



JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL COUNCIL WORKSHOP AND MEETING

Jasper County Clementa C. Pinckney Government Building
358 Third Ave., Ridgeland, SC. 29936

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

Minutes

Officials Present: Chairman Joey Rowell, Vice Chairman Joseph Arzillo, Councilman John Kemp, Councilman Chris VanGeison and Councilman Gene Ceccarelli

Staff Present: County Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Interim County Attorney Lawrence Flynn, Clerk to Council Wanda Giles, Kimberly Burgess, Eric Larson, Jim Iwanicki, Nicole Holt, Chief Russell Wells, Susan Waite, and Videographer Jonathan Dunham.

5:00 PM: Workshop

- **JASPER COUNTY GREENBELT PROGRAM** Presentation by Kate Schaefer, Member of the Greenbelt Committee

The workshop was to provide oversight on the Jasper County Green Belt Program. The program is a result of the 2024 sales tax, which allocated funding for road construction, transportation improvements, and land conservation.

Ms. Kate Schaefer was present to outline the procedural framework for land conservation, emphasizing a competitive, quarterly application process. The discussion focused significantly on conservation easements, which protect private property from development while keeping it on tax rolls, and acquisitions for public assets like boat landings and parks. These involve purchasing the land outright for public use, such as boat landings, passive parks, and WMA (Wildlife Management Area) expansions. Examples were provided such as Meyer Lake was cited as a fee simple acquisition by the DNR that protects a mile of the water canal providing the county's drinking water.

Council members expressed specific interest in ensuring public access, prioritizing projects with matching state or federal funds, and maintaining financial transparency through independent audits. Ultimately, the program aims to strategically offset rapid regional growth by preserving high-priority watersheds and rural landscapes.

Ms. Schaefer prepared a presentation (See Attachment "A") covering the following topics:

- Greenbelt Program Flowchart
 - Noting what the applicant was responsible for and what the program is responsible for
 - The Committee was discussed
- Conservation Easements and what they are
- Permitted Rights
- Restricted Rights

- Annual Easement Monitoring
- Simplified Easement Process
- Local Conservation Easement examples
- Simplified Fee Process
- Coosawhatchie WMA
- Meyer Lake

Adjournment

The workshop was adjourned followed by a 10-minute recess before the regular council meeting.

6:00 PM: Council Meeting

➤ *Please silence your phones during the Meeting.*

1. Call to Order of the Jasper County Council Meeting by Chairman Rowell

Chairman Rowell called the meeting to order. The Report of Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act was read for the records as follows: *In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, notification of the meeting and the meeting agenda were posted at least 24 hours prior to the meeting on the County Council Building at a publicly accessible place, on the county website, and a copy of the agenda was provided to the local news media and all person's or organizations requesting notification.*

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act the electronic and print media were notified. During periods of review, discussion and/or presentations minutes are typically condensed and paraphrased. The recorded version is available online at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm_ggXCJIA. Closed captions are also available for all of our County Council videos.

2. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation:

The Pledge of Allegiance was given and Chairman Rowell gave the Invocation.

3. Approval of the Consent Agenda:

Approval of the Consent Agenda passes all Consent Agenda Items. Consent Agenda Items are not considered separately unless a Councilmember requests it. In the event of such a request, the item is placed at the end of the Public Hearings, Ordinances, and Action Items.

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda: Councilman VanGeison

Second: Councilman kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

4. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

A) Approval of the Minutes 08.18.2025

B) Lisa Wagner – Consideration of the 3rd Reading of Ordinance #O-2026-01 to amend the Official Zoning Map of Jasper County so as to transfer two properties located along Pearlstine Drive, 1) bearing Jasper County Tax Map Number 080-00-03-044 consisting of 4.12 acres from the Mixed Business Zone to the Industrial Development Zone; and 2) bearing Jasper County Tax Map Number 080-00-03-121 consisting of 0.82 acres from the General Commercial Zone to the Industrial Development Zone on the Jasper County Official Zoning Map:

☐ **Re-zoning_Pearlstine Dr**

(Ordinance # O-2026-01 - 1st Reading 12.15.2025, Public Hearing and 2nd Reading 1.5.2026)

This is the end of the Consent Agenda Items.

5. APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR AGENDA:

The request was made to omit Item # 9C and add under Executive Session, Section 2: Item # 2 –Legal representation for Elected Officials.

Motion to approve the agenda with the noted changes: Councilman VanGeison

Second: Councilman Arzillo

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

6. PRESENTATIONS:

Jim Iwanicki – Update on the Coosawhatchie Community Center Project.

Mr. Iwanicki was present to update Council on the Coosawhatchie Community Center Project. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for architectural services was issued, with responses due February 18th. Staff noted that they expected to recommend a firm in March and finalize a contract in April. Discussion ensued regarding "rightsizing" the building to balance community needs with a \$3-4 million estimated budget. Council suggested exploring modular/steel construction and public-private partnerships to offset costs.

7. CITIZEN COMMENTS:

Open Floor to the Public per Ordinance Number #08-17. Any citizen of the County may sign to speak in person at the Council Meeting (before the Council Meeting's 6:00 PM start time on the Sign-In Sheet on the Podium), to address the Council on matters pertaining to County Services and Operations. Presentations will be limited to three (3) minutes per person, and total public input will be limited to 30 minutes.

John Holloway, Isaac Vigil, Donna K. McIver, Tina NeSmith, Glenn Rivers, and Philip Meech expressed strong opposition to the mine, citing concerns over wetlands degradation, road damage from heavy trucks, noise, dust, and threats to the area's rural character.

Lafayette Weber raised concerns regarding historical corruption and civil rights complaints.

Hetty Frazier expressed support for the Coosawhatchie Community Center and requested continued community involvement in its design.

8. RESOLUTIONS

A) Eric Larson - Consideration of Resolution #R-2026-05 a Resolution of Jasper County, South Carolina County Council Appointing a County Council Representative to Serve on the Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance Board of Directors.

Mr. Larson was present to review, address and discuss the consideration of Resolution #R-2026-05 a Resolution of Jasper County, South Carolina County Council Appointing a County Council Representative to Serve on the Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance Board of Directors.

Motion to approve: Councilman Kemp

Second: Councilman Arzillo

Vote: The vote was 4 yes and 1 abstained (Councilman Ceccarelli)

The meeting adjourned.

B) Kimberly Burgess – Consideration of Resolution #R-2026-06 to Approve the Addition of Two Employees to the Assessor's Office.

Ms. Burgess was present to review, address and discuss the consideration of Resolution #R-2026-06 to Approve the Addition of Two Employees to the Assessor's Office.

Motion to approve: Councilman Arzillo

Second: Councilman Ceccarelli

Vote: Unanimous

The meeting adjourned.

C) Jim Iwanicki and Kimberly Burgess – Consideration of Resolution #R-2026-07 a Resolution of Jasper County Council to Approve the Procurement of a Jetter and associated accessories for Jasper County Under a State Contract Pursuant to the Jasper County Purchasing and Contracting Ordinance, and Matters Related Thereto.

Mr. Iwanicki and Ms. Burgess was present to review, address and discuss the consideration of Resolution #R-2026-07 a Resolution of Jasper County Council to Approve the Procurement of a Jetter and associated accessories for Jasper County Under a State Contract Pursuant to the Jasper County Purchasing and Contracting Ordinance.

Motion to approve: Councilman Ceccarelli

Second: Councilman Arzillo

Vote: Unanimous

The meeting adjourned.

9. PUBLIC HEARINGS, ORDINANCES, AND ACTION ITEMS

A) Lisa Wagner - Consideration of Public Hearing and 2nd Reading of Ordinance #O-2026-03 to amend Article 10 of the Jasper County Land Development Regulations, Stormwater Management, Section 10.2.B, Applicability and Exemptions, to provide a conditional exemption for new development of commercial sites located in a major subdivision that was previously approved and for which the stormwater infrastructure has been constructed; And Other Matters Relating Thereto(1st reading 01.05.2026)

Ms. Wagner was present to review, address and discuss the consideration of Public Hearing and 2nd Reading of Ordinance #O-2026-03 to amend Article 10 of the Jasper County Land Development Regulations, Stormwater Management, Section 10.2.B, Applicability and Exemptions, to provide a conditional exemption for new development of commercial sites located in a major subdivision that was previously approved and for which the stormwater infrastructure has been constructed.

The public hearing was opened but there were no comments so the public hearing was closed.

Motion to approve: Councilman VanGeison

Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The meeting adjourned.

B) Kimberly Burgess - Consideration and acceptance of bid for the Thomas Heyward, Jr. Homesite Kiosk Cover.

Ms. Burgess was present to review, address and discuss the Consideration and acceptance of bid for the Thomas Heyward, Jr. Homesite Kiosk Cover.

Motion to approve: Councilman Arzillo

Second: Councilman Ceccarelli

Vote: 4 yes votes and 1 abstaining vote by Councilman Kemp

The meeting adjourned.

C) Eric Larson - Consideration of the 1st Reading of an Ordinance to Authorize Jasper County to Convey, Through a Donation, Real Estate Owned by Jasper County to Beaufort Jasper Housing Trust, Inc. (This item was omitted from the agenda)

D) Wanda Giles – Discussion and Update of the Applications Submitted for the Planning Commission Vacant Seat.

Ms. Giles was present to review, address, and discuss the Applications Submitted for the Planning Commission Vacant Seat. She noted that staff's request was to allow time for Council to review and discuss the applicants in preparation for the upcoming Resolution of Appointment to be placed on the 02.02.2026 County Council Meeting Agenda for a new Planning Commission Member. She noted that they currently had one vacant seat open on the Jasper County Planning Commission. This is for Seat # 07-PC that was held by Mr. Lee Gramling

until he stepped down from the Planning Commission. Mr. Gramling had a term end date of 12.31.2028. After consideration and review of the applicants, staff would like to have the name of the Council's chosen applicant that will be filling this unexpired term at the next Council Meeting on 02.022.2026 if possible. She noted that there had originally been 5 applications, but the 5th Applicant had withdrawn her application for the Planning Commission, so there are currently 4 applications for this position. She noted that the remaining applicants were: Aaron Saxon, Morgan Denny, Russell Fredericks and Taylor Lomprez. She noted that she had attached each of the applicant's submitted applications for Council's review and consideration for this available seat on the Planning Commission. There was no motion made and no vote taken on this item.

E) Jim Iwanicki – Consideration of and Selecting an Engineering Firm to Fulfill the Services Required in RFQ #2025 for 2025 CTC Paving and 2025/2026 Parking Lot Repair.

Mr. Iwanicki was present to review, address and discuss the consideration of and Selecting an Engineering Firm to Fulfill the Services Required in RFQ #2025 for 2025 CTC Paving and 2025/2026 Parking Lot Repair. He noted that Jasper County advertised a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) on October 22, 2025, with a due date of November 20, 2025, for Engineering Services for 2025 CTC Paving and 2025/2026 Parking Lot Paving Repair. He noted that six RFQs had been received. The RFQs were scored by a committee consisting of Eric Larson, Director of Development Services, Jeff Crosby, Superintendent of Maintenance, and Jim Iwanicki Engineering Services Director. The Consultant's also included hourly fee information as part of the proposal. A contract and compensation would be negotiated and brought back for Council's approval. He noted that his recommendation based on the scoring of the RFQs, was that the County Council approve J. Bragg Consulting, Inc. of Bluffton, SC as the most qualified proposer. He also recommended that Council direct the County Administrator or his designee to negotiate a contract and fees with J. Bragg Consulting, Inc. for the required services and bring back the contract to Council for approval.

Motion to approve: Councilman VanGeison

Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

F) Andrew Fulghum – Consideration of the 1st Reading by TITLE ONLY of an Ordinance of Jasper County Council Approving the Transfer of Custody, Management and Operation of the Jasper County Detention Center to the Jasper County Sheriff Pursuant to S.C. Code § Ann. 24-5-12, and Other Matters Related Thereto.

Mr. Fulghum was present to review, address and discuss the consideration of the 1st Reading by TITLE ONLY of an Ordinance of Jasper County Council Approving the Transfer of Custody, Management and Operation of the Jasper County Detention Center to the Jasper County Sheriff Pursuant to S.C. Code § Ann. 24-5-12. He noted that this was a follow up to the Emergency Ordinance O-2026-04 and that this would start the process of our permanent ordinance as directed by the County Attorney.

Motion to approve: Councilman VanGeison

Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

10. Administrator's Report - Mr. Fulghum reviewed the information from his report that was provided in the agenda e-packet. Mr. Fulghum noted that Mr. Larson needed to discuss an Economic Development Grant. Mr. Larson noted that South Carolina Department of Agriculture had awarded a grant to Project Heat (Daly Organics) for \$300,000 with stipulations such as in the expansion of operations that there would be 30 more jobs created. He noted that the SCA had assisted in putting the grant together and they would administer it. He noted that they were asking for a county action which was a signature from the Chairman for the grant. He noted there would be annual reporting required and that the SCA would oversee that. Mr. Fulghum mentioned that M.s Burgess had just mentioned another \$100,000 grant for Project Veggie and that Mr. Boykin of the SCA had brought these grants into the county. The request was made for the authorization by council for the Chairman of the County Council to sign the grant documents for both Project Heat and Project Veggie as discussed by Mr. Larson.

Motion to authorize the Chairman to sign the grant documents as discussed by Eric Larson for Project Heat and Project Veggie – Councilman VanGeison

Second – Councilman Kemp

Vote – Unanimous

The motion passed.

11. Councilmember Comments and Discussion -- Councilmember Comments were given but there were no comments that required action.

12. Executive Session SECTION 30-4-70.

(a) A public body may hold a meeting closed to the public for one or more of the following reasons:

(1) Discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body, or the appointment of a person to a public body – (1) Attorney; (2) Detention Center

(2) Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contract arrangements and proposed purchase or sale of property, the receipt of legal advice, where the legal advice related to pending, threatened, or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim – (1) Exit 3; (2) Legal representation for Elected Officials (as was amended to the agenda).

Motion to into Executive Session: Councilman Ceccarelli

Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

Any Executive Session Matter on Which Discussion Has Not Been Completed May Have Discussion Suspended for the Purpose of Beginning the Open Session at Its Scheduled Time, And Council May Return to Executive Session Discussion After the Conclusion of The Open Session Agenda Items.

Note: Please Be Advised, There May Be Votes Based on Items from the Executive Session.

13. Return to Open Session:

Motion to return to open session: Councilman VanGeison

Second: Councilman Kemp

Vote: Unanimous

The motion passed.

14. Council Action to be taken on items as discussed in Executive Session

Note: *Council may act on any item appearing on the agenda, including items discussed in executive session.*

15. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Councilman Kemp

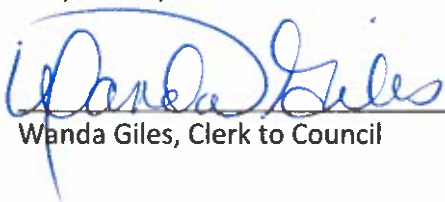
Second: Councilman VanGeison

Vote: Unanimous

The meeting adjourned.

For more information on this meeting please go to our YouTube Channel for the video. During meetings and / or workshops periods of review, discussion, presentation, comments, and other sections the minutes are typically condensed and paraphrased. The recorded version is available online at our YouTube Channel video at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm_ggXCJIA. Closed captions are also available for all of our County Council videos. Just click the "CC" button to follow along.

Respectfully submitted:



Wanda Giles, Clerk to Council



W.J. Rowell III, Chairman