



MINUTES

OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

February 04, 2025

MEMBERS, OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Mr. John Elliott, District I
Mr. Matthew Durham, Chairman, District II
Mr. Don Mize, Vice Chairman, District III
Mr. Thomas James, District IV
Mr. Glenn Hart, Chairman Pro Tem, District V

Oconee County Council met at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members, County Administrator Amanda F. Brock, County Attorney David Root, & Jennifer C. Adams, Clerk to Council present.

Press: Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [www.oconeesc.com/council]. In addition, it was made available [*upon request*] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Members of the press present: Caleb Gilbert / The Journal, Dick Mangurm / 101.7 WGOG, WYFF 4 News, Fox Carolina News

Call to Order

Mr. Durham called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Moment of Silence

Mr. Durham asked for a moment of silence prior to the Invocation.

Invocation by County Council Chaplain

Mr. Root, County Council Chaplain, gave the Invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Mrs. Jennifer Adams led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Attorney's Comments

None for this meeting

Administrator's Comments

None for this meeting.

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Consent Agenda

1. January 21, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

2. Procurement Item:

Five (5) Floating Dock Systems for High Falls and South Cove County Parks

Department: PRT

Amount: \$398,700.00

Contingency (10%): \$39,870.00

Total: \$438,570.00

Procurement was approved by Council in Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget process.

Budget: \$438,570.00 Project Cost: \$438,570.00 Balance: \$0.00

(Funding is from SCDNR Water Recreation Fund (\$150,110), South Carolina National Heritage Corridor Grant
or Local ATAX (\$59,000), and Oconee State ATAX (\$229,460))

It is the staff's recommendation that Council:

- 1. Approve the Award of ITB 24-07, 5 Docks for High Falls and South Cove County Parks, to Lake Wylie Dock Construction of Fort Mill, SC in the amount of \$398,700.00, plus a 10% contingency in the amount of \$39,870.00, for a total award of \$438,570.00.*
- 2. Authorize the County Administrator to execute documents for this project and sign any change orders within the contingency amount.*

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 - 0, to approve all items on the consent agenda as presented.

Proclamations

PROCLAMATION 2025-01 A PROCLAMATION OF APPRECIATION TO THE OCONEE COUNTY PERSONNEL WHO VOLUNTEERED THEIR SERVICES TO DORCHESTER COUNTY.

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 - 0, to approve **Proclamation 2025-01** on first and final reading.

Public Comment Session

If you are not able to attend in person and you have a comment, you may submit it by contacting our Clerk to Council, Jennifer C. Adams at jennifercadams@oconeesc.com or 864-718-1023, so that she may receive your comment and read it into the record.

Mr. Durham noted that he would like a motion to decrease citizen speaking time to three minutes, with a total of 90 minutes allotted for public comment.

Mr. Hart made that motion, seconded by Mr. Mize, approved 5 – 0.

1. Mr. JR Slack addressed Council in opposition to funding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Initiatives in Oconee County.
2. Mr. Wayne McCall addressed Council in opposition to DEI Initiatives and added his opinions related to immigration.
3. Mr. Dexter Robinson, with the Oconee Branch of the NAACP, addressed Council in opposition of

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Ordinance 2025-05 as it is currently written.

4. Mr. Dave Nix addressed Council with comments related to the recent Presidential election and the June 2024 Primary election and expressed his support of Council passing **Ordinance 2025-05**.
5. Ms. Camille More addressed Council in opposition to Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
6. Mr. Michael Mullet addressed Council in opposition to Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act and in opposition of **Ordinance 2025-05** related to DEI Initiatives.
7. Ms. Carolyn Padilla addressed Council in opposition to Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
8. Reverend Ramfis Moulier addressed Council in opposition to Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, expressing his concerns related to the potential cost of implementation.
9. Mr. Devin Clay addressed Council in opposition to Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act and in support of DEI Initiatives.
10. Ms. Mary Parker addressed Council in opposition to Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
11. Ms. Lynell Hecht addressed Council in support of Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
12. Ms. Lucretia Morgan addressed Council in support of Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act and in support of **Ordinance 2025-05** related to DEI Initiatives.
13. Mr. Jamie Soto addressed Council in opposition of Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
14. Ms. Vikki Allen addressed Council in opposition of **Ordinance 2025-05** related to DEI Initiatives.
15. Ms. Jody Gaulin addressed Council in opposition of Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act and in opposition to **Ordinance 2025-05** related to DEI Initiatives, noting that she believes these topics are a distraction from other issues that she believes should take priority.
16. Mr. Lee Sheehan addressed Council with comments related to **Ordinance 2025-05** and Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act and urged Council to think through both of these topics carefully before voting.
17. Ms. Wanda Sheehan addressed Council in opposition of **Ordinance 2025-05** related to DEI Initiatives.
18. Ms. Elizabeth O'Connor addressed Council in support of **Ordinance 2025-05** related to DEI Initiatives and added further comments related to immigration.
19. Ms. Brenda Rodriguez addressed Council with comments related to immigration.
20. Ms. Kim Jackson addressed Council in support of **Ordinance 2025-05** related to DEI Initiatives.
21. Ms. Cathy Littleton addressed Council in opposition of **Ordinance 2025-05** related to DEI Initiatives and in opposition to Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
22. Ms. Carla Poirier addressed Council in opposition of **Ordinance 2025-05** related to DEI Initiatives.
23. Ms. Carol Knupp addressed Council with comments related racism and immigration.
24. Ms. Isuy Martinez addressed Council in opposition of Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.
25. Ms. Audrey Mitta addressed Council in opposition Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act and in opposition to **Ordinance 2025-05** related to DEI Initiatives.
26. Mr. Robert Lee addressed Council in support of **Ordinance 2025-05** related to DEI Initiatives.

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Council Members Comments

Mr. Durham offered clarification related to Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (NIA), which is up for Council discussion later in the meeting.

Mr. James reference the case of Laken Riley in Athens, GA, noting no one wants something of that nature to happen in our community and if a person is arrested for a crime, he believes their immigration status should be checked while they are in custody.

Mr. Elliott added that he believes Council needs to provide more education to the public regarding Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (NIA) before taking any action.

Public Hearing for the Following Ordinances *If you would like to be heard during either of the public hearings, please contact Clerk to Council Jennifer C. Adams at jennifercadams@oconeesc.com or 864-718-1023 so that your participation by may be coordinated.*

ORDINANCE 2024-28 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 10 OF THE OCONEE COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES, IN CERTAIN LIMITED REGARDS AND PARTICULARS ONLY, EFFECTING A LIMITATION ON CERTAIN EMERGENCY POWERS AND DESIGNATING THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR AS THE PRIMARY POINT OF CONTACT FOR THE COUNTY WITH OTHER JURISDICTIONAL AUTHORITIES; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Durham opened the floor for Public Comment.

Noting that no citizens signed up to address Council; Mr. Durham opened the floor for any citizen wishing to address Council regarding this ordinance. No citizen addressed Council and no citizen submitted or presented any written comments for the record.

Mr. Durham closed the Public Hearing regarding **Ordinance 2024-28**.

Third Reading of the Following Ordinances

ORDINANCE 2024-28 (*see caption above*)

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 - 0, to approve **Ordinance 2024-08** on third and final reading.

Second Reading of the Following Ordinances

None for this meeting.

First Reading of the Following Ordinances

ORDINANCE 2025-05 AN ORDINANCE TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF COUNTY FUNDS FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES AND TO ENSURE FAIRNESS AND EQUALITY UNDER THE LAW.

Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mize, to approve **Ordinance 2025-05** on first reading.

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Mr. Elliott commented that for the last six years that he has been on Council and Ms. Brock has been the County Administrator, hiring of employees has been based on qualifications and promoted based on merit, regardless of race or gender.

He further noted he would be voting in favor of **Ordinance 2025-05**.

Mr. Durham provided commends related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives.

Motion approved 5 – 0.

First & Final Reading for the Following Resolutions

None for this meeting.

Action on Matters Removed from Consent Agenda at Council Member Request

None for this meeting.

Discussion Regarding Action Items

Discussion on Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) and other related matters.

Mr. Durham noted that the Trump administration sent out a memo requesting local government support of enforcing immigration laws, and further explained that the 287(g) program provides training that qualifies local law enforcement officers to determine the immigration status of detainees.

Mr. Durham went on to add that South Carolina Attorney General, Alan Wilson, also sent out a memo calling on departments across the state to apply for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Section 278(g) program, noting this applies to only those who have committed a crime and are detained by local law enforcement and that officers would not be going out into the community to question citizenship.

Mr. Durham stated he fully supports this program.

Mr. Elliott commented that he believes more information needs to be distributed into the community to educate people on this program before any action is taken by Council.

Mr. Mize agreed with Mr. Elliott's and Mr. Durham's above statements.

Several citizens offered questions to Council regarding the 287(g) program, to which Mr. Durham responded with further clarification as to how the program works.

Council consideration of acceptance of performance bond in lieu of completion for Cascade Point Subdivision

Cascade Point subdivision is 148 lots on parcel 254-00-01-024. The developer has requested to bond \$451,496.50 worth of required infrastructure at 125% (total bond \$564,370.63) to record the final plat and begin selling lots in phase 1 (lots 1-30 and 93-135).

Oconee County will hold the bond until the engineer of record confirms the completion of all work outlined in the performance guarantee and bond estimate. If the developer fails to install the required infrastructure the County would be required to call the bond and complete the work.

Mr. Elliott made a motion to approve the above request.

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Mr. James Coley, Planning and Code Enforcement Director, addressed Council with details related to the above request.

Mr. Root provided further clarification related to this request as requested by Council, noting the County would be protected if Council accepted the performance bond.

Mr. Hart noted he has no problem approving this request and pointed out an error in the tax map number listed on the request.

Short discussion followed between Mr. Coley, Mr. Root and Council related to the above request.

Mr. Hart seconded the motion.

Motion approved 5 – 0.

Council Committee Reports

None for this meeting.

Board & Commission Appointments

Building Codes Appeal Board

Durham made a nomination, approved 5 – 0, to appoint Mr. Joel Nathaniel Smith as an At-Large representative on the Building Codes Appeal Board.

Mr. Durham made a nomination, approved 5 – 0, to appoint Mr. Tate Rochester as an At-Large representative on the Building Codes Appeal Board.

Conservation Bank Board

Mr. James made a nomination, approved 5 – 0, to appoint Alfred Jay De La Costa as an At-Large representative on the Conservation Bank Board.

Mr. Hart made a nomination, approved 5 – 0, to re-appoint Mr. Scuddy Walker as the District V representative on the Conservation Bank Board.

Mr. Durham made a nomination, approved 5 – 0, to appoint Mr. Perry Smith as the District II representative on the Conservation Bank Board.

Executive Session

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to enter into Executive Session for the following purposes, as allowed for § 30-4-70(a) of the South Carolina Code of Laws:

- 1. Receive legal advice and discuss potential contractual matter related to property development proposal.*

Council entered into Executive Session at 7:54 p.m.

Council returned from Executive Session at 8:59 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 5 – 0.

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Mr. Durham noted not action was taken during Executive Session.

Adjourn:

Mr. Hart made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn at 8:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jennifer C. Adams
Clerk to Council

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