

**City Council Minutes**  
**June 2, 2026**

Orangeburg City Council held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, June 2, 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 May 19, 2026, City Council Minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Butler recognized Service-minded as the June Orangeburg County Community of Character Trait.

Council presented a Retiree Resolution to Gene Michael Rast – City of Orangeburg for twenty-five years, seven months and thirteen days with a retirement date of April 3, 2026.

Mr. Wilfred L. Pace, Director, Bull Swamp Colored School and Community Center, 112 Purity Street, appeared before Council concerning DPU Service. He stated, “The request from the directors and trustees of the Bull Swamp Colored School and Community Center is that City Council reinstate DPU electrical service of the Bull Swamp Community Center while ownership and governance issues are resolved through legal channels. First, the recorded deed clearly establishes community ownership. February 23, 1959, deed of record conveys that the Bull Swamp School was properly entrusted to three trustees for the use of a community center for the benefit of Bull Swamp Community. The language in the deed is clear, specific and unambiguous. The four corners of the deed state the granter, the trustees receiving the property, the property conveyed, and the community purpose for which the property was conveyed. At no point in 1959 by Orangeburg School District Five does any portion of the deed convey ownership to Bull Swamp Baptist Church. South Carolina law recognized recorded deeds as controlling evidence of ownership. A recorded deed is a lawful instrument under South Carolina law and is the primary source of determining ownership interest in any property. The deed itself controls ownership rights, not assumptions, nonverbal claims, nor social media comments or long-term perceptions. The deed governing Bull Swamp Community Center identifies trustees and community purpose. It does not identify Bull Swamp Church as owner. DPU considered and relied on incorrect GIS information. Proper deed and documents were provided to DPU’s official on April 17, 2026, to establish legal written contractor agreement for electrical service at the Bull Swamp Community Center at 112 Purity Street and the electrical services were turned on at that point which is why we are here asking that they be restored. Copies of the certified deed have been provided to the officials and the GIS posted on the County website has been corrected. All of this has been done with a legal survey that matched the deed of 1959 which was missing in the courthouse. The independent deed search that was provided to DPU shows clearly that the property does not belong to the Bull Swamp Baptist Church but belongs to the Bull Swamp Community. This was done by a reputable, nonpartisan research firm out of Virginia. The senior attorney stated in the report that the guarantees are identified as the trustees of the community, not of the church. No documentary evidence of church ownership has been provided to DPU. Proper ownership should be determined by recorded legal documents rather than supported by verbal claims. The legal research found no subsequent conveyances have happened since 1959. In other words, the legal search was done and it went back to 1959 and said specifically that there are no recorded conveyances in the Orangeburg County Courthouse in existence today. Concerns regarding fairness and administrative neutrality. The DPU appeals process should be guided by documented evidence, verified facts, and established customers disconnection timelines. The historical committee were given less than a week notice that lights would be shut off on the facility; we had less than three days to answer. The typical policy is ten days. Community members are concerned that unsupported ownership claims from religious leaders may have been given more weight than certified recorded documents. The issue before DPU is not religious. It is a concern of property records, documentation, and

administrative fairness. Correcting errors strengthens public trust. Long-standing assumptions do not become legal facts simply through repetition. When evidence demonstrates that an error has occurred, public agencies and entities like Orangeburg DPU have the responsibility to correct the record and act on verifiable documents. Restoring electrical services while legal issues are reviewed would demonstrate DPU's commitment to fairness, neutrality and evidence-based decision making. The facility dates to funds being given by President Franklin Roosevelt. It is a national historic building that goes back to an era where our ancestors were there during slavery, and the building has been on that site since 1867. Public interest of preserving a historical site has been recognized in this area by the Secretary of State who has given us a certificate of assistance to operate as Bull Swamp Colored School and Community Center. It is registered with the IRS, and we have our own constitutional bylaws. We believe in doing things decently and in order. The public interest is what is at stake. You must control the climate in a historical building to prevent moisture, mold, and the deterioration of the artifacts that we have found within that building. The Bull Swamp Colored School is a rare surviving African American educational structure dating from the time of segregation and without electricity or the lack of security, vandalism and theft will occur, climate control cannot function, humidity levels increase, mold growth accelerates, exterior materials deteriorate and historical preservation investments are at jeopardy. This is County and State investments of \$300,000 - \$400,000. The state of South Carolina recognized the importance of protecting historical properties and encouraging local efforts and that is why we are here today to preserve historical structures for future generations, state preservation laws and policies."

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, "I would caution Council from making any further comments as they have engaged a lawyer."

Mr. Pace stated, "We have not engaged a lawyer. We asked legal advice."

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, "Council, we have received two separate emails from the Williams Law Firm suggesting that they represent the Colored School."

Ms. Charlotte Daniels, 343 Mack Road, Cordova appeared before Council concerning animal control issue. She stated, "I am here to speak on behalf of several people here for the animals concerning the Animal Control Ordinance. There are several matters that I disagree with greatly one being there is no trap, neuter and release program. In the ancient world, cats were revered and pampered and appreciated for their skillful hunting of vermin and other disease carrying creatures. During the middle ages, cats were vilified and slaughtered in mass due to their association with the devil. It was during this time that countless souls lost their lives from the bubonic plague. It is no coincidence that the population decrease of cats played a significant role as the rat population grew exponentially. At the time, people did not realize it was rats responsible for the Black Death. The fact that we are euthanizing animals who are not aggressive or suffering from a particular disease is something you would expect from the dark ages. In 2007, 4,820 animals were euthanized at the behest of Orangeburg County authorities. Based on other statistics, that number ranges from 50 - 70% of those animals being cats. Approximately 400 animals were adopted, 90 were returned to their owner, 20 escaped, and 15 died while in captivity. These are the most recent numbers I could find. I left numerous messages for the City Animal Control Department over the period of a week and never received a return phone call. I understand there is only one person in the Animal Control Department. I contacted the County Animal Control Department and was instructed to complete a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to get the number of animals that are euthanized a year. Trap, neuter, and release programs are shown to decrease the population of feral cats. It stops animals from engaging in behaviors that people find annoying or a nuisance like shrieking, yowling, and spraying urine. Also trap, neuter and release are significantly less expensive per cat. For instance, the estimated cost to spay, neuter, clip ear, vaccinate and flea treatment for a three-month period is \$50 whereas euthanasia runs about \$100 per cat. In 2007, 4,800 animals were euthanized multiplied by \$100 equates to \$48,000 - \$50,000 spent killing animals when you could spend \$25,000 trapping, neutering, and releasing them. I am sure the City of Orangeburg has a lot of property and some of this land could be used to release cats in a park for cats. Certain people go to cat cafes to be around cats I would like to get the State Attorney General's opinion on the legality of this because I think it is unethical not to feed an animal. I request that you table this matter so that we can do further research and maybe come with a better proposition or maybe a small amount of funding towards a trap, neuter and release program. It is cats now; next it will be homeless people like another nuisance to society and who is to say what is next."

Councilmember Hannah asked, "Did you state there were 4,000 – 5,000 cats euthanized in Orangeburg in 2007?"

Councilmember Grevious asked, "Did the data of how many animals were euthanized come from the County?"

Ms. Daniels stated, "Yes, 4,800. The data came from an organization that requested information from all the counties in the state, and it was posted online."

Councilmember Hawkins asked, "I appreciate your concern in this matter. Have you read this ordinance? What do you oppose in the ordinance?"

Ms. Daniels stated, "I did read the ordinance, and I was informed that the ordinance kept changing. Some items that I oppose are female cats in heat need to be confined. If we fix the cats, they will not be in heat. Under Section 12-6, 'it should be unlawful for a person to torment, overload, overwork or otherwise abuse an animal or cause, instigate or permit a dog fight or other combat between animals.' If you are not feeding the animals, they are going to fight. Am I correct, under this new ordinance, you will not be able to feed geese, birds, or fish at the park? What is the difference in feeding feral cats or birds and fish at the park? How many animal control officers are there?"

Chief Austin stated, "Presently, we have one animal control officer, and we are in the process of advertising for an additional officer, but all our officers are certified class one officers. They have the authority to enforce the ordinance if we have animal control concerns."

Ms. Daniels stated, "I read on the Orangeburg County website under the animal control portion that it is just as important a job as fire, rescue, police officers, and others. Yet, it sounds like they are not getting a lot of financing. Maybe that could be investigated to provide more financing. Is it okay to feed ducks at the park?"

Mayor Butler stated, "We will note your question and get back to you."

Ms. Daniels stated, "In Section 12-10, 'inflicting any unnecessary suffering or pain upon an animal.' By not feeding it, if you see it suffering, is doing that. 'Repeatedly failing to provide basic necessities whether such person be the owners thereof or the temporary charge in custody of the same.' People that feed cats temporarily have charge in custody. The ordinance states, 'a nuisance animals shall mean and include but not limited to any animal that damages, soils, defiles or defecates on private property other than the owners or on public walks or recreation areas unless such waste is immediately removed or properly disposed of by the owner.' There are few other things in the ordinance like wild animals; we must live with the animals."

Mayor Butler stated, "Our aim is never to be ugly or mean to animals. Our aim is to keep them from being a nuisance to other people that have a right to enjoy their homes. We are all animal lovers. I understand your pain because those animals are your children. We must take everybody's concerns under consideration that come to this Council."

City Administrator Evering addressed Council concerning third reading of an ordinance amending, restating, striking and replacing Chapter 12 of the City Code – Animal Control. He stated, "As it has been discussed, this is a very extensive ordinance. I will highlight portions of the ordinance. It requires that owners must provide adequate food, water, shelter, and veterinary care. Animal cruelty, abandonment, and unlawful tethering are prohibited. Animals running at large may be impounded and owners pay fees to reclaim them. Nuisance animals, which are animals that have excessive barking, property damage, etc. are subject to escalating fines of \$300, \$400, and \$500 for repeat offenses. Feeding feral animals is prohibited unless you are actively trying to catch them for placement. Female cats in heat must be confined in a building, secure enclosure, or veterinary boarding facility except for intentional control breeding. Owners may not allow animals to roam beyond their property or lease controlled land. Endangered, vicious, or unruly animals must be kept under restraint at all times. Impounded animals are held for a minimum of five days to reclaim them. Expenses are capped at \$75. A nuisance animal is considered one that damages or defecates private or public property, causes insanitary or offensive conditions, chases or intimidates people or other animals, is repeatedly found at large, making disturbing noises, or causes reasonable

annoyance or discomfort to neighbors. City officials may issue citations directly. Animal owners get a three-day warning period before being charged. Breeding animals for financial gain requires a City license. Feeding feral animals in 12-51 indicates that it is unlawful for any person to feed or provide food for any animal that is feral, domesticated or undomesticated that is not in their care.”

Mayor Pro Tem Kalu stated, “We have talked and deliberated on this issue a while. I know it is a touchy issue but listening to Ms. Daniels presentation, it is my view that we need to postpone this to the next meeting and get the opinion of the attorney general before we make a final decision.”

Councilmember Grevious stated, “We have deliberated this issue for quite some time, and I want to commend Ms. Daniels and others who have reached out regarding this issue. As the Mayor said this is not an issue where we intend to harm or neglect any animals. However, I think the City is at a point where we do not have the resources to address the problem or issues as the activists have suggested. If there are organizations, groups, or individuals out there who are willing to assist and provide resources to the City, I encourage them to come forward. Again, this is an issue that has been deliberated for quite some time. If it is postponed today, it is not going away. So, we need you to come forward and not wait until it appears on the agenda again.”

Mayor Butler stated, “I agree with Councilmember Grevious that the groups that are here need to come forward and let us know if you can assist because we could have worked something out if we all come together. I do empathize with Ms. Moore as I do not agree with 16 cats on her property. It is wrong to infringe on someone else’s rights as some people do not love animals.”

Councilmember Keitt stated, “I do not care that much for cats, but I do empathize with you as how much you love them, but you cannot infringe on other’s property. If you love them, then keep them at your house whatever animal it is. We have gone over this many times and there is no sense in going over it again. We have looked at this and if this is what we need to do, we need to finish tonight.”

Councilmember Hannah stated, “This started as trying to get some leverage on animal population. When it started, it was cats and dogs. We can vote to postpone it but every time one niche comes up, we cannot stop it and then wait till the next time. I say let’s pass something. It is like the Constitution of the United States, it is constantly getting ratified.”

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Kalu to postpone third reading to the next regular Council meeting once the opinion from the attorney general’s office is received on the treatment and feeding of feral cats. There was not a second, so the motion failed.

Councilmember Hawkins asked, “Could we look at an attorney general opinion search to see if there were anything that remotely would tie to this?”

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, “I certainly can. I am comfortable that the City has the ability to regulate under state law what is in front of Council.”

A motion was made by Councilmember Keitt, seconded by Councilmember Hannah to approve third reading of an ordinance amending, restating, striking and replacing Chapter 12 of the City Code – Animal Control. The motion was approved 4-2-1. Councilmembers Grevious and Kalu opposed. Councilmember Knotts abstained.

Councilmember Grevious stated, “I still encourage citizens and groups to contact us if you have recommendations and suggestions as Councilmember Hannah stated all ordinances can be amended.”

City Administrator Evering addressed Council concerning third reading of an ordinance amending, restating, striking and replacing Section 30 of Chapter 5 of the City Code – Smoking in Public Places. He stated, “This ordinance has also been discussed extensively. I will highlight some of the ordinance. The purpose and intent are to protect the public and employees from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke and vapor, promote a healthier environment in workplaces and public spaces, prioritize the right of non-smokers to breathe clean air over the desire to smoke. Smoking is prohibited in all enclosed workplaces without exception, applies to all city-owned, leased, or operated buildings, vehicles, and adjacent outdoor property. Employers are required to enforce

smoke-free environments. Smoking is prohibited in restaurants, bars, retail stores, offices, healthcare facilities, educational institutions, public transportation, and related facilities. Under outdoor smoking, smoking is prohibited in various outdoor areas, including within 25 feet of building entrances, windows, and ventilation systems, outdoor dining and seating areas, public events, parks, playgrounds, and recreational areas, outdoor areas of City controlled property. The ordinance allows smoking in specific circumstances, private residences, qualified private clubs, retail tobacco stores with age restrictions, religious ceremonies involving smoking, approved medical research facilities and theatrical performances where smoking is part of production. Under Enforcement and penalties, violations are classified as civil infractions and public nuisances. Penalties include up to \$100 for a first offense, \$200 for a second offense, and \$500 for subsequent offenses.”

Councilmember Hawkins stated, “For clarification, 5-30.2 under definitions on workplace means an enclosed indoor area, structure, building or facility or any portion thereof in which one or more employees perform services for an employer. Then on the next page under workspace means any enclosed area occupied by an employee. It seems like it contradicts each other.”

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, “There are places within the ordinance that refer to workspace or workplace so there is a distinction. A workspace would be individual. A workplace would be one or more.”

Councilmember Hawkins asked, “My question would be if someone is in their own private business that is open to the public and are in a closed office by themselves; they could not smoke a cigarette or vape as they would they be in violation?”

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, “Depending on where else it falls in the ordinance, that is correct.”

Councilmember Grevious asked, “I have a question regarding 5-30.3c, City owned buildings. Will this also affect City-owned buildings that have an area that is already designated as a smoking area that is not 25 feet away?”

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, “This would impact all City spaces. My understanding of the intent was that it would limit smoking. Period.”

Councilmember Grevious asked, “Even if I am in my personal vehicle on City owned property?”

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, “I think that is the intent. You must be 25 feet from the entrance, yes.”

Councilmember Grevious asked, “I asked the question last meeting about the retail tobacco stores as defined in Number 3 under 5-30 4 under exceptions. This includes vape shops, correct?”

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, “The definition of retail tobacco store is any establishment which is not required to possess a retail food permit whose primary purpose is to sell or offer for sale to consumers tobacco products and paraphernalia and tobacco products does include e-cigarettes.”

Councilmember Grevious asked, “I know the intent there was to exclude cigar lounges. Is it possible to include cigar lounges in the language for Number 2, Private Clubs?”

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, “Let me make sure I understand. The portion we are talking about is exceptions to the prohibition. Under 5-30.4 Item 2, you would want to exclude from the exclusion?”

Councilmember Grevious stated, “I want to add to private clubs in the exclusions, cigar lounges.”

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, “Meaning they would also be excluded?”

Councilmember Grevious stated, “Yes.”

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, “As a separate designation? So instead of it being a private club, it could simply be a cigar lounge. Certainly, Council could make that motion to amend. Whether that becomes Sub Item 3 and it pushes everything else down or that could be Sub Item 7 for

example which would be the next numbered list. Rather than making it part of a private club, it would be its own stand-alone exception. I think that is Council's preference."

Councilmember Grevious stated, "My intent is to remove retail tobacco stores from the list of exceptions and add cigar stores."

Councilmember Hawkins asked, "Would that then take out the local smoke shops we have around town, like at the mall?"

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, "I am not familiar with this specific location, but I do not believe it would be a private residence. I am assuming it is not a private club unless it is a cigar lounge, and I do not think it would be a religious ceremony, a medical research facility, or smoking as part of a theatrical performance."

Councilmember Hawkins asked, "So, it would put them out of business? "

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, "They would not be able to have people smoking in the establishment. It does not change their ability to sell. It is where you can actually smoke."

A motion was made by Councilmember Grevious, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Kalu to amend the ordinance Section 30 of Chapter 5 of the City Code – Smoking in Public Places by striking from Section 5-30.4 under exceptions number 3, Retail Tobacco stores as defined here and replacing that with Cigar Lounges. The motion was unanimously approved.

City Attorney Kozlarek stated, "I believe that is the only place in the ordinance that the words, Retail Tobacco Store appear. Assuming that is correct, I would also like to make the scrivener's change as that is the only place it appears to remove that definition because it would have no purpose at that point."

A motion was made by Councilmember Grevious, seconded by Councilmember Keitt to approve third reading of an ordinance amending, restating, striking and replacing Section 30 of Chapter 5 of the City Code – Smoking in Public Places as amended. The motion was approved 6-1. Councilmember Hawkins opposed.

A motion was made by Councilmember Keitt, seconded by Councilmember Grevious to cancel the July 7 and July 21, 2026, Council meetings due to Budget Meetings. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Councilmember Grevious, seconded by Councilmember Knotts to go into Executive Session concerning discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and the receipt of legal advice. SC Code Section 30-4-70(a)(2) a) Pole Attachment Agreement – Entry Point and b) E-Bikes. The motion was unanimously approved.

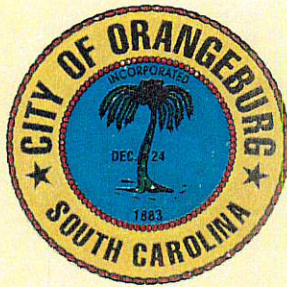
Council did not return to open session. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Linda McDaniel*

Linda McDaniel  
City Clerk





## RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Gene M. Rast faithfully served the City of Orangeburg for twenty-five years, seven months and thirteen days with a retirement date of April 3, 2026; and,

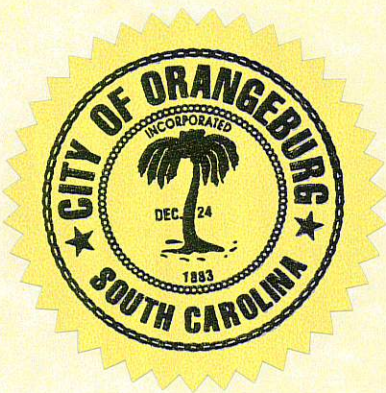
WHEREAS, he, through his long and faithful service, contributed greatly to the successful operation of the City of Orangeburg; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council, in recognition of the fine contribution rendered 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 the City, 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 and a copy furnished to Mr. Rast in recognition of his services.

PASSED BY the City Council of the City of Orangeburg, State of South Carolina, this 2nd day of June 2026.



Michael C. Butler  
MAYOR

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

ATTEST:

Luinda Merdaniel  
CITY CLERK