

City Council Minutes
September 5, 2023

Orangeburg City Council held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, September 5, 2023, at 6:00 PM with Mayor Michael C. Butler presiding.

PRESENT:

Michael C. Butler, Mayor
Jerry Hannah
Dr. Kalu Kalu, Mayor Pro Tem
L. Zimmerman Keitt
Sandra P. Knotts
Richard F. Stroman

PRESENT VIRTUALLY:

Bernard Haire

Mayor Butler opened Public Hearing concerning an ordinance to adopt the budget for the operation of the Department of Public Utilities for the fiscal year October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, (2) adopt amended electric rates effective October 1, 2023, and (3) adopt amended gas rates effective October 1, 2023. There was no one to speak at the public hearing. The public hearing was closed.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stroman, seconded by Councilmember Keitt to approve the August 15, 2023, City Council minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Butler recognized "Responsibility" as the September 2023 Orangeburg County Community of Character trait.

Mayor Butler and Council recognized Mr. George Edward Easterlin with thirty-four years, nine months, and four days service to DPU with a retirement date of August 25, 2023.

Mr. Geoffrey Fine was listed on the agenda to address Council and was not present at the meeting to speak.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kalu, seconded by Councilmember Keitt to approve the third reading of an ordinance amending the budget for the City of Orangeburg, SC for the Fiscal Year October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023. The motion was unanimously approved.

City Administrator Evering addressed Council concerning third reading of an ordinance to raise revenue and adopt a budget for the City of Orangeburg SC for the Fiscal Year October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024. He stated, "This budget includes increasing entry-level public safety officers (PSO I) from \$40,000 to \$47,000 and allowing the hiring of six new Fire Engineers and a Fire Inspector. We are proposing a 3% Cost of Living Adjustment for our employees. We are requesting an increase in Commercial and Residential Sanitation rates beginning January 2024. This budget includes increasing the starting salary of CDL drivers from \$17 - \$20 per hour. We are also recommending increasing some fines."

A motion was made by Councilmember Keitt, seconded by Councilmember Knotts to approve third reading of an ordinance to raise revenue and adopt a budget for the City of Orangeburg, SC for the Fiscal Year October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Councilmember Keitt, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kalu to appoint Interim Parks and Recreation Director, Shawn Taylor, to the Accommodations Tax Advisory Committee unexpired term ending 06-06-2025. The motion was unanimously approved.

City Administrator Evering addressed Council concerning first reading of an ordinance amending the 2020 Code of the City of Orangeburg to add Section 22-231, Urban Camping, and improper use of public places. He stated, "As you may have noticed in certain areas of the City, one being our downtown area, an increased number of homeless folks are camping out. It is a public concern and a safety concern. This ordinance will allow Department of Public Safety (DPS) the ability to

address the issue by first giving a written or verbal warning to anyone violating the ordinance. If they do not comply after receiving the warning, they can be fined up to \$500. After receiving a warning and fine, they can be arrested if they do not comply.”

Mayor Butler stated, “This ordinance is important for our downtown. We have worked hard to establish the Samaritan House for the homeless. Some individuals are sleeping on our streets because they do not want to follow the Samaritan House rules.”

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kalu, seconded by Councilmember Knotts to approve first reading of an ordinance amending the 2020 Code of the City of Orangeburg to add Section 22-231, Urban Camping, and improper use of public places. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Councilmember Keitt, seconded by Councilmember Stroman to approve second reading of an ordinance to amend the budget for the operation of Department of Public Utilities for fiscal year October 1, 2022, through September 30, 2023. The motion was unanimously approved.

DPU Administrative Director Nexsen addressed Council concerning second reading of an ordinance to adopt the budget for the operation of the Department of Public Utilities for fiscal year October 1, 2023, through September 30, 2024, (2) adopt amended electric rates effective October 1, 2023, and (3) adopt amended gas rates effective October 1, 2023. He stated, “I want to bring to your attention, at the first reading, Mayor’s salary was incorrectly stated as increasing to \$25,000 instead of \$23,000. Councilmembers salaries will increase from \$13,000 to \$18,000. The electric and gas rates were last amended four years ago on October 1, 2019.”

Councilmember Knotts asked, “Will DPU send flyers or bill inserts notifying customers of these rate increases?”

DPU Manager Harley stated, “Yes, we can do that.”

Councilmember Hannah asked, “Does DPU handle Council’s salaries? Is this a 3% increase?”

DPU Administrative Director Nexsen stated, “Yes, DPU handles Mayor and Council’s salaries. I apologize. I did not bring the spreadsheet with me tonight. But I think it was a little less than 3% annualized. The last time Council’s salary was adjusted was eight years ago in 2015.”

A motion was made by Councilmember Keitt, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kalu to approve second reading of an ordinance to adopt the budget for the operation of the Department of Public Utilities for the fiscal year October 1, 2023, through September 20, 2024, (2) adopt amended electric rates effective October 1, 2023, and (3) adopt amended gas rates effective October 1, 2023. The motion was approved 5-2. Councilmember Haire and Councilmember Hannah opposed.

DPU Superintendent of Wastewater Collection Etheridge addressed Council concerning consideration of a Wholesale Wastewater Treatment Service Agreement between Blue Granite Water Company and the Department of Public Utilities. He stated, “We currently service this area with water, electric and gas. This agreement would bring approximately 200 additional customers to the Wastewater Division. In this agreement, Blue Granite Water Company will pay DPU a service charge for every customer and Blue Grante Water Company will receive a discount on the wastewater commodity charge.”

A motion was made by Councilmember Stroman, seconded by Councilmember Keitt to approve the consideration of a Wholesale Wastewater Treatment Service Agreement between Blue Granite Water Company and the Department of Public Utilities. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Councilmember Keitt, seconded by Councilmember Stroman to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda McDaniel

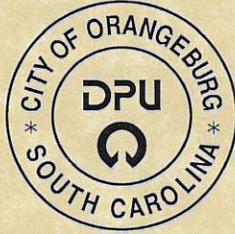
Linda McDaniel
City Clerk



VOID

VOID

VOID



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, George Edward Easterlin, faithfully served the Department of Public Utilities of the City of Orangeburg for thirty-four years, nine months and four days with a retirement date of August 25, 2023; and

WHEREAS, he, through his long and faithful service contributed greatly to the successful operation of the City of Orangeburg; and

WHEREAS, the City Council, in recognition of the fine contribution rendered to the City of Orangeburg, wants to inscribe on the records its appreciation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Members of Council, in Council assembled, do officially recognize the faithful service rendered to the City of Orangeburg in the capacities in which he served and we take pride in commending him for a job well done.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution, in appreciation for his devotion of duty to the City of Orangeburg, be placed in the Minute Book of the City in recognition of his services.

PASSED BY the City Council of the City of Orangeburg, State of South Carolina, this 5th day of September 2023.



Michael C. Butler
Mayor

James D. ...

Liz Zimmerman

Richard F. ...

...

Andrea ...

...

Members of Council

ATTEST:

Linda McDaniel
City Clerk