: three exempt employees, three non-exempt employees, and two alternates. She stated that Mr. Hester and Ms. Mobley and herself compiled a list of employees from various departments that represent a range of experience and years of service. The list was provided at the council members' desks. Administrator Hester stated that since Council is not aware of all employees or their exempt status, the list was put together for approval. He also stated that the employees selected represent varying levels of diversity, departments, and years of service.

Vice Chair Mosley motioned to accept the proposed grievance committee, seconded by Councilman Raines. Vote 5-0 to accept.

11. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

a) **Fort Lawn Fire Protection District Appointment**

Councilman John Agee, District 1

Councilman Agee motioned to appoint Mr. C.E. (Earl) Thrailkill, seconded by Vice Chair Mosley. Vote 5-0 to appoint.

b) **Hazel Pittman Center Board of Directors**

Councilman John Agee, District 1

Councilman Agee motioned to appoint Mr. Tony Montello, seconded by Councilman Raines. Vote 5-0 to appoint.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman Raines motioned to enter into executive session, seconded by Councilman Guy. Vote 5-0 to enter.

- a) Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body – Project P2529

13. ACTIONS FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

Vice Chair Mosley motioned to return to regular session, seconded by Councilman Guy. Vote 5-0 to return.

- a) Action taken regarding Project P2529

Chairman Wilson stated this item was taken as information only.

14. COUNCIL COMMENTS

No council comments.

15. ADJOURN

Vice Chair Mosley motioned to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Raines. Vote 5-0 to adjourn.

Time of adjournment: 8:43pm

Kristie Donaldson
Clerk to County Council