



MINUTES

OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

Regular Meeting

July 21, 2026

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, Chairman Pro Tem, District IV
Mr. Glenn Hart, 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 Stewart Jones, Deputy Administrator Phil Shirley, County Attorney Rob Chumley, & 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: Fox Carolina News Station, Dick Mangrum / 101.7 WGOG, Andrea Kelley / The Journal

Call to Order

Mr. Durham called the meeting to order at 6:18 p.m.

Moment of Silence

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

Invocation

Mr. Joel Smith gave the Invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

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

Attorney's Comments

None for this meeting.

Council's meetings shall be conducted pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, Council's Rules and the Model Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for South Carolina Counties, latest edition. This agenda may not be inclusive of all issues which Council may bring up for discussion at this meeting. Items are listed on Council's agenda to give public notice of the subjects and issues to be discussed, acted upon, received as information and/or disposed of during the meeting. Items listed on Council's agenda may be taken up, tabled, postponed, reconsidered, removed or otherwise disposed of as provided for under Council's Rules, and Model Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for South Carolina Counties, latest edition, if not specified under Council's rules.

A video recording of this meeting is available at www.oconeesc.com. Meetings have been live-streamed beginning January 17, 2017.
Brought to you by Your Oconee.

Administrator's Comments

Mr. Jones introduced Mr. Richie Caudill, Emergency Services Director, who then made a short presentation on the Noah's Box project that is currently being implemented and utilized by emergency services.

Consent Agenda

[Consent agendas are used to more quickly dispose of routine business by allowing Council to approve more than one item at the same time, without debate, amendment, or individual motions. If a Council member requests discussion about one or more of these items, that item(s) will be removed from the consent agenda and placed on the regular agenda to be discussed later in the meeting.]

1. July 07, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes

2. Procurement Item:

2026 Hyundai EX1200-7 Mining Shovel

Department(s): Rock Quarry

Amount: \$1,860,500.00

Procurement was approved by Council in Fiscal Year 2026-2027 budget process.

Budget: \$1,860,500.00 Project Cost: \$1,860,500.00 Balance: \$0.00

(Funding from Rock Quarry Capital Equipment budget)

It is the staff's recommendation that Council approve the purchase of a 2026 Hitachi EX1200-7 Shovel from Hills Machinery of Greenville, SC, in the amount of \$1,860,500.00, per N. C. Sheriff's Association Contract # 27-11-0421.

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

Proclamations

PROCLAMATION 2026-07 A PROCLAMATION OF OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL

HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF UNITED STATES SENATOR LINDSEY OLIN GRAHAM

Mr. Durham expressed his personal gratitude for the help that Senator Graham provided to his sister and her family during a crisis in Africa where they were serving as missionaries.

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mize, approved 5 - 0, to approve **Proclamation 2026-07** on first and final reading.

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. Richard Pugh provided remarks related to the Corinth-Shiloh Special Purpose Tax District for Fire Protection millage rate, noting he is not in favor of a millage increase.

Mr. Durham stated that there has been no proposal of removing the millage cap for the Corinth-Shiloh Special Purpose Tax District for Fire Protection, noting the only suggestion made to Council was that any millage increase for this special tax district be put to a referendum for voters to decide.

Council's meetings shall be conducted pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, Council's Rules and the Model Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for South Carolina Counties, latest edition. This agenda may not be inclusive of all issues which Council may bring up for discussion at this meeting. Items are listed on Council's agenda to give public notice of the subjects and issues to be discussed, acted upon, received as information and/or disposed of during the meeting. Items listed on Council's agenda may be taken up, tabled, postponed, reconsidered, removed or otherwise disposed of as provided for under Council's Rules, and Model Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for South Carolina Counties, latest edition, if not specified under Council's rules.

A video recording of this meeting is available at www.oconeesc.com. Meetings have been live-streamed beginning January 17, 2017. Brought to you by Your Oconee.

2. Ms. Lauren Ballard shared her concerns related FLOCK cameras and how the data they collect will be used.
3. Ms. Valerie McCarthy expressed her appreciation for our law enforcement and went on to share her concerns with the technology of FLOCK cameras.
4. Mr. David Crockett spoke in opposition to **Ordinance 2026-23**.
5. Mr. Wayne Smith spoke in support of **Ordinance 2026-23**.
6. Ms. Lisa Fister spoke in opposition to **Ordinance 2026-23**.
7. Mr. Kerry Sartain spoke in opposition to **Ordinance 2026-23** and shared his opinion that the Corinth-Shiloh Special Purpose Tax District for Fire Protection needs to be rescinded.
8. Ms. Christine Levesque spoke in opposition to **Ordinance 2026-23**.
9. Mr. James Miller shared his concerns related to the millage rate within the Corinth-Shiloh Special Purpose Tax District for Fire Protection.
10. Mr. Tim Murphy spoke in opposition to **Ordinance 2026-23** and shared the frustrations he has with the Corinth-Shiloh Special Purpose Tax District Commission.
11. Mr. Doug Hedden, Jr. spoke in opposition to FLOCK cameras.
12. Mr. Danny Delmarco spoke in opposition to **Ordinance 2026-23** and shared the frustrations he has with the Corinth-Shiloh Special Tax District Commission.
13. Mr. Bill Box spoke in opposition to **Ordinance 2026-23**.
14. Ms. Elizabeth O'Connor spoke in opposition to FLOCK cameras.
15. Mr. Matt Price spoke in opposition to FLOCK cameras.
16. Mr. David Hammond expressed his concerns over an Oconee County Sheriff's Office employee.

Council Members Comments

Mr. Durham made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 – 0, to direct the County Administrator and the County Attorney to conduct a full review of the automatic license plate reader systems, including FLOCK and other cameras offering the same technology, in Oconee County and return to Council with a written report that includes a legal recommendation within 60 days, noting this report should include the scope of Council's authority, including the limits created by the Sheriff's status as an elected constitutional officer, and the legal recommendation of action available to the Council (termination, relocation, procurement, etc. of cameras).

Mr. Hart pointed out that he did not appoint Mr. Wayne Smith to the Corinth-Shiloh Special Purpose Tax District Commission and offer further comments related to transparency.

Mr. Elliott noted that public safety is number one and extended his appreciation for all those in attendance with concerns related to the Corinth-Shiloh Special Purpose Tax District, then went on to state that he will be abstaining from voting on **Ordinance 2026-23** and recommended that the volunteers and Corinth-Shiloh Special Purpose Tax District Commission need to start working together and put public safety first.

Mr. Durham noted that the recommendation from the Corinth-Shiloh Special Purpose Tax District Commission was to have a referendum for voters to decide if the millage should go above 25 mills and went on to express his opinion that the Corinth-Shiloh Special Purpose Tax District for Fire Protection was not needed.

Council's meetings shall be conducted pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, Council's Rules and the Model Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for South Carolina Counties, latest edition. This agenda may not be inclusive of all issues which Council may bring up for discussion at this meeting. Items are listed on Council's agenda to give public notice of the subjects and issues to be discussed, acted upon, received as information and/or disposed of during the meeting. Items listed on Council's agenda may be taken up, tabled, postponed, reconsidered, removed or otherwise disposed of as provided for under Council's Rules, and Model Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for South Carolina Counties, latest edition, if not specified under Council's rules.

A video recording of this meeting is available at www.oconeesc.com. Meetings have been live-streamed beginning January 17, 2017. Brought to you by Your Oconee.

Third Reading of the Following Ordinances

None for this meeting.

Second Reading of the Following Ordinances

ORDINANCE 2026-23 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2024-26 ENTITLED “AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE CORINTH-SHILOH SPECIAL PURPOSE TAX DISTRICT FOR FIRE PROTECTION; ESTABLISHING THE CORINTH-SHILOH SPECIAL PURPOSE TAX DISTRICT COMMISSION; AND OTHER RELATED MATTERS.”

Mr. Hart made a motion, seconded by Mr. James, to approve **Ordinance 2026-23** on second reading.

Mr. Durham made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 4 – 1 [Mr. Elliott abstained from voting] to direct County Administrator in consultation with County Attorney, Fire Chief and Emergency Services Director to examine the feasibility and legality of dissolving the Corinth Shiloh Special Tax District for Fire Protection and return fire protection in that area to the County and report back to Council with findings, proposed plan, and cost analysis in 90 days.

Mr. Mize expressed his opinion that this is not the time to change the current composition of the Corinth-Shiloh Special Purpose Tax District Commission from appointed to elected, echoing Mr. Durham’s prior statements that public safety should not be in jeopardy due to the current conflict between the Commission and volunteers.

Mr. Durham pointed out that, per the ordinance, the appointed Commission is still within the 2-year span before the election of commissioners.

Mr. Durham made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 4 – 1 [Mr. Elliott abstained from voting] to direct County Attorney to review a possible amendment to **Ordinance 2026-23** for third reading stating that any increase in millage above 25 mills go to a referendum.

Motion to approve **Ordinance 2026-23** on second reading, approved 4 – 1[Mr. Elliott abstained from voting].

First Reading of the Following Ordinances

ORDINANCE 2026-24 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CONVEYANCE OF EASEMENT RIGHTS TO UPCOUNTRY FIBER FOR THE PURPOSE OF UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE AT PROPERTY OWNED BY OCONEE COUNTY, LOCATED AT THE INTERSECTION OF NEBO CHURCH ROAD AND HARBIN ACRES ROAD, SENECA, SOUTH CAROLINA, SUCH PROPERTY CURRENTLY IDENTIFIED BY TAX PARCEL NUMBER 256-00-04-031; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO. *(in title only)*

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hart, approved 5 - 0, to approve **Ordinance 2026-24** on first reading in title only.

Council's meetings shall be conducted pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, Council's Rules and the Model Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for South Carolina Counties, latest edition. This agenda may not be inclusive of all issues which Council may bring up for discussion at this meeting. Items are listed on Council's agenda to give public notice of the subjects and issues to be discussed, acted upon, received as information and/or disposed of during the meeting. Items listed on Council's agenda may be taken up, tabled, postponed, reconsidered, removed or otherwise disposed of as provided for under Council's Rules, and Model Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for South Carolina Counties, latest edition, if not specified under Council's rules.

A video recording of this meeting is available at www.oconeesc.com. Meetings have been live-streamed beginning January 17, 2017. Brought to you by Your Oconee.

ORDINANCE 2026-25 AN ORDINANCE FOR THE PRESERVATION, REDEVELOPMENT, AND SALE OF THE HISTORIC OCONEE COUNTY COURTHOUSE LOCATED AT 211 W. MAIN ST. WALHALLA, SOUTH CAROLINA; AND OTHER RELATED MATTERS. (*in title only*)

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. James, to approve **Ordinance 2026-25** on first reading in title only.

Mr. Durham pointed out that first reading of this ordinance was “in title only” and further details would be available before second reading.

Motion approved 4 – 1[Mr. Elliott abstained from voting].

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 of MSW Transfer Station Tipping Fee for Small Residential Haulers

Traditionally, the County has waived the “MSW Transfer Station Tipping Fee – Residential Haulers at 50%” for small in county residential haulers. After further review and discussion, Council must evaluate if these newly added fees be waived for the remainder FY27 for small residential haulers. The Administration recommends that Council adopt this waiver by motion and plans to set new criteria for these fees in the FY28 budget. There is no impact on the budget as this was a newly added fee and was not calculated into projected revenues yet.

Mr. Durham provided background information related to residential hauler tipping fees.

Mr. Cole Lampier, a small residential hauler, addressed Council with his concerns related to tipping fees.

Mr. Swain Still, Solid Waste Director, provided Council the cost details of their contract for disposal of solid waste in Homer, Ga., noting that if they used the Oconee Transfer Station in Fair Play the cost would still be the same.

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. James, approved 5 – 0, to approve waiving the newly added tipping fees for the remainder of fee period 2027 for small residential haulers.

Mr. Hart commended the current Corinth-Shiloh Special Purpose Tax District Commissioners for the work they are doing and offered recognition of all 5 members in attendance.

Council Committee Reports

Mr. James provided information outlining discussions held at the July 07, 2026 Planning and Economic Development Committee meeting.

Council's meetings shall be conducted pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, Council's Rules and the Model Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for South Carolina Counties, latest edition. This agenda may not be inclusive of all issues which Council may bring up for discussion at this meeting. Items are listed on Council's agenda to give public notice of the subjects and issues to be discussed, acted upon, received as information and/or disposed of during the meeting. Items listed on Council's agenda may be taken up, tabled, postponed, reconsidered, removed or otherwise disposed of as provided for under Council's Rules, and Model Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for South Carolina Counties, latest edition, if not specified under Council's rules.

A video recording of this meeting is available at www.oconeesc.com. Meetings have been live-streamed beginning January 17, 2017. Brought to you by Your Oconee.

Board & Commission Appointments

Building Codes Appeal Board..... 1 At-Large Seat

No questionnaires on file requesting consideration of appointment.

Agricultural Advisory Board *District 1*

One questionnaire on file requesting consideration of appointment.

No nominations were made for the vacant positions on the Building Codes Appeal Board or the Agricultural Advisory Board.

Executive Session

Mr. Elliott made a motion, seconded by Mr. James, 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. Receipt of legal advice and discussion regarding a personnel matter.*
- 2. Receive legal advice and discuss potential contractual matter regarding utilities / infrastructure project(s).*
- 3. Receipt of legal advice and discussion regarding a contractual matter with emergency services.*
- 4. Receive legal advice and discussion regarding the contractual sell of county property.*
- 5. Discussion regarding an economic development matter, Project Homecoming.*

Council entered into Executive Session at 7:56 p.m.

Council returned from Executive Session at 10:11 p.m. on a motion made by Mr. Hart, seconded by Mr. James, approved 5 – 0.

Mr. Durham noted that now action was taken during executive session.

Adjourn:

Mr. James made a motion, approved unanimously, to adjourn at 10:11 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Jennifer C. Adams
Clerk to Council

Council's meetings shall be conducted pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act, Council's Rules and the Model Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for South Carolina Counties, latest edition. This agenda may not be inclusive of all issues which Council may bring up for discussion at this meeting. Items are listed on Council's agenda to give public notice of the subjects and issues to be discussed, acted upon, received as information and/or disposed of during the meeting. Items listed on Council's agenda may be taken up, tabled, postponed, reconsidered, removed or otherwise disposed of as provided for under Council's Rules, and Model Rules of Parliamentary Procedure for South Carolina Counties, latest edition, if not specified under Council's rules.

**A video recording of this meeting is available at www.oconeesc.com. Meetings have been live-streamed beginning January 17, 2017.
Brought to you by Your Oconee.**