

City Council Minutes
January 16, 2024

Orangeburg City Council held its regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at 6:00 PM with Mayor Michael C. Butler presiding.

PRESENT:

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

A motion was made by Councilmember Stroman, seconded by Councilmember Kalu to approve the December 19, 2023, City Council minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mayor Butler recognized "Visionary" as the January 2024 Orangeburg County Community of Character trait.

Mayor Butler and Council recognized Mr. Freddie Walker III with twenty-five years, three months, and twenty-seven days service to DPU with a retirement date of December 28, 2023.

Mr. Marc Wood with Sheheen, Hancock & Godwin, CPAs addressed Council concerning Financial Update. He stated, "The total November revenue for the General Fund was \$2.4 million, which is about 10 percent of the budget. Total expenses were \$4.3 million, which is 18 percent. The ideal percentage should be 14 percent. Your revenue is about 4% under and expenditures are about 4% over. Your largest source of revenue is property taxes, business licenses and fire contracts. Property tax collection is beginning now. In February and March fire contracts collections begin. In April and May, business licenses are collected. It is common for revenues at this time to run behind expenses. Finance is monitoring expenses and looking for ways to save and reduce the percentage. This is why the City has reserves to carry them through the times revenue is not coming in, but you still have expenses. The City has been relying on the reserves to get them through and now your largest sources of revenue will start to come in and you will start building your reserves back up."

Councilmember Hannah asked, "What is in place for cost cutting and saving? Is there anything specific?"

Mr. Wood stated, "We are always trying to find ways to be more conscientious on expenditures. We are meeting with Department Directors to see if there are things we can do more efficiently to bring down expenditures. Currently, we have not identified any specific expenditures."

Councilmember Hannah asked, "Next time you come before Council, will you have something specific?"

Mr. Wood stated, "Yes, we might be able to have something by then."

Councilmember Kalu asked, "What is the amount you recommend we have in reserves?"

Mr. Wood stated, "Typically three to six months of operations. If your operating budget is \$24 million, typically you would want \$3 to \$6 million in reserves. Once you get past June and July, your revenue sources drop significantly. You need reserves to carry you through the lean months of August, September, October, November, and December. The City has been fortunate to have reserves."

Councilmember Kalu asked, "What impact do you think will be on the financial reserves if we do not have a transfer from DPU to the City?"

Mr. Wood stated, "It would be a significant hit of \$6.2 million to a \$24 million budget."

Councilmember Kalu stated, "As Councilmember Hannah said, we need to look at areas in terms of consolidation or bring areas into perspective because if we do not have the DPU transfer, there will really be a negative impact on expenses. We as Council need to look into this because we are in charge. We need to look at the way the City is being run and make a drastic recommendation on what to do."

Councilmember Grevious asked, "You stated the revenue areas. What areas are the large expenditure areas?"

Mr. Wood stated, "Your largest expenditure is salaries and benefits which is probably 70-80 percent of total expenditures. It is in your people which is why Council made decisions this new budget year to help some salaries."

Public Works Director Singh addressed Council concerning Skatepark Update. He stated, "On the screen is a video of the skatepark project design and concept. A public meeting was held in December. Construction is targeted to begin March to early April."

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Keitt, seconded by Councilmember Kalu to approve a resolution to support the Municipal Association 2024-2025 Legislative Advocacy Initiatives. The motion was unanimously approved.

City Administrator Evering addressed Council concerning Boards and Commissions Appointments for the Aviation Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and the Planning Commission. He stated, "The following nominations have been made by districts for re-appointments for the Aviation Commission Carroll Joye, James M. Albergotti, III, Dr. Carl A. Carpenter and Tonzel E. Shuler; Board of Zoning Appeals Dr. Willie Woodbury and Desiree E. Chavis; and Planning Commission Stephon Edwards, II and John H. Wolfe. New nominations received are the Board of Zoning Appeals, Mabel Haynes and the Planning Commission, Vincent Pendarvis. These are all four year terms ending January 2028."

A motion was made by Councilmember Stroman, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Keitt to approve the Boards and Commissions appointments to the Aviation Commission, Board of Zoning appeals and the Planning Commission as nominated. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Councilmember Kalu, seconded by Councilmember Grevious to approve third reading of an ordinance amending the City of Orangeburg Department of Public Utilities Operating Budget Ordinance 2023-15 for Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2024 (DPU Project House 2). The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Councilmember Hannah, seconded by Councilmember Knotts to approve the second reading of an ordinance making provision for the terms and conditions of a \$21,000,000 Combined Public Utility System Revenue Bond of the City of Orangeburg, South Carolina, authorized by a Bond Ordinance of the City of Orangeburg enacted January 2004, as amended (2024 Series Ordinance). The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Councilmember Stroman, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Keitt to go into Executive Session concerning 1) discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale of purchase of property, and the receipt of legal advice for matters covered by the attorney-client privilege – Annexation S.C. Code Sec. 30-4-70 (a)(2), 2) performance evaluation discussion – Department of Public Utilities Manager S.C. Code Sec. 30-4-70(a)(1) and 3) performance evaluation discussion – City of Orangeburg Administrator S.C. Code Sec. 30-4-70(a)(1). 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





**A RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT THE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION
2024-2025 LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY INITIATIVES**

WHEREAS, cities and towns in South Carolina are the government closest to the people providing the core services residents and businesses demand for an exceptional quality of life; and,
WHEREAS, local decisions affecting residents and local businesses should be made by local leaders; and,
WHEREAS, cities and towns seek to make numerous small changes in current state law to support new and existing local industry and businesses, changes in public health and safety, and continuity of service delivery; and,
WHEREAS, cities and towns seek to support legislation that adds more tools to the toolbox for local governments to expand and create programs to help residents and businesses; and,
WHEREAS, the City of Orangeburg fully supports the 2024-2025 advocacy initiatives set forth by the Municipal Association of South Carolina Board of Directors for city and town councils to govern effectively and efficiently and listed below are the 2024-2025 initiatives:

- protecting the authority of cities and towns to regulate short-term rentals within municipal boundaries
- expanding local economic development incentives to cities and towns to allow municipal officials to increase the number of small businesses in downtowns
- supporting traffic safety measures including a ban on "squat trucks" and other local safety ordinances
- supporting statewide hate crimes legislation
- allowing cities and towns under a certain revenue threshold to complete a compilation of financial statements instead of a full audit
- allowing cities and towns to close doughnut holes, or enclaves, in their municipal limits through a local annexation process
- requiring code enforcement liens to be billed and collected by cities, towns, and counties in a method similar to what is used for property taxes
- allowing cities and towns with no property tax millage to impose a millage with certain limitations
- creating an option for municipal residents to approve a Municipal Option Sales Tax penny tax for capital projects within the city limits
- supporting stronger penalties for illegal fentanyl trafficking and possession
- clarifying how state U.S. Census population estimates for cities and towns are determined, and creating an appeals process for resolving potential differences in the estimates between the state and municipalities

BE IT, THEREFORE, RESOLVED that the Council of the City of Orangeburg affirms on this 16th day of January 2024, its support for the Municipal Association's 2024-2025 advocacy initiatives for the benefit of all of South Carolina's 271 cities and towns.

DONE AND RATIFIED THIS 16th DAY OF JANUARY 2024.



Michael C. Butler
MAYOR

[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]
[Signature]
MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

ATTEST:

Luinda McDaniel
City Clerk



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Freddie Walker III, faithfully served the Department of Public Utilities of the City of Orangeburg for twenty-five years, three months and twenty-seven days with a retirement date of December 29, 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 16th day of January 2024.



Michael C. Butler

Mayor

Nanda P. Scotts

Richard J. Thomas

L. Zimmerman Keitt

John [unclear]

[unclear]

[unclear]

Members of Council

ATTEST:

Ruida McDaniel

City Clerk