

City Council Minutes
March 3, 2026

Orangeburg City Council held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 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 February 17, 2026, City Council Minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Butler recognized Curiosity as the March Community of Character trait.

Ms. Laura Moore, 1191 Dantzler Street addressed Council concerning Animal Control Concern. She stated, "I am a first-time home buyer, and I have lived in my home three years. I have not been able to enjoy my yard as I have a problem with cats. They are defecating in my garden, on my grass, and in my shed. I have talked Chief Austin, Corporal Gilmore and Officer Moore. In the beginning they were to build something to house the cats but that fell through. Then they came to capture the cats and that fell through. They said they did not have anywhere to put the cats. This has been a problem. I believe my neighbors passion should not be my burden. I should be able to enjoy my yard. I get along with everybody in the neighborhood. My dad was in the military, and we were brought up to have respect for our neighbors and everyone. It has been ruff. There are a lot of things I want to do in my yard. I wear grocery bags on my feet when I go outside in my yard because I do not want to step into the cat feces. When I mow my lawn, I wear a mask as you know things fly. The cats lay on my air conditioner unit in the back yard. It is caving in where the screws are coming out the wall."

Mayor Butler asked, "Approximately how many cats is it?"

Ms. Moore stated, "Sixteen or more. I talked with Chief Austin and Corporal Gilmore came by last week to let me know they are still working on placing the cats."

Councilmember Hannah stated, "I have spoken with you and your mom several times and have witnessed what you are saying, but not to the magnitude of what you are saying. I have also talked with your neighbor which told me they gather these cats and take them to the veterinarian to be neutered. You are here tonight to report that even though these cats are neutered, they are still intruding on your property."

Chief Austin stated, "We are very sensitive to the issue which Ms. Moore is dealing with. We have had several conversations. We have used repellents to try to disrupt the cats. Some of the neighbors have spent money having them neutered. We hoped that would help. We are now working on a proposal that we will be sending to Council that we hope will address the issue in terms of a trap, neuter, and release program. But we are going to need a place that we can release them so that they would be able to safely go about their business. We are going to do everything that we can within our legal constraints to work to get this resolved."

Mayor Buter asked, "Do those cats belong to one particular house?"

Chief Austin stated, "Feral cats travel in colonies. Legally, we must be very careful how we handle them because they are almost a protected group. We pick up dogs and we can house them. But we do not yet have facilities available to house feral cats. Again, we are still working on that and hopefully by the time we meet again, I will have some ideas about what we can do to address the problem."

Mayor Butler stated, "Please educate me on these feral cats."

Chief Austin stated, "Feral cats are domestic, but they do not belong to anybody. They travel in colonies."

Councilmember Hannah stated, "When I spoke with Ms. Moore, she had an idea of where the cats were housed. Some of them were next door. When I approached her neighbor to help facilitate this, she told me she feeds the cats. Much of what Ms. Moore is getting is because of the neighbor. Although loose cats come and escalate the situation."

Chief Austin stated, "The issue is where feral cats are fed is where they will take up residency and they move in colonies. We have tried to discourage the neighbor that feeds them from doing that because wherever they find food, it is where they are going to congregate."

Councilmember Hawkins asked, "Have you tried trapping the cats?"

Chief Austin stated, "Yes, we have tried to trap the cats, but we do not have a facility to house them. The neighbors who have paid to have them neutered, have a concern when we trap them. They want to know where we will release them. Currently we do not have a place designated, and it is one of the things we are working on now."

Councilmember Hawkins asked, "This has been going on for three years. Chief, what is the game plan you have within the next 30 days of how we can remedy this situation so Ms. Moore can enjoy her yard?"

Chief Austin stated, "To present a trap, neuter, and release plan to Council. Again, we are doing some research to find a safe place we can release them."

Mayor Butler stated, "This is a burden on Ms. Moore. Mr. Evering, please see what we can do to help Chief with this. This is infringing on someone's property and life."

Councilmember Hawkins asked, "Have we reached out to the County?"

Chief Austin stated, "Yes, the County has a trap, neuter, and release program in place."

Councilmember Keitt stated, "We need to sit down and come up with a plan as this is infringing on other's property."

Councilmember Hawkins stated, "Ms. Moore, please follow up with us in 30 days and let us know whether this issue has gotten rectified. Council's emails are on the City's website."

City Administrator Evering addressed Council concerning second reading of an ordinance approving a license agreement between the City and WF Media Group, LLC. He stated, "This ordinance would allow the City to enter into an agreement with WF Media Group for the use of Stevenson Auditorium for a two-year term. It would automatically renew after one year unless 30 days' notice is given. It allows WF Media Group to use Stevenson Auditorium and they will coordinate with the City to make sure that their use does not affect any other events that are scheduled throughout the year for Stevenson. They will provide 20% payment of all gross ticket sales to the City. They will be responsible for cleaning services, and payment of utilities that exceed base levels. They would be responsible for any damage beyond normal wear and responsible for security and cleaning costs. In exchange for that commitment from this they would provide live comedy performances, television productions, specials, talk shows, podcast recordings, holiday and inspirational music programming, an annual comedy festival beginning in 2027."

Mayor Pro Tem Kalu asked, "In the agreement under Exhibit C, number 1 concerning advertisement in the agreement, if the company has a program and plan to advertise it, are they allowed to put up a sign?"

City Administrator Evering stated, "It is allowed but they cannot affix the signage to the building. They can put signage in front of the building. Of course, once we have the marquee, the advertisements can go there."

Councilmember Grevious asked, "This agreement clearly is not active yet or approved, did WF Media Group pay the normal rental rate for their previous engagements?"

City Administrator Evering stated, "Not yet. I do not know if Council wants me to grandfather them in because we had a letter of intent or if you want them to pay the normal rental rate. I did compare the two for the first performance and it is almost a wash. I think it was \$120 difference."

Councilmember Grevious asked, "Do you anticipate the 20% putting us in a position to exceed what we could make if we were to do the regular rental agreement?"

City Administrator Evering stated, "I think it will. At the first event, they comped a lot of ticket sales just to make sure people were aware and attended. But as time goes on, I think it will exceed. We certainly do not anticipate it would be a loss to the City."

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kalu, seconded by Councilmember Keitt to approve second reading of an ordinance approving a license agreement between the City and WF Media Group, LLC. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Butler and Council presented a resolution honoring the life and legacy of the Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson, Sr.

Mayor Butler and Council presented a resolution congratulating Edisto Habitat for Humanity on the construction of its 100th home and commending its service to the community.

City Administrator Evering addressed Council concerning an appointment for an unexpired term on the Election Commission. He stated, "For your consideration is the appointment to the Election Commission for the unexpired vacant term ending March 31, 2029. It is a six-year term. The current members on the Election Commission are Ms. Georgine Hightower whose six-year term ends on March 31, 2031, and Ms. Mary Jordan whose term ends on March 31, 2027. Council has provided two nominees to fill this vacant term ending March 31, 2029, including Mr. Skyler B. Hutto, Esquire and Mr. Henry Ideozu."

Council voted 4-3 to appoint Mr. Henry Ideozu to the Election Commission for the unexpired term ending March 31, 2029. Mayor Butler, Councilmember Keitt and Councilmember Hawkins opposed.

DPU Manager Harley addressed Council concerning the DPU 2025 Annual Safety Record. He stated, "In your packets is a memo concerning our safety report card. We are members of the South Carolina Municipal Insurance Trust (SCMIT) which is run through the Municipal Association of South Carolina (MASC). This is our workers' comp insurance. The reason I am sharing this as it shows that we at DPU on a daily basis try to create a culture of safety and that culture make sure that everybody to the best of our ability comes in and goes home safe and that we are protecting our employees, giving them what they need to do the jobs tasked which are sometimes very dimerous jobs. We have a philosophy that we will not do it until we can do it safely. We pride ourselves on making sure that we protect our employees. I want to point out a few of the key metrics that indicate we have a pretty healthy safety program. As you recall, Council allowed DPU to hire a superintendent of safety to put a daily focus on safety from an organization wide perspective and coordinate in a very different way than we had before. As you can see those things have paid off. On page two of my memo, our experience modifier for 2025 is .55. The highest you can have, which is not good, is 2.5. The lowest you can have is 50, which is good. Essentially what that means for every dollar coverage that we buy, we pay 55 cents. It is an indication that we are doing very well in terms of our safety program. It does have a monetary benefit as it reduces our premium overtime. Our loss rate for this year is 1.63. We have an average over a five-year period of 21.63% which is essentially how much premium is used to pay claims and the idea is that you want to be, if you are considered healthy by an insurance group, we are at 50-80%. Anything below 80 is good. Where we are and where we have been operating for the last several years is excellent. Our team has done a really good job. The score for our report card is 96%. One of the things that we can improve on is our lag time in reporting injuries a little faster. We are better than the pool average, but we can do better. If an injury happens on the weekends, it may delay some of that reporting. The idea is that the faster you report, the more you reduce the injury getting worse, so you want to get folks in, seen, and get the injury under control. Our premium for this year is \$128,000, which is mainly because we have a low modifier. Our modifier did go

up for 2026. It will be .65 so we will be paying 65 cents on the dollar for coverage. Again, excellent and it is better than the pool average as the pool average is one. You want to be at one or lower. Again, it demonstrates that we have put a focus where it belongs which is getting or people in and out safely in the jobs that we do in very high-risk situations, and we have done that to the benefit of the City in terms of a financial impact to us.”

Councilmember Hannah stated, “This is an excellent, outstanding recruiting tool for citizens coming to this community seeking employment.”

DPU Manager stated, “This shows to Mr. Hannah’s point that we care about our employees so much that we put things in place to keep you safe and you cannot work for us if you are not going to be safe. I make a clear message to all new and ongoing employees that our goal is to protect each other and to make sure that the jobs that we do can be done in a safe way and we try to hold folks accountable, me included.”

Mayor Pro Tem Kalu asked, “Did you reduce the number of injuries?”

DPU Manager Harley stated, “We did reduce the number of injuries. What goes into the experience modifier is the severity of an accident/claim. When someone gets hurt, how bad it is will impact your score and drive up your rating. The lag time is essentially the time the injury happens, when the report gets to our carrier, and when they get in to see the doctor. We want to make sure we shorten the lag time. This credit is due to the DPU employees and directors. I want to say thank you to them for the job well done and we want to encourage them to keep doing what they are doing.”

A motion was made by Councilmember Grevious, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kalu to go into Executive Session concerning discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body. SC Section 30-4-70 (a)(5) – a) Project French and b) Project Juice and discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property and the receipt of legal advice. Section 30-4-70(a)(2) – Columbia Road Property. The motion was unanimously approved.

Council did not return to open session. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda McDaniel

Linda McDaniel
City Clerk





**RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF THE
REVEREND JESSE LOUIS JACKSON, SR.**

- WHEREAS,** the City of Orangeburg mourns the passing of the **Reverend Jesse Jackson, Sr.** an internationally recognized civil rights leader, minister, humanitarian, and advocate for justice, equality, and human dignity; and,
- WHEREAS,** he was born and raised in Greenville, where his early experiences in the American South helped shape his lifelong commitment to civil rights, economic empowerment, and social justice; and
- WHEREAS,** Reverend Jackson rose to national prominence as a close associate of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and as a key leader in the modern Civil Rights Movement, dedicating his life to expanding opportunities for marginalized and underserved communities across the United States and around the world; and,
- WHEREAS,** as founder of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, Reverend Jackson championed voting rights, educational access, labor rights, economic inclusion, and peaceful social change, inspiring generations to pursue justice through civic engagement and nonviolent advocacy; and,
- WHEREAS,** throughout his distinguished career, Reverend Jackson sought to bridge racial, economic, and political divides, reminding Americans of their shared humanity and calling upon the nation to live up to its highest ideals of liberty and equality; and,
- WHEREAS,** Reverend Jackson's tireless advocacy, moral leadership, and unwavering faith left an indelible mark on the struggle for civil and human rights and contributed meaningfully to the progress of communities throughout South Carolina and the nation; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Orangeburg, South Carolina, do hereby honor the life, legacy, and enduring contributions of the **Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson, Sr.,** and express profound condolences to his family, friends, and all who were inspired by his work.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Orangeburg recognizes Reverend Jackson's lifelong commitment to justice, equality, and opportunity, and encourages all citizens to reflect upon his example of service and advocacy as we continue striving to build a more just and inclusive community.

ADOPTED this 3rd day of March 2026.



Michael C. Butler
MAYOR

[Signature]

[Signature]

Jandra P. [Signature]

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COUNCILMEMBERS

Attest: Ruinda M. Daniel
City Clerk

