



**SPECIAL MEETING OF FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, APRIL 16, 2024 – 9:00 A.M.
BUS TOUR – CITY CENTER
324 WEST EVANS STREET
FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Teresa Myers Ervin, Councilwoman Lethonia Barnes, Councilman Chaquez T. McCall, Councilman Bryan A. Braddock, and Councilman J. Lawrence Smith, II

MEMBERS ABSENT

Mayor Pro Tempore George Jebaily and Councilwoman LaShonda NeSmith-Jackson

ALSO PRESENT

Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager; Mrs. Casey Moore, Municipal Clerk; Mr. Clint Moore, Assistant City Manager of Development; Chief Allen Heidler, Florence Police Department; Chief Shannon Tanner, Florence Fire Department; Mr. Michael Hemingway, Director of Utility Planning and Economic Development; Mr. Joshua Whittington, Director of Utilities; Mrs. Amanda Pope, Director of Marketing/Communications and Municipal Services; Mrs. Jennifer Krawiec, Director of Human Resources; Mr. Adam Swindler, Director of Public Works; Mr. Kevin Rawlinson, Chief Financial Officer and Ms. Victoria Nash, Recreation Division Manager

MEDIA PRESENT

Notices of this regular meeting of City Council were provided to the media and individuals requesting a copy of the agenda informing them of the date, location and time of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ervin called the April 16, 2024 special meeting of Florence City Council to order at 9:15 a.m.

BUS TOUR OF CITY FACILITIES AND CURRENT PROJECTS

Carolina Theater

The first destination of the tour was Carolina Theater located in downtown Florence. Mr. Clint Moore, Assistant City Manager of Development, said Carolina Theater is currently in Phase I of construction. In 2018, a bond was issued for \$2,000,000 for project costs. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and inflation, the original design required modification. Phase I project cost is \$500,000 and includes a \$300,000 grant received from the state. The remaining funds will be preserved in hopes to secure matching funds for the remaining phases. Upon completion, Carolina Theater will be utilized as a conference and event space.



Behavioral Health Facility

The next destination was the Behavioral Health Facility located on Cedar Street. Mr. Moore said state funds in the amount of \$100,000,000 have been invested for the project and construction is underway. While many partners are involved, MUSC is overseeing project management and the state is completing all permitting for the project. Upon completion, this facility will serve as a regional behavioral hub.

Slim Chickens, Dunkin Donuts, and Murphy's Gas Station

Mr. Moore said Slim Chickens, Dunkin Donuts and Murphy's Gas Station are an example of a commercial development project that has gone very well. The property was annexed into the City in January 2023. Plans were submitted in May 2023 and the land disturbance permit was issued following the submittal. All three businesses received their building permits in August 2023. Currently, only Slim Chickens has received their Certificate of Occupancy and is open for business. Dunkin Donuts and Murphy's Gas Station are soon to follow.

Bluffs at Mill Creek

Mr. Moore featured the Bluffs at Mill Creek as an example of a residential development project. This is a large, 250 tract home development project. The property was annexed, and the City entered into a development agreement with the developer in 2021. A development agreement protects the developer by vesting property rights, such as the zoning, or from the effect of changing policies. They also protect the municipality by defining the responsibilities of the City. In February 2022, the sketch plan went before Planning Commission for approval. Following Planning Commission approval, the development plan was submitted to staff for approval in November 2022. The land disturbance permit was issued in May 2023 which initiated the start of inspections to ensure the project is being developed to specifications. Construction begins once the developer pays the tap fees and receives the building permit. Upon the completion of a residential development project, the newly added infrastructure will become the City's burden to maintain.

There was discussion on the impacts a residential project has on all City departments and potential fees that could be imposed to mitigate some of these impacts. Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager, said one of the biggest challenges with these residential developments is having to provide services before the City realizes any revenue, such as property taxes.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Mr. Josh Whittington, Utilities Director, began the tour of the Wastewater Treatment Plant by discussing the various apparatus and the treatment process. Wastewater enters the plant by flowing through a screen that removes large, inorganic matter. Wastewater then flows to the aeration basins where liquids and solids begin to separate and treatment begins. Liquids will then be disinfected and discharged into the Pee Dee River. Solids are removed from the tanks and are either used as compost or hauled to the landfill.

Mr. Michael Hemingway, Economic and Utility Planning Director, gave a brief overview of the planned expansion of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The current site of the treatment plant is approximately 100 acres with room for expansion. The expansion will increase capacity from 22 million gallons per day to 33 million gallons per day and more aeration basins and clarifiers will be added as well as an increase to the effluent station.

Council and staff toured the Wastewater administration building to include the control room and lab.



Public Works and Animal Shelter

Mr. Adam Swindler, Public Works Director, began the tour of Public Works by showcasing the many needs of the site.

The mulch yard was the first stop and is the result of all the yard waste that is collected. Eventually, new mulching equipment will be necessary.

The tour then proceeded through the Public Works administration building, the sign shop and equipment maintenance. 900-1000 pieces of equipment are maintained by equipment maintenance employees in the shop. At approximately 50 years old, the shop does not have the adequate space and equipment necessary to service the amount of fleet in the City. The outdated space, equipment, and amenities also make it difficult to recruit new employees.

Up next was the sanitation division. The sanitation division currently houses 30-33 employees with the potential to add more to maintain routes. Mr. Swindler spoke of the need to add offices, meeting and training rooms, lockers, and showers for employees.

The beautification and facilities division was toured next which houses the streets division and management staff. Currently, this division is located in a temporary construction trailer and there is an increased need for a new space.

Also located on the public works site is the compliance office, utility operations building, and the utilities shed.

Mr. Swindler provided Council with a tour of the animal shelter and spoke of the need for facility repairs to include interior and exterior paint. Some capital money has been included in the budget for some improvements.

Surface Water Treatment Plant

The last stop was the Surface Water Treatment Plant. Mrs. Brenda Ehandy, Water Production Superintendent, provided an overview of the water treatment process. The water treatment plant was built approximately 20 years ago and its current capacity is rated for 10 million gallons per day with an average of 7 million gallons per day. Water enters the plant from the Pee Dee River raw water intake approximately 3 miles away. Water initially goes through a pretreatment process. Following pretreatment, caustic is added for pH adjustment before entering the sedimentation basin and filters. Upon leaving the filters, water goes to the transfer wells for disinfection. The treatment plant has an on-site lab certified by the Department of Health and Environmental Control where samples are tested regularly.

Mr. Hemingway said the Surface Water Treatment Plant is currently in the process of an expansion that will increase capacity to 20 million gallons per day and will also upgrade the plant as necessary to remove Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The expansion will cost approximately \$210 million and is slated to begin in September. The expansion will duplicate the current treatment facilities as well as add another raw water line. The new facilities will be built and online before repairs are made to existing facilities.



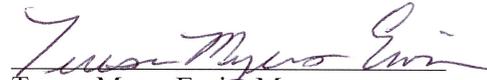
FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING – APRIL 16, 2024

ADJOURN

Without objection, the April 16, 2024 special meeting of City Council was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Dated this 14th day of May 2024.


Casey C. Moore, Municipal Clerk


Teresa Myers Ervin, Mayor