

**City Council Minutes
November 4, 2025**

Orangeburg City Council held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, November 4, 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
Jordan E. Hawkins
Dr. Kalu Kalu, Mayor Pro Tem
L. Zimmerman Keitt
Sandra P. Knotts

A motion was made by Councilmember Keitt seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kalu to approve October 21, 2025, minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Butler recognized Empathy as the November Orangeburg County Community of Character Trait.

Orangeburg High School for Health Professions Future Business Leaders of America introduced their Chapter to Council.

Ms. Dianna Colvin Perkins, Clemson Rural Health appeared before Council with updates on Fiscal 2025 services to the community.

City Administrator Evering addressed Council concerning second reading of an ordinance authorizing the transfer of approximately 0.21 acres of real property with improvements, if any, located at 215 Courthouse Square, with County TMS #0173-13-29-006.000. He stated, "As I indicated to you at the last meeting, this is an offer to purchase the green space next to the Williams and Williams Law Firm. On the screen is a rendering of the plans, the property we are referring to is the space on the far left that is currently city-owned property. The developer would like to make a pocket park/green space that will provide opportunities for the public to use. There will be parking spaces for food trucks, an area for a small stage and some permanent seating. WillBros Property, LLC has offered to purchase the property for \$30,000."

A motion was made by Councilmember Grevious, seconded by Councilmember Hannah to approve second reading of an ordinance authorizing the transfer of approximately 0.21 acres of real property with improvements, if any, located at 215 Courthouse Square, with County TMS #0173-13-29-006.000. The motion was unanimously approved.

City Administrator Evering addressed Council concerning second reading of an ordinance authorizing the transfer of approximately 0.16 acres of real property with improvements, if any, located at 307 Jennings Court, with County TMS #0173-18-10-003.000. He stated, "This property is a seldom used City park located at the corner of Jennings and Rowe Streets. The developer is looking to rehab 12 units there and then add two more units. At the last meeting, Council asked a few questions. I spoke with the developer and have the following updates. There will be a rent increase of 10 to 15% that will take place in January. It is unrelated to the rehab as it was going to be increased regardless. There will be two new buildings with two units per building which is a total of four units. Eight parking spaces will be provided for the four new units and then an additional five parking spaces for current residents. Again, Phase 1 will be the construction of the two new buildings. Phase 2 will be the rehab of the twelve units that are currently there. They do not anticipate there being any displacement of current residents as work can be done without displacing any residents. The proposal is to sell the property for \$2,500 with the reversionary clause which would allow the City to purchase the property for \$2,500 plus the cost of any permanent improvements if the property is not rehabbed as he indicated that he would."

Councilmember Grevious asked, "The developer said there will be an increase in rent in January. What is the completion date on the project?"

City Administrator Evering stated, "Eight to twelve months."

Councilmember Grevious asked, "Does he anticipate another increase after the completion of the project?"

City Administrator Evering stated, "He said it might go up again of a small increase of another 10%. He stated there has not been an increase in years. The increase in January is to make the rent more comparable, but it is still well under market rate."

Councilmember Keitt stated, "I am pleased to see the area being upgraded."

A motion was made by Councilmember Keitt, seconded by Councilmember Grevious to approve second reading of an ordinance authorizing the transfer of approximately 0.16 acres of real property with improvements, if any, located at 307 Jennings Court, with County TMS #0173-18-10-003.000. The motion was unanimously approved.

Assistant City Administrator Williams addressed Council concerning an update on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) process. She stated, "I wanted to start with reminders of events that happened in 2024. On July 30, microburst, on August 2, Hurricane Debby, on September 27, Hurricane Helene, and a month after that, a flood in the Gardens and the Police Camp area. I think the flood was probably the most impactful and caused the most damage. We filed insurance claims and FEMA damages estimates were also filed. We filed FEMA claims after the state declared our area was a disaster. The estimated total of all the FEMA damages is well over \$2 million. Of that amount, to date, we have only received \$37,152.25. FEMA is typically a reimbursement which means you must do the work first and then you apply to get that money back even though you must provide damages estimates upfront. We have received some insurance claim funds particularly for damage to Hillcrest. We filed a claim of \$18,000 and after our deductible and a few other items that were taken out, we received \$9,700 from Travelers Insurance. We also received just over \$3,400 due to the loss of rent from damage to the Chamber building. There is still an outstanding claim for lightning damage at Mirmow Field for Hurricane Helene. The \$9,700 that we received was minus the deductible of \$5,000 and we have filed that claim with FEMA. The greatest damage was to the Gardens and Police Camp Road and was from the flood. The gardens include the Chapel, Chamber building, the Boardwalk and Police Camp Road. The Chamber building is covered by flood insurance but the cost of the repairs, which was estimated at \$300,000, will not exceed the deductible of \$600,000. The \$600,000 includes National Flood Insurance of \$500,000 and then you also have \$100,000 deductible from Travelers Insurance. The Chapel is not covered by flood insurance. The cost of repair for that is about \$58,000, and it is currently being worked on. We paid \$10,000 for an engineer assessment to the Boardwalk that showed there is at least \$100,000 to \$300,000 worth of repairs needed. Spray Park closed in 2023 due to mechanical issues which were repaired and reopened in the summer of 2024. The total cost for Spray Park repairs in 2023 was \$33,000 largely funded by a \$25,000 grant with the remaining subsidized by the City. The flood in November closed the park for a second time and the estimated repair cost is \$41,000 to \$59,000. This estimate was received in February of this year. With inflation, I am sure that cost has gone up. The new cost probably will increase because of some testing that is needed on additional equipment at the Spray Park so that damage estimate could exceed \$59,000. The Spray Pad is not covered under any kind of flood insurance. A FEMA claim has been filed. We anticipate at the point that the Spray Park will reopen in time for the summer of 2026."

Councilmember Hawkins asked, "Is the Chapel being currently used?"

Assistant City Administrator Williams stated, "Not currently due to repairs needed."

Councilmember Hawkins asked, "If the City pays \$50,000 to fix the Spray Park what are the chances that FEMA would reimburse?"

Assistant City Administrator Williams stated, "That is hard to say since the government is currently shut down. It has been a slow and arduous process with FEMA. We have had monthly meetings with FEMA just to get it to this point."

Councilmember Hannah asked, "You stated the price may go up because of inflation. Are we getting bids on this?"

Assistant City Administrator Williams stated, "We received bids in December all the way through this past summer when we started this process on all the projects which was a FEMA requirement. The bid received for the Spray Park was done in February of this year so the cost I am sure at the point have increased."

Mayor Pro Tem Kalu asked, "From the numbers you presented, we are looking at \$2.5 - \$3 million from City funds to repair these areas. Do we have that money?"

City Administrator Evering stated, "I would say no, we do not have all of that to fix it. We do have some Capital Project Sales Tax funds that were designated for improvements to the Gardens that we could utilize. We have been very strategic about not spending the money until we have gotten through the budget process which is why we have had the delay but as we continue to get into this fiscal year and see how things are going, then we will likely tap into those Capital Project Sales Tax funds to begin some of these repairs."

Mayor Pro Tem Kalu asked, "After repairs to the Chapel, do you have future use for the building?"

Parks and Recreation Director Taylor stated, "The Chapel is used as a rental space. We periodically have rentals of weddings there."

Councilmember Hawkins stated, "I know this is a lot of money, but it is imperative that we get the repairs done with the City of Orangeburg being the Garden City and the Rose Festival will be here before we know it. Also, a lot of children play at the Spray Park. We need to get together and figure it out."

City Administrator Evering stated, "We realize that is a big impact to the community and why we want to make it a priority to try to get fixed by next year."

A motion was made by Councilmember Hannah, seconded by Councilmember Grevious to go into Executive Session concerning discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and/or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement or legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim – SC Code Sec. 30-4-70(a)(2) a) Health Insurance, b) Town of Norway, 1) Long-term installment repayment agreement, 2) Waiver of fees and 3) Transfer of surplus. The motion was unanimously approved."

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kalu, seconded by Councilmember Keitt to return to open session. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Councilmember Hawkins, seconded by Councilmember Hannah not to authorize DPU Manager to waive fees related to wholesale water contract for the Town of Norway. The motion was unanimously approved.

DPU Manager Harley addressed Council concerning authorizing DPU Manager to transfer surplus property to the Town of Norway. He stated, "We have some surplus meters that the Town of Norway could use, and they are requesting that we give those meters to them so that they might deploy on their water system. I would recommend us moving forward to transfer at least 500 of those meters to the Town of Norway."

A motion was made by Councilmember Keitt, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kalu to authorize DPU Manager to transfer surplus property of 500 meters to the Town of Norway. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kalu, seconded by Councilmember Grevious to adjourn. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda McDaniel

Linda McDaniel
City Clerk

