

**City Council Minutes
May 6, 2025**

Orangeburg City Council held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at 6:00 pm in Council Chambers, 933 Middleton Street with Mayor Butler presiding.

PRESENT:

Michael C. Butler, Mayor
Annette Dees Grevious
Jerry Hannah
Dr. Kalu Kalu
Sandra P. Knotts
Richard Stroman

ABSENT:

L. Zimmerman Keitt, Mayor Pro Tem

A motion was made by Councilmember Kalu, seconded by Councilmember Stroman to approve April 15, 2025, minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Butler recognized Creativity as the May Orangeburg County Community of Character Trait.

Ms. Kayra Rice with the Center for Heirs' Property Preservation addressed Council. She stated, "I am a community engagement specialist with the Center for Heir's Property Preservation here to educate, advocate and inspire. Our local office is located at 396 St. Paul Street. We help families keep and protect their land. Heirs' property happens when a loved one passes without a will and the land does not transfer properly. Having heirs' property is a huge liability because they cannot sell timber, get a mortgage, or get FEMA grants if a disaster happens on this land. We offer attorney services to represent clients free of charge through the probate court process to clear the title. The client only pays court fees. We have seminars to educate about legal terminology of Heirs' property, the process of probate court, and family mediation to get all family members on board to protect the land and get it divided up. Our forestry team helps property owners make money with this land with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) grant with a sustainable tree farm. We also offer free will clinics."

City Administrator Evering addressed Council concerning second reading of an Ordinance authorizing the option to transfer and approval of transfer, of approximately 1.78 acres of real property with improvements, if any, located at 351 Langston Street, TMS #0173-17-31-006.000. He stated, "As we discussed, this is related to Project Riverview. There is one minor revision in terms of the option agreement that I want to point out. The initial option was for \$5,000 and would allow three additional options of \$5,000 each. Now, the first initial option is \$10,000 and would allow for two additional options at \$5,000 each. The initial 12-month option would run from the execution of the agreement until May 30, 2026. If two additional options are needed, they would be for six months a piece with the first running from June 1 through December 2026 and the second running from January 1 through May 31, 2027. It should also be noted that currently the property is being rented as a laydown yard and that agreement will be ending in May 2026, but this does not affect that agreement in any way."

Councilmember Knotts asked, "What are the options contingent upon?"

City Administrator Evering stated, "It would be contingent upon the development of the project and review."

Councilmember Kalu asked, "Are the \$10,000 and \$5,000 monthly payments? What is the total sales price?"

City Administrator Evering stated, "No, the first option for \$10,000 would be for a 12-month period. The total sale of the property would be \$100,000. Any options payments will be deducted from the final sales price."

A motion was made by Councilmember Kalu, seconded by Councilmember Grevious to approve second reading of an Ordinance authorizing the option to transfer and approval of transfer, of approximately 1.78 acres of real property with improvements, if any, located at 351 Langston Street, TMS #0173-17-31-006.000. The motion was approved 5-0-1. Councilmember Stroman abstained.

Assistant City Administrator Williams addressed Council concerning first reading of an ordinance for Zoning District Map Change from A-3 Residential, General District to B-1 General Business District for property belonging to Edward M. Rast located at 390 Wheeler Street TMS# 0173-18-05-001.000. She stated, "Included in your packets are the Planning Commission April 17, 2025, minutes, sign in sheets, rezone application, maps, public notice, pictures of the posted signs and the signed Planning Commission resolution recommending approval to Council. A public hearing was held at this meeting where one citizen spoke on the matter as well as the property owner. The property owner also owns an adjacent property that is already zoned commercial. It is his intent to develop this property commercially."

Councilmember Kalu asked, "In the minutes, one of the property owners asked if the property taxes would increase. Also, in terms of security, would the City need to add more security?"

Assistant City Administrator Williams stated, "One citizen asked about the possibility of increased property taxes, and I stated that was a possibility and they would need to contact our local office to find out. In terms of security, we would need to talk with Chief Austin about this as I am not sure how that area is currently patrolled."

Chief Austin stated, "We are happy to survey the area and see what the needs are currently and what changes will need to be considered if we move forward with this."

A motion was made by Councilmember Kalu, seconded by Councilmember Stroman to approve first reading of an ordinance authorizing Zoning District map Change from A-3 Residential, General District to B-1 General Business District for property belonging to Edward M. Rast located at 390 Wheeler Street TMS# 0173-18-05-001.000. The motion was unanimously approved.

Assistant City Administrator Williams addressed Council concerning first reading of an ordinance for Zoning District Map Change from B-1 General Business District to B-2 Central Business District for properties belonging to Martin Roache located at 812 Russell Street TMS# 0152-20-07-002.000 and 776 Russell Street TMS# 0152-20-08-001.000. She stated, "This was discussed at the April 17, 2025, Planning Commission meeting and a public hearing was held on the matter. We had several citizens speak from the community as well as the property owner and several of his business partners. Mr. Roache is looking to create a student housing project on these parcels in conjunction with SCSU. Your packet includes Planning Commission meeting sign in sheets, public notice, pictures of the signs posted, rezone application, project renderings and the signed Planning Commission resolution recommending approval."

Mr. Martin Roache addressed Council. He stated, "There are significant student housing projects in downtown Columbia, Charleston, Savannah, Rock Hill so why not downtown Orangeburg with SCSU and Claflin University. In this project, we are integrating a significant amount of retail space which reads very well into that area and would stimulate economic growth."

A motion was made by Councilmember Kalu, seconded by Councilmember Grevious to approve first reading an ordinance authorizing Zoning District map Change from B-1 General Business District to B-2 Central Business District for properties belonging to Martin Roache located at 812 Russell Street TMS# 0152-20-07-002.000 and 776 Russell Street TMS# 0152-20-08-001.000. The motion was approved 5-0-1. Councilmember Stroman abstained.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Linda McDaniel
Linda McDaniel
City Clerk

