

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
SALUDA COUNTY COUNCIL
MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 2026 AT 6:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, SALUDA COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
400 WEST HIGHLAND STREET, SALUDA, SOUTH CAROLINA

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Moore called the regular meeting of Saluda County Council to order at 6:00 P.M.

Present were:

Councilman J. Frank Daniel, Sr.
Councilman Jack Atkinson
Vice-Chairman Carey Bedenbaugh
Councilman Justin Anderson
Chairman James L. Moore

Also Present were:

Regina Turner, County Administrator
Heather L. Griffin, Clerk to Council
Ginny Bozeman, County Attorney

B. INVOCATION

Chairman Moore delivered the invocation.

C. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Moore led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

It is noted by the Clerk herein, that in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the regular meeting was given to the local news media and properly posted, to include the County website. The following notice was placed at the beginning of the agenda: **Please note meetings are open to the public. Access to the video is available by going to the County's Facebook page (Saluda County, SC Government).**

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion of Vice-Chairman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Councilman Atkinson, the agenda was unanimously approved.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of Vice-Chairman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Councilman Atkinson, the minutes of July 13, 2026 were unanimously approved as written in the agenda.

F. REPORTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Council recognized Senator Shane Massey and Mr. Corey Bedenbaugh, 2026 South Carolina Teacher of the Year.

Senator Massey presented Mr. Bedenbaugh with a Senate Resolution recognizing his accomplishment as South Carolina Teacher of the Year and congratulated him on his achievement. Senator Massey recognized Mr. Bedenbaugh's work in social studies, history and civics, as well as his mentorship and positive influence on students.

Chairman Moore recognized Mr. Corey Bedenbaugh on being named the 2026 South Carolina Teacher of the Year and noted that Mr. Bedenbaugh had been a resident of Saluda County for 35 years. Chairman Moore presented remarks recognizing Mr. Bedenbaugh's commitment to education and his service as an ambassador for more than 60,000 educators throughout South Carolina.

Councilman Atkinson stated that he was glad to see everyone there.

Councilman Anderson congratulated Mr. Bedenbaugh and recognized the importance of educators and their influence on students.

Councilman Daniel also recognized Dana Bledsoe, Administrator and CEO of the Saluda County Nursing Home, and Doris Hicks, Chairperson, for their work and service to the nursing home.

Vice-Chairman Bedenbaugh announced that Saluda County would hold seven informational meetings concerning the upcoming Capital Project Sales Tax Referendum. The meetings will provide information regarding the proposed projects and the ballot question. The meetings will begin at 6:00 P.M. and will be held on the following dates and at the following locations:

August 17 – Old Town Fire Department
August 18 – Trinity Community Center (Good Hope)
August 25 – Circle Fire Department
August 31 – Hollywood Fire Department
September 1 – Sardis Community Center
September 8 – Ridge Spring Fire Department
September 21 – Council Chambers

Vice-Chairman Bedenbaugh encouraged citizens to attend one of the meetings and participate in the informational process.

Chairman Moore reminded Council of the ribbon cutting for the urgent care facility on August 12 at 3:00 P.M. and the dedication and special recognition of Saluda Elementary School on August 14 at 10:00 A.M.

Chairman Moore also reported that the Saluda County Library renovation project had been advertised for bids. Bid documents are available through the Saluda County website, with bids due September 2 at 2:00 P.M.

During discussion concerning public comments, Chairman Moore discussed whether and how responses could be provided to citizens regarding matters raised during public comment. County Attorney Ginny Bozeman advised Council that responses would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis and that Council must comply with the Freedom of Information Act and open meetings requirements. She further explained that matters requiring deliberation and discussion by Council would need to be properly placed on an agenda.

G. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dr. Patricia Graham was recognized to speak. Dr. Graham expressed concerns regarding road conditions and litter in the Higgins-Zoar community, including erosion, potholes and litter along the roads. She requested consideration of signs prohibiting littering and asked that the ongoing road and sanitation concerns be addressed.

Amy Potts, representing the Saluda County Republican Party, was recognized to speak. Ms. Potts presented Council with a packet containing research and a proposed sample ordinance concerning the sale of county-owned property and fair market value. She requested that Council consider adopting an ordinance requiring an independent determination of fair market value before the sale of county-owned property, while allowing reasonable exceptions and Council discretion when a legitimate public purpose or economic opportunity exists.

Frederick Weaver was recognized to speak. Mr. Weaver expressed concerns regarding working conditions and safety at the county recycling center, including heat, equipment safety, protective barriers and controls on machinery. He also expressed concerns regarding road conditions and vegetation along roads in the Topaz Road area and requested that these issues be addressed.

H. OLD BUSINESS

1. On motion of Vice-Chairman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Councilman Atkinson, Council unanimously approved second reading of Ordinance No. 07-26, "AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE LEASE OF T-HANGARS OWNED BY SALUDA COUNTY AND LOCATED AT THE SALUDA COUNTY AIRPORT, AUTHORIZING AN INCREASE IN T-HANGAR LEASE RATES, AND OTHER MATTERS RELATING THERETO."
2. On motion of Vice-Chairman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Councilman Daniel, Council unanimously approved third reading of Ordinance No. 01-26, "AN ORDINANCE OF SALUDA COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA AMENDING AND RESTATING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF THE COUNTY; AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO."

I. NEW BUSINESS

1. On motion of Councilman Daniel, seconded by Councilman Atkinson, Council approved first reading of Ordinance No. 08-26, "AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING AN UPDATED BUILDING PERMIT FEE SCHEDULE AND OTHER MATTERS RELATED THERETO."

Scott McDaniel of SafeBuilt was recognized and explained the proposed building permit fee schedule. Mr. McDaniel stated that SafeBuilt had provided services to Saluda County since 2018 and that there had been no fee increases during that period. He explained that the proposed increases were necessary to continue providing building permit and inspection services and to remain comparable with surrounding jurisdictions.

Council discussed the proposed fees, plan review fees, permitting requirements, inspections, code enforcement, construction costs and the effect of inflation on permit fees. SafeBuilt representatives also explained the County's code enforcement process and the handling of work performed without required permits.

Voting in favor were Councilman Atkinson, Councilman Daniel, and Chairman Moore. Voting against were Vice-Chairman Bedenbaugh and Councilman Anderson. The motion carried by a vote of 3-2.

2. On motion of Vice-Chairman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Councilman Daniel, Council unanimously approved the purchase of stairwells for the fire training facility, to be paid from the Fire Board Millage Account.

Mark Lybrand, Fire Coordinator, and Austin Rodgers, Chairman of the Fire Board, were recognized. Mr. Rodgers explained that three sets of stairwells were available for purchase for \$35,000, including loading, unloading and placement by crane. He stated that the stairwells would cost substantially more if purchased new. Council discussed the planned fire training facility, the use of shipping containers, engineering requirements and compliance with applicable NFPA requirements.

3. On motion of Vice-Chairman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Councilman Daniel, Council unanimously approved for County staff to search for property for a future site of the Circle EMS substation.

Council discussed the condition of the current Circle EMS substation and the need to relocate the facility. It was noted that the relocation would be necessary regardless of the outcome of the Capital Project Sales Tax Referendum.

4. On motion of Councilman Atkinson, seconded by Councilman Anderson, Council unanimously approved the appointment of Todd Poole as an alternate representative for the Circle Fire Department to the Fire Board.

5. On motion of Councilman Daniel, seconded by Councilman Atkinson, Council unanimously approved the transfer of \$220,000 from the County Reserve Fund to the Heavy Equipment Reserve Account to cover lease payments for the 2026-27 budget year.

J. EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion of Vice-Chairman Bedenbaugh, seconded by Councilman Anderson, Council entered into Executive Session pursuant to Section 30-4-70(a)(3) of the South Carolina Code of Laws, as amended, to receive legal advice. Council returned to open session at the call of the Chair.

There being no action taken as a result of Executive Session, the meeting proceeded to adjournment.

K. ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Vice-Chairman Bedenbaugh, the meeting was adjourned at 7:53P.M.

Heather L. Griffin
Clerk to Council

James L. Moore, Chairman

Date Approved: September 14, 2026