



SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING -- WORKSHOP
6:00pm, Tuesday, October 14, 2025
City Hall Council Chambers
1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Present: Council members Streetman, Anderson, Bogosian, Ward, Carroll, Pierce, and Mayor Pounds

Absent: Council members Hahn and Miars

Staff Present: Administrator Kerr, various department heads

2. Citizens' Comments

Ms. Julie Nestler, 17 22nd Avenue, read a letter from the mother of a child hurt in a hit-and-run on Sullivan's Island expressing her support for first responders. Ms. Nestler "implored" City Council to raise the pay of the City's first responders.

Mr. David Kuntz, Ocean Club, spoke about the tidal damage done at Ocean Club recently and thanked City Council for the sandbags. He believes more work needs to be done to preserve the beach and would like to see the large renourishment project happen sooner than scheduled.

3. Special Presentations -- none

4. Dashboard of City Operations and Short-Term Rental Report

Administrator Kerr reported that all job openings in City Hall have been filled. There are currently 2 vacancies in the Police Department and 5 in the Fire Department. Due to the topic matter, Administrator Kerr provided the update on the Evergreen wage study at this point in the meeting.

HR Officer Ladd is providing data to Evergreen who is also collecting data from other municipalities, including St. John's district and Colleton County. He anticipates the final deliverable in about 3 months. They have been given exit interview data. HR Officer Ladd stated that of the ten staff who have left this year, four stated it was due to pay.

City Council discussed a variety of ideas to incentivize Public Safety staff. Council members Pierce and Ward expressed the need to be proactive and stay ahead of the problem.

Discussion then ensued about the number of short-term rental licenses and how best to understand the trends related to the number of licenses issued. Administrator Kerr said he will work on further clarifying the numbers for City Council.

6. Departmental Reports

7. Financial Review

Financial Statements and project worksheets

Director Hamilton said \$3.4 million in revenues was collected in the first quarter, and \$5.3 million has been expensed. Expenses are in line with prior years. The City currently has \$54 million in cash and investments, which is \$8 million over prior year. The City earned \$568,000 in interest in the first quarter.

Business license income is down slightly, which she attributed to timing issues.

The auditors were onsite last week. She anticipates their report will be presented at the November City Council meeting.

\$375,000 in municipal tax revenues have been received, showing a 4% increase over last year. No quarterly funds nor the County pass-through have been received. She completed an audit of last month's hospitality tax receipts and found one business had not submitted their payment. They have been notified of their late payment.

Beach Preservation fees and LOST are up 4% over last year.

7. Procurement

8. Capital Projects Update

Administrator Kerr reported that Phase 1 and 1a of the Waterway Boulevard project are complete. Paving is scheduled for this week. Thomas & Hutton is working on the permitting for Phase 4 Drainage. Work is anticipated to begin in the first part of 2026.

The restaurant tenants would like a commitment from the City about the physical arrangements and payment for changes to the marina parking lot before agreeing to any changes in the lease. This issue will work its way through the Public Services & Facilities Committee before it comes to City Council.

The permits for the marina dredging project are in hand.

The sidewalk extension project is being worked on by the County and still needs to be designed. Council Member Ward expressed concern about a nearby restaurant losing parking spaces because of that project. He offered a design solution and would like that communicated to the County. Administrator Kerr said he does not anticipate the project beginning before the summer.

9. **Strategic Plan Policy Initiatives and Priorities**

A. **Livability**

i. **Discussion of Ordinance 2025-07 – shark fishing ordinance and guidelines**

Council Member Bogosian said clarifying language has been added to the ordinance about the use of a traditional rod and reel to cast a line and not other mechanical means.

B. **Environmental**

i. **Discussion of beach debris removal contract**

Administrator Kerr said there was only one responsive bidder to this RFP. He believes the reason more were not interested is because of the 40 cans on the beach that must be emptied. He shared, “The company that did bid is Trident, who is the same company that was the low bidder on the garbage collection contract. They are also the operation that is doing a very similar process on Kiawah. So they have an experience with Kiawah. We have run some, there’s a little bit of a challenge in figuring out how their bid, they gave us a daily rate in their bid, and their daily rate is \$975/day. The challenging part of that is figuring out how that measures up with our typical days of collection.”

He noted that 160 days of collection at \$975/day is \$156,000. Asst. Director Asero said he believed the cost of the last contractor was \$741/day, but there were less collections.

Administrator Kerr pointed out that the current operation has not been smooth or consistent. He added that the City prefers to have more than one bid on RFPs before awarding a contract.

He suggested that eliminating cans on the beach and only have trash receptacles roadside. He shared that staff completed a pilot program at one beach access where all receptacles were roadside and there was no increase in the amount of trash on the beach. Administrator Kerr would like direction from City Council before engaging in any sort of change to the contract with Trident. Further analysis of the bid and contract and history of trash removal from the beach will be meeting packet at the end of the month.

C. **Public Services**

D. **Personnel – discussion of wage study update (completed earlier in the meeting)**

E. **Other items for discussion -- Discussion of ATAX grant award to the Lutheran Retreat Center**

Administrator Kerr said the ATAX Committee requests the approval of a \$10,000 ATAX grant be awarded to the Lutheran Retreat Center for parking lot improvements.

10. Legislative Report

11. Adjournment

Council Member Ward made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Council Member Bogosian seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:57pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk

Randy Bell 22 41st Avenue

Citizen comments for 9/8/2025 IOP Council Workshop

Conflicts of Interest and required Recusal sourced from S.C. Code and the Municipal Association of S.C.

A key requirement of South Carolina's ethics laws is that public officials, members of public bodies and public employees must not use their offices in a way that provides themselves, members of their family, or businesses with which they are associated with financial gain.

To prevent officials from taking acts that benefit them financially, state law addresses situations where they must recuse themselves from voting on an issue, or even deliberating on an issue as represented in SC Code Section 8-13-700.

Yet, in the wrong venue, two members (Ward and Carroll) of the Administrative Committee with an orchestrated 2-1 vote introduced tonight's agenda item (9.a.iii) Discussion of license strikes being citations instead of founded complaints thus allowing Councilmember Carroll to blatantly violate S.C. state ethics law. For Ms. Carroll, owner of Carroll Realty, the discussion and subsequent vote could not be more clear. Mayoral "leadership" should not have placed this item on the agenda and zero debate should take place that includes Councilmember Carroll.

A reminder to Council, and particularly those advocating enforcement over numerical limitations on short-term rentals, you did finally take an appropriate step by passing the ordinance now unpopular with the "Family Vacation Rental Group" which Councilmember Carroll openly states she is representing, and "meets regularly to discuss these types of things..."

"*We're proposing*" is Councilmember Carroll's exact quote from the committee meeting. I'll repeat, "*We're proposing.....*" as clear representation of commercial interest, not the elected position on Council

Recusal from a vote involves several steps.

Step 1: Prepare a written statement.

The law requires them to make a written statement describing the matter requiring action and the nature of the conflict.

Step 2: Submit the statement by providing it to the Mayor as presiding officer

Step 3: Place into public record

Step 4: Avoid taking any further action.

Avoiding any official action means not voting and not deliberating. The member is not required to leave the meeting, but the SC Ethics Commission advises that members of public bodies who recuse themselves physically leave the room for the portion of the meeting concerning the conflict of interest to avoid any perception of undue influence.

Ethics Commission Sanctions

- Public reprimand,

- A civil fine of up to **\$2,000 per violation**
- A cease-and-desist order

Should there be any confusion on this topic I would advise going into Executive Session for advice from the city attorney.

S.C. Code Section 8-13-700 is not optional, and all elected officials are required to comply

You may all recall Councilman Buchanan recused himself a few years back simply for owning one STR. As for any long-serving Council member, you should certainly know better than violating the ethics laws.