



City Council

6:00 p.m., Thursday, January 29, 2026
City Hall Council Chambers
1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Present: Council members Bogosian, Cohen, Carroll, Streetman, Miller, Ward, Miars (left at approximately 8:45pm), Pierce, Mayor Pounds

Staff Present: Administrator Kerr, Deputy Administrator Kuester, City Attorney McQuillin, various department heads

2. Citizen's Comments

Wendi Pasterik, Ocean Boulevard, shared some printed materials with Council members. She encouraged City Council to accept Foth/Olsen's proposal for beach alternatives analysis.

Sandra Brotherton's comments are attached to these minutes.

Julie Nestler, 22nd Avenue, asked City Council to examine the base pay structure for the Fire and Police departments. She said the current system discourages experienced Public Safety personnel to stay for a longer period of time. She would like to see the formation of a citizen Public Safety committee.

Cindi Solomon, 130 Ocean Boulevard, and Dan Slotchiver, Back Bay Drive, also advocated for Foth/Olsen to be selected for the beach alternatives analysis.

Andrew Schumacher, COO for WDCA, spoke with concern about the City's proposed funding cap on beach renourishment within Wild Dunes.

3. Election of Mayor Pro Tem

Council Member Ward nominated Council Member Streetman for Mayor Pro Tem. Council Member Bogosian nominated Council Member Pierce for Mayor Pro Tem.

Council members Carroll, Ward, Streetman, and Mayor Pounds voted in favor of Council Member Streetman.

Council members Pierce, Bogosian, Miller, Miars, and Cohen voted in favor of Council Member Pierce. Council Member Pierce was elected Mayor Pro Tem

4. Presentations – Beach Renourishment Update, Stephen Traynum

Mr. Stephen Traynum and Mr. Scott Finnish of CS&E shared an update on current beach conditions. That slide deck appears alongside the agenda on the City's website.

Mr. Traynum also shared details of the project scope for the upcoming beach renourishment project. Administrator Kerr said the City's budget accounts for higher amounts of sand than what is being proposed in the base bid for the project.

Council Member Pierce expressed concern about the "staying power" of the sand on the beach. Mr. Traynum replied, "We are seeing a lot of sand remaining in the system. We are scheduled to do our normal semiannual survey next week if the weather allows. So we will be able to quantify the actual volume that we're seeing compared to late August when our last survey was. What we did not see was Ahtna pump a lot of sand and that sand immediately move up the dry sand beach. We knew a lot of it was out in the low tide area. But I think what we are starting to see evidence with this wide dry sand beach between 2nd Avenue and up to about 6th Avenue, is that sand is just very slowly over time migrating up the profile, and you're seeing kind of a more gradual increase in the dry sand as opposed to one kind of initial surge of a kind of sandbar migrating on shore."

Mr. Traynum said the sand can be sampled. Finer sand can be moved into the dunes. The sand that will be pumped onshore during the renourishment will be coarser sand.

Council Member Bogosian asked if the current beneficial use projects are affecting Hamlin Creek and suggested hiring an expert to determine if that work is affecting the creek.

Council Member Bogosian suggested putting the larger quantities of sand in the bid. Mr. Traynum answered, "I don't know that there's much advantage to doing that in the bidding process. That's just giving the contractor a minimum quantity that they are confident that they know they're going to get for that end and for the mobilization effort they're going to have to do. It just gives the City flexibility to place as much as you want up to that permit amount in the end."

Mr. Traynum added that completing tracer studies and or a survey of Hamlin Creek can be included in their beach monitoring scope for a modest increase in their contract. He noted that inlet creeks, such as Hamlin Creek, are consistent problem areas along the coast.

Mr. Traynum shared that he has worked with US Fish and Wildlife and their programmatic biological opinion to adjust the construction windows for the upcoming project. He believes the construction could start in April/May and take up to 4 months, which is inside the construction windows acceptable to US Fish and Wildlife.

He anticipates releasing the bids on February 13 and a bid opening on March 18.

Administrator Kerr suggested that the issue with Hamlin Creek and potential use of the sand contained within would be a good project for the new Beach Preservation Committee to consider.

5. Approval of previous meetings' minutes

MOTION: Council Member Bogosian and Council Member Miller seconded the motion.

- A. City Council Meeting – November 12, 2025
- B. Special City Council Meeting – December 9, 2025
- C. Municipal Inauguration – January 6, 2026

- D. Special City Council Meeting – January 6, 2026
- E. Special City Council Meeting – January 13, 2026

Council Member Streetman noted an error in the vote for the Council liaison to the Charleston Visitor’s Bureau for the minutes of the Special Meeting on January 6, 2026.

VOTE: The minutes were approved as amended.

MOTION: Council Member Ward made a motion to suspend the rules of order and allow for the discussion of the beach alternatives analysis to be discussed at this point in the meeting. Council Member Bogosian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. New Business

- F. Discussion and consideration of beach alternatives analysis proposals

MOTION: Council Member Pierce made a motion to select Foth/Olsen to prepare a beach management alternatives analysis. Council Member Miars seconded the motion.

Mayor Pounds reminded Council that they still need to discuss if they want hard structures on the beach.

Council members Bogosian, Miller, and Cohen spoke in favor of Foth/Olsen. Council Member Streetman spoke in favor of CS&E.

Administrator Kerr said this work does not affect or change the beach monitoring services or the management of the upcoming beach renourishment project that is currently handled by CS&E.

Mayor Pounds suggested having both companies complete the analysis and make decisions based on what they receive.

VOTE: A vote was taken on the motion as follows:

- Ayes: Cohen, Miars, Bogosian, Ward, Pierce, Carroll, Miller
- Nays: Streetman, Pounds

The motion passed 7-2.

7. Old Business – none

8. New Business

- A. Discussion and consideration of budget timeline and assumptions

Director Hamilton said she has met with department heads regarding their proposed FY27 capital schedules, which will be reviewed by their respective committees in February. She will discuss operational budgets with them next, and those will be reviewed by committees in March.

Director Hamilton reviewed the budget assumptions in the meeting packet.

Council Member Bogosian requested a “three-year runway” on building licenses and permits. He expressed concern about revenues remaining flat while expenses are increasing. He would like to challenge the staff to keep expenses flat.

Administrator Kerr noted that costs associated with the beach renourishment will go across FY26 and FY27.

Council Member Pierce expressed concern about not having enough time to work on the budget. Council Member Streetman noted the proposed budget timeline is the same timeline Council has used for several years, but additional meetings could be added, if necessary.

Administrator Kerr said the Public Services & Facilities Committee continues to work through the beach renourishment funding options.

Council Member Bogosian agreed an additional budget meeting may be needed as this is a non-typical budget year. He would like City Council to further refine the budget assumptions at the workshop on February 10.

B. Discussion and consideration of cost sharing arrangement with the Wild Dunes Community Association for the upcoming beach renourishment project

Administrator Kerr reviewed five proposed cost-sharing arrangements for the Wild Dunes portion of the beach renourishment project. The Public Services & Facilities Committee recommended scenario #5. Council Member Miars explained that scenario #5 shares the soft costs of the project between Wild Dunes and the City.

Administrator Kerr explained that the proposed cap of \$10 million on the City's portion of the project on the north end protects the City should the bids come in higher than anticipated. He added that the city's costs are based on budgetary placeholders and the lower amount of cubic yards in the base bid. Any agreement between the City and Wild Dunes will allow for "dialing down." He said, "I think in any situation, both groups, and it's what the agreement would say, both groups would have to agree to go above the kind of estimated numbers. We wouldn't want City Council to be on the hook for a limitless percentage cost of the project." The only way to complete a larger project is if the bids come in lower than anticipated.

Administrator Kerr said that staff is looking for City Council to "endorse a percentage breakdown with a cap that would then go into an agreement." That agreement would come back to City Council for consideration.

Council Member Bogosian asked City Attorney McQuillin for clarity regarding the use of public funds on private property.

City Attorney McQuillin said, "Beach renourishment is generally considered a public purpose, and there are plenty of cases. Bradens versus Folly Beach is the most recent case that the South Carolina Supreme Court issued where it recognized beach nourishment as a public purpose. It's whether it's on the south side of the beach or in Wild Dunes. We are still pushing sand onto people's private property, and so there is always going to be some sort of incidental private benefit. You're protecting someone's private property. That is why we are, in large part, why we are putting sand there. So I don't see any issue with it being in Wild Dunes."

Council Member Bogosian asked why the Committee selected scenario #5. Council Member Miars said scenarios #1 and 2 are not feasible, and out of scenarios #4 and 5, #5 seemed the fairest. Council Member Pierce would like to have the proposed percentage breakdown validated. Administrator Kerr briefly explained what data could be used to validate the

breakdown. Council Member Pierce would like further Council discussion about the breakdown at the workshop.

MOTION: Council Member Pierce made a motion to move forward with the 47/53 breakdown suggested in cost sharing scenario #5, subject to validation, and a funding cap of \$10.5 million for the Wild Dunes portion of the project. Council Member Cohen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The proposed MOU will be reviewed at the upcoming Public Services & Facilities Committee meeting on February 9.

C. Discussion and consideration of allocating up to \$500,000 to improve the marina parking lot and amend the lease agreement

Administrator Kerr said the Public Services & Facilities Committee has been working with the restaurant operators to come up with a plan that would eliminate the need to share parking at the marina. He shared a visual of the proposed plan. He said the restaurant indicated they would not consider any lease amendments without a promise from the City to fund all the physical improvements to make this plan happen. The Committee ultimately made a recommendation that the City commit approximately \$500,000 to fund the improvements. With City Council's approval, the next step would be to amend the lease.

Council Member Miars added that Mr. Lorenz suggested he could take on the management of the project since he could possibly get lower costs.

Mayor Pounds asked if amending the lease would violate the original lease in any way. City Attorney McQuillin said, "This goes back to Bogosian's question, too, about using public funds for a private purpose. We're getting things out of this, additional parking spaces, trailer parking, a little park up there. So I do think there is a public benefit associated with us doing this work. The one thing we need to make clear though is if we are paying for these improvements ultimately under the lease, the going forward maintenance, at least particularly to their property under the lease, they're going to have to continue to do that. I don't want there to be any confusion that oh because the City is doing this, they are stuck with maintaining it. Because that was never the intent of --"

Council members Miars and Pierce said the restaurant agreed to that maintenance at their recent meeting.

MOTION: Council Member Miars made a motion to allocate up to \$500,000 to improve the marina parking lot and amend the lease agreement. Council Member Pierce seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Discussion and consideration of the creation of a standing Finance Committee

City Council engaged in a lengthy discussion about the possible formation of a standing Finance Committee. Council Member Pierce expressed his preference for a standing Finance Committee, adding that the City Council workshop does not allow for thorough discussion of financial issues. He would like more in-depth review of the City's finances and forecasting. He believes there needs to be more financial transparency.

Parameters such as how frequently such a Committee would meet and report out as well as whether or not the Committee should be a standing committee versus an ad hoc committee that would work on reporting were discussed.

MOTION: Council Member Pierce made a motion to create a standing Finance Committee. Council Member Miars seconded the motion.

City Attorney McQuillin said specifics about such a committee would need to be added to City Code. He said that most municipalities have a Ways & Means Committee made up of the entire City Council.

Discussion ensued about the possibility of eliminating the workshop and replacing it with a standing Finance Committee made up of all Council members.

MOTION: Council Member Pierce made a motion to amend the original motion to create a standing Finance Committee made up of all City Council members and eliminate the City Council workshop. Council Member Miars seconded the amendment. A vote on the amended motion was taken with all in favor.

E. Discussion and consideration of State budget requests through lobbyist

Referencing the pages in the meeting packet, Mayor Pounds said, “The first page was what we approved in November, which included revenue production ideas and the funding priorities based on feedback from our lobbyists. Next page was around taking our next fiscal year purchases that would fit into those categories” totaling approximately \$6.5 million. These purchases would include equipment for Public Safety, drainage, stormwater infrastructure, beach access paths, and some greenspace.

He suggested that the City request a portion of the State’s budget surplus for beach nourishment. Council Member Pierce suggested asking for \$20 million. Mayor Pounds asked that request be added to the page of budgetary requests.

MOTION: Council Member Bogosian made a motion to approve the list as amended. Council Member Ward seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

G. Discussion of future Charleston County Transportation Sales Tax project requests

After a brief discussion, City Council would like to make two requests for the next round of TST funding: extending the Palm Boulevard sidewalk by the Exchange Club and the evaluation of bike paths as they connect to the Isle of Palms Connector.

9. Committees, Boards, and Commissions Reports

- a. Council Committees – Chair reports and minutes attached
- b. Board of Zoning Appeals – minutes attached
- c. Planning Commission – minutes attached
- d. Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee – minutes attached
- e. Environmental Advisory Committee – minutes attached

10. Ordinance, Resolutions, and Petitions

- a. **Second Reading -- none**
- b. **First Reading -- none**
- c. **Proclamations and Resolutions -- none**

11. Executive Session

MOTION: Mayor Pounds made a motion to enter into Executive Session in accordance with SC Code Section 30-4-70(a)(2) to receive legal advice on current pending legal items and beach renourishment. Council Member Bogosian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

City Council entered into Executive Session at 8:52pm.

City Council returned from Executive Session at 9:26pm.

Mayor Pounds said no decisions were made.

MOTION: Mayor Pounds made a motion to forego securing permanent easements of for the upcoming beach renourishment project. Council Member Ward seconded the motion.

Council Member Cohen would like to secure permanent easements. Administrator Kerr said if staff started working on securing easements tomorrow, it would like take up until the start of the project to secure them all. He did not believe they would be successful in securing easements from 100% of the property owners.

Discussion ensued as to what the project would look like without 100% of the easements.

VOTE: A vote was taken as follows:

Ayes: Streetman, Bogosian, Ward, Pounds

Nays: Cohen, Pierce, Carroll, Miller

The motion failed.

Further discussion about easements will be on the February 10 agenda.

12. Adjournment

Council Member Ward asked for consideration of the Spirit of the Island Award to be on the February Council meeting agenda.

Council Member Ward made a motion to adjourn, and Council Member Streetman seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:36pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk