



# **MINUTES**

## **OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Regular Meeting**

### **November 18, 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, Interim County Administrator Phil Shirley, 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](http://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: None

#### **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**

Mr. Lombard led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

#### **Attorney's Comments**

None for this meeting.

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## **Administrator's Comments**

As requested by Mr. Shirley, Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mize, approved 5 – 0, to remove item #5 and item #8 from the consent agenda for further review.

## **Consent Agenda**

### **1. October 21, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes**

### **2. October 24, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes**

### **3. October 28, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes**

### **4. Procurement Item:**

#### **2026 International HX620 Tri-Axel Dump Truck**

**Department: Roads & Bridges**

**Amount: \$216,056.87**

Procurement was approved by Council in Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget process

Budget: \$216,056.87    Project Cost: \$216,056.87    Balance: \$0.00

*(Funding from Capital Equipment / Vehicle Fund (325))*

*It is the staff's recommendation that Council approve the purchase of a 2026 International HX620 Tri-Axle Dump Truck from Carolina International Trucks of Greer, SC in the amount of \$216,056.87, per Sourcewell Contract Number 032824-NVS.*

### **~~5. Procurement Item:~~**

#### **~~2026 Ford F-550 with Utility Body~~**

**~~Department: Emergency Services~~**

**~~Amount: \$91,954.00~~**

~~Procurement was approved by Council in Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget process.~~

~~Budget: \$91,954.00    Project Cost: \$91,954.00    Balance: \$0.00~~

~~*(Funding from Emergency Services Capital Equipment / Vehicle Fund (335))*~~

~~*It is the staff's recommendation that Council approve the purchase of a Ford F-550 with utility bed to Ford of Spartanburg of Spartanburg, SC, in the amount of \$91,954.00, per SC State Contracts.*~~

### **6. Procurement Item:**

#### **Vehicle Upfitting**

**Department: Vehicle Maintenance / Sheriff's Office**

**Amount: \$118,335.11**

Procurement was approved by Council in Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget process.

Budget:

\$118,335.11    Project Cost: \$118,335.11    Balance: \$0.00

*It is the staff's recommendation that Council approve the purchase of upfitting equipment from Dana Safety Supply, Inc. of Greensboro, NC, in the amount of \$118,335.11, per State Contract #4400025308.*

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**7. Procurement Item:**

**PO Change Order No. 1 – Smith Gardner, Inc.**

**Department: Solid Waste**

**PO 55436: \$112,800.00**

**Change Order 1: \$25,000.00**

**Purchase Order Total: \$137,800.00**

Procurement was approved by Council in Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget process.

Budget:

\$25,000.00    Project Cost: \$25,000.00    Balance: \$0.00

*It is the staff's recommendation that Council approve PO# 55436, Change Order # 1, to Smith Gardner, Inc. of Raleigh, NC, in the amount of \$25,000.00, for a revised purchase order total of \$137,800.00.*

**~~8. Procurement Item:~~**

**~~2025 Chevrolet Silverado~~**

**~~Department: Information Technology (IT)~~**

**~~Amount: \$53,298.00~~**

~~Procurement was approved by Council in Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget process.~~

~~————— Budget: \$53,298.00    Project Cost: \$53,298.00    Balance: \$0.00    (Funding from Capital Equipment / (325) Vehicle Fund)~~

~~*It is the staff's recommendation that Council approve the purchase of one (1) 2025 Chevrolet Silverado from Hendrick Chevrolet of Columbia, SC, in the amount of \$53,298.00.*~~

Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 5 - 0, to approve all items on the consent agenda, excluding item #5 and item #8, as presented.

**Public Comment Session**

*If you are unable to attend in person and you have a comment you would like to be considered by Council, please email or call the Council Member for your district (<https://oconeesc.com/council-home/council-officials>), so that they may consider and perhaps include your comments during Council Member comments, as and if appropriate.*

1. Mr. Lee Sheehan addressed Council with his concerns related to comments posted on Facebook [copy in backup] by a current Oconee County Conservation Bank Board member and in opposition to the request for hiring two sworn deputies to address homelessness in Oconee County.

**Council Members Comments**

Mr. Durham noted that this is Mr. Shirley's first full Council meeting as Interim County Administrator and expressed his appreciation for Mr. Shirley's hard work over the last several weeks.

**Public Hearing for the Following Ordinances**

**ORDINANCE 2025-17 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING, PURSUANT TO TITLE 4, CHAPTERS 1 AND 29, OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA 1976, AS AMENDED, THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF SPECIAL SOURCE REVENUE CREDIT AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, AND BAXTER MANUFACTURING LLC (PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED BY THE COUNTY AS PROJECT BEAMER), ACTING FOR**

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ITSELF, ONE OR MORE CURRENT OR FUTURE AFFILIATES AND OTHER PROJECT COMPANIES; PROVIDING FOR CERTAIN SPECIAL SOURCE REVENUE CREDITS; DESIGNATING CERTAIN PROPERTY TO BE INCLUDED IN A MULTI-COUNTY INDUSTRIAL PARK; AND OTHER RELATED MATTERS.

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 2025-17**.

### **Third Reading of the Following Ordinances**

**ORDINANCE 2025-17** (*see caption above*)

Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, to approve **Ordinance 2025-17** on third and final reading.

Mr. Durham extended his thanks to Baxter Manufacturing for their investment in Oconee County.

Motion approved 5 – 0.

### **Second Reading of the Following Ordinances**

**ORDINANCE 2025-22** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING, PURSUANT TO TITLE 4, CHAPTER 29, SECTION 68 OF THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA 1976, AS AMENDED, THE EXECUTION AND DELIVERY OF A SPECIAL SOURCE REVENUE CREDIT AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN OCONEE COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA, AND [PROJECT JOE], ALSO KNOWN AS PROJECT JOE, ACTING FOR ITSELF, ONE OR MORE CURRENT OR FUTURE AFFILIATES AND OTHER PROJECT COMPANIES (COLLECTIVELY, “COMPANY”); PROVIDING FOR A SPECIAL SOURCE REVENUE CREDIT; AND OTHER RELATED MATTERS.

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mize, approved 5 - 0, to approve **Ordinance 2025-22** on second reading.

**ORDINANCE 2025-23** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CONVEYANCE OF EASEMENT RIGHTS TO BLUE RIDGE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. FOR THE PURPOSE OF UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE AT PROPERTY LOCATED AT 150 SCHOOL HOUSE ROAD, WESTMINSTER, SOUTH CAROLINA, SUCH PROPERTY CURRENTLY IDENTIFIED BY TAX PARCEL NUMBER 300-00-02-031; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 - 0, to approve **Ordinance 2025-23** on second reading.

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**ORDINANCE 2025-24** AN ORDINANCE FORMALLY REPEALING ARTICLE IV (SEE ORDINANCE 1995-07) AND ARTICLE V (SEE ORDINANCE 1989-06) OF CHAPTER 34 (“UTILITIES”) OF THE OCONEE COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES, AS RELATES TO SEWER REGULATIONS OF THE FORMER OCONEE COUNTY SEWER COMMISSION; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mize, to approve **Ordinance 2025-24** on second reading.

As requested by Mr. Hart, Mr. Root provided background information related to the above ordinance, noting this ordinance is just an administrative clean up of former Oconee County Sewer Commission provisions to decrease any confusion.

Motion approved 5 – 0.

### **First Reading of the Following Ordinances**

**ORDINANCE 2025-25** AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND ARTICLE IV (“USE OF PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS”) OF CHAPTER 22 (“PARKS AND RECREATION”) OF THE OCONEE COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES, WITH RESPECT TO THE REGULATION OF GOLF CART OPERATION AT COUNTY PARKS; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO.

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, to approve **Ordinance 2025-25** on first reading.

Mr. Shirley informed Council that the above requested amendment is to ensure compliance with new State laws related to golf cart regulations.

Motion approved 5 – 0.

### **Action on Matters Removed from Consent Agenda at Council Member Request**

None for this meeting.

### **Discussion Regarding Action Items**

#### **Council consideration to amend Horton’s 2019 Performance Agreement for the company’s South Carolina Set-Aside Grant Agreement**

In 2019 Horton received a South Carolina Set-Aside Grant for \$540,000 for the construction of their new engine cooling fans manufacturing facility at Oconee Industry and Technology Park in Westminster. The grant required them to have a capital investment of \$20,000,000 and create 125 new jobs by March 2025. The company has exceeded the investment requirement by 80%; however, has not met the required job numbers. The South Carolina Coordinating Council for Economic Development, which administers the grant, has agreed to extend the job creation deadline to December 31, 2027. The extension requires Oconee County to amend the grant’s performance agreement to reflect the date change.

*There is no financial impact to Oconee County.*

***It is the staff’s recommendation that Council approve the amended performance agreement.***

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Mr. Durham made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 - 0, to approve the amended Horton's 2019 Performance Agreement for the company's South Carolina Set-Aside Grant Agreement.

**Request for Council's approval for the addition of a Victim Advocate position for the Solicitor's Office**

- The Solicitor's Office applied for grant funding for a new Victim Advocate through the Attorney General's Crime Victim Assistance Grant Program.
- The reimbursement grant covers costs associated with the salary and fringe benefits for the position.
- The salary + fringe benefits total \$75,005.
- The grant is a \$60,000 grant that requires a \$15,005 match.
- The grant funds will be provided directly to the Solicitor's Office and administered by their staff.
- The Solicitor's Office has seen an increase in caseloads over the last few years and requested this position in the FY 2025-2026 budget proposal; however, it was not included in the approved budget.

The Solicitor's Office would like to continue this position after the end of the grant period. The office will apply for additional grant funding, if available, to support the position.

The match will be paid out of the Solicitor's Office General Fund, which utilizes state funding and alternate revenue resources.

Are Matching Funds Available: No, Oconee County would not be providing the match from the general fund, or special revenue funds for this grant.

***It is staff's recommendation that Council support the FY2025 Crime Victim's Assistance Grant and approve the addition of the Victim Advocate position under the Solicitor's Office.***

On behalf of Solicitor Micah Black, Mr. Chris Beeco provided Council with details related to the above request.

Mr. Durham noted there would be no cost to Oconee County should this request receive approval.

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to approve the addition of a Victim Advocate position for the Solicitor's Office.

Mr. Hart provided comments in support of the below request for two deputies to address increased homelessness in Oconee County.

**Request for Council's approval to commit funds, towards the US Department of Justice FY25 COPS Hiring Program Grant, for the hiring of two sworn deputies to address increased homelessness in Oconee County.**

- Oconee County has seen an increase in the number of homeless people, impacting business owners with loitering and littering, as well as increasing the needs for medical services at the local hospital.
- Homelessness often has an underlying cause, such as substance use disorders or mental health disorders.
- The Oconee County Sheriff's Office has experienced an increase in calls for law enforcement related services due to homelessness.
- This grant would allow the Oconee County Sheriff's Office to hire two new deputies that would be able to help homeless persons suffering from addiction and mental health-related issues.
- The grant award is \$250,000 and requires a minimum 25% match. The grant period is over three years, beginning on November 1, 2025 and ending on October 31, 2028.
- Estimated total project cost is \$434,056, with the County match totaling \$184,056.

Oconee County would be responsible for the full salaries and fringe for two sworn officers after the grant period

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ends. The grant does not cover equipment and vehicle costs. For two new deputies, equipment and upfitted vehicles will cost \$128,304.

As the grant does not correlate with the Fiscal Calendar, funding will need to be allocated across four fiscal years to support the grant.

Fiscal Year	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	Total
County Match	\$ 40,902.00	\$ 61,352.00	\$ 61,352.00	\$ 20,450.00	\$ 184,056.00
Equipment	\$ 24,104.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 24,104.00
Upfitted Vehicles	\$ 104,200.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 104,200.00
Total					\$ 312,360.00

Funding for these positions, equipment and upfitted vehicles were not included in the approved budget for FY 2025-2026.

***It is staff's recommendation that Council support the FY25 COPS Hiring Grant and commit matching funds, up to \$184,056, for the hiring of two deputies to address homelessness in Oconee County. Oconee County further requests Oconee County Council approve the allocation of funding for the equipment and upfitted vehicles for the two deputies, in the amount of \$128,304.***

Sheriff Mike Crenshaw provided Council with information related to the above request and answered all questions presented by Council.

Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mize, approved 5 – 0 and contingent upon fund availability identified by Interim County Administrator, to approve and support the FY25 COPS Hiring Grant and commit matching funds, up to \$184,056, for the hiring of two deputies to address homelessness in Oconee County. Oconee County further requests Oconee County Council approve the allocation of funding for the equipment and upfitted vehicles for the two deputies, in the amount of \$128,304

### **Council Committee Reports**

None for this meeting.

### **Board & Commission Appointments**

#### **Building Codes Appeal Board..... 2 At-Large Seats**

No questionnaires on file requesting consideration of appointment.

#### **Fire Service Advisory Commission..... Districts I II III IV V**

District I: 0 questionnaires requesting initial appointment

Mr. Elliott made a nomination, approved 5 – 0, to appoint Mr. David Nabors as District I representative on the Oconee County Fire Service Advisory Commission.

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District III: 2 questionnaires requesting initial appointment

Mr. Mize nominated Mr. Favion Skelton as the District III representative on the Oconee County Fire Service Advisory Commission.

Mr. Hart indicated that Mr. Skelton actually lives in District V.

Mr. Durham and Mr. Mize agreed to postpone this appointment to the December 2, 2025 Council meeting.

*At-large positions are appointed by Oconee County Fire Chiefs' Association*

### **Executive Session**

Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. Elliott, 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. *Discussion regarding an economic development matter, Project Hawk.*
2. *Discuss personnel matter related to emergency service operations.*
3. *Discuss personnel matter related to Interim County Administrator.*
4. *Discuss contractual matter regarding personnel recruitment.*
5. *Discuss contractual matter regarding legal services – County Attorney.*
6. *Discuss personnel matter related to committee appointment.*
7. *Receive legal advice and discuss matters related to proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services to encourage economic development.*
8. *Receive legal advice and discuss contractual matter regarding employee benefits consultants / vendors and issues directly related thereto.*

Council entered into Executive Session at 6:25 p.m.

Council returned from Executive Session at 8:11 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 5 – 0.

As requested by Mr. Root related to Executive Session item number three, Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to direct County Attorney to draft a Memorandum of Understanding memorializing the terms of engagement for the Interim County Administrator for the County Council Chair to execute.

Mr. Durham made a nomination, seconded by Mr. Elliott, approved 5 – 0, to appoint Mr. Glen Hart to serve on the OJRSA Reconstitution Ad Hoc Committee to represent the County.

As requested by Mr. Root related to Executive Session item number seven, Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to direct Interim County Administrator to work with the Sewer Authority to draft and send a letter to the Department of Transportation as discussed and for the project engineers to evaluate the underlying issues.

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As requested by Mr. Root related to Executive Session item number eight, Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to direct the Interim County Administrator to submit a non-binding application for a quote from PEBA Health Insurance Benefits.

**Adjourn:**

Mr. Elliott made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Jennifer C. Adams  
Clerk to Council

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