



SUMTER CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2025

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Mayor David P. Merchant.

| City Council          | Title                     | Status  |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------|
| David P. Merchant     | Mayor                     | Present |
| James B. Blassingame  | Mayor Pro Tempore, Ward 2 | Present |
| Anthony Gibson        | Councilman, Ward 1        | Present |
| Calvin K. Hastie, Sr. | Councilman, Ward 3        | Present |
| Rebecca Lynn Kennedy  | Councilwoman, Ward 4      | Present |
| Colin C. Davis        | Councilman, Ward 5        | Present |
| Gifford M. Shaw       | Councilman, Ward 6        | Absent  |

| City Staff        | Title                                       |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Deron McCormick   | City Manager                                |
| Howie Owens       | Assistant City Manager                      |
| Staci Johnson     | Administrative Services Director            |
| Jonathan Flinchum | Finance Director                            |
| Russell Roark     | Police Chief                                |
| Karl Ford         | Fire Chief                                  |
| Helen Roodman     | Planning Director                           |
| Michael Geddings  | Director of Public Services                 |
| Jeffery Jackson   | Assistant Police Chief                      |
| Ernie Dollard     | Assistant Fire Chief                        |
| Jeffrey Shirley   | Division Chief of Administrative Operations |
| Shelley Kile      | Communications & Tourism Director           |
| Clarence Gaines   | Community Development/Housing Director      |
| Larry McFadden    | HOPE Centers Coordinator                    |
| Danielle Malachi  | Codes Enforcement Supervisor                |
| Glenn Button      | Litter Control Officer                      |
| Marc Engle        | Multimedia Specialist                       |
| Danny Crowe       | General Counsel                             |
| Linda Hammett     | City Clerk                                  |
| CC Newman         | Records Management Administrator            |

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Councilman Gibson

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

City Council was asked to approve the February 4, 2025, special called meeting and regular meeting minutes. **Approved**

Motion: \_\_\_\_\_ Councilman Davis      Second: \_\_\_\_\_ Councilman Blassingame      Vote: 6-0

**SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

City of Sumter Litter Awards

| Category                             | Recipient(s)                                                      |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Above and Beyond                     | Keith Cheuvront (absent due to illness)                           |
| Most Litter Picked Up                | Knights of Columbus                                               |
| Volunteer Cleanup                    | Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority                  |
| “Love Where You Live” Poster Contest | Mason Miller, 4 <sup>th</sup> grade, Liberty STEAM Charter School |
| “Love Where You Live” Poster Contest | Sydney Faddis, 6 <sup>th</sup> grade, Alice Drive Middle School   |
| “Love Where You Live” Poster Contest | Peyton Harvin, 11 <sup>th</sup> grade, Lakewood High School       |



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Black History Month Presentation

| Award                | Recipient     |
|----------------------|---------------|
| Legacy of Excellence | Ione J. Dwyer |

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

| Award                      | Recipient(s)                           |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Firefighter of the Year    | Captain Leroy Hancock                  |
| Police Officer of the Year | Detective Staff Sergeant Heath Gardner |

PUBLIC HEARING – 6:00 P.M.

1. RZ-24-23, 314 LESESNE COURT

Receive comments from the public and consider **First Reading** of an ordinance to rezone an approximate 0.34-acre portion of a larger parcel of land from Residential-9 (R-9) to Limited Commercial (LC). The property is located at 314 Lesesne Court and identified by Tax Map Number 228-01-01-039 (part).

**Approved**

| Affirmative | Negative |
|-------------|----------|
| None        | None     |

Motion: Councilman Davis Second: Councilwoman Kennedy Vote: 6-0

OLD BUSINESS

2. BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Consider appointments expired December 31, 2024, and other vacancies. **No action taken.**

3. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Consider **Final Reading** of **Ordinance Number 2870** adopting the Community Development Entitlement Budget for Federal Fiscal Year 2025-2026. **Approved**

Motion: Councilman Hastie Second: Councilman Gibson Vote: 6-0

*First Reading approval was given February 4, 2025.*

NEW BUSINESS

4. LEASE-PURCHASE AGREEMENT

Consider **First Reading** of an ordinance entitled: “An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution, Delivery, and Performance of a Lease-Purchase Agreement and Other Documents Relating to the Lease-Purchase Financing of Certain Vehicles and Equipment in an Aggregate Principal Amount of Not Exceeding \$2,075,000.00, and Other Matters Relating Thereto.” **Approved**

Motion: Councilman Hastie Second: Councilman Gibson Vote: 6-0

5. PROCUREMENT RESOLUTIONS

a) Consider **Resolution Number 979** authorizing a contract for the Broad Court Sewer Relocation Project. **Approved**

Motion: Councilman Hastie Second: Mayor Pro Tempore Blessingame Vote: 6-0

b) Consider **Resolution Number 980** authorizing a contract for the Live Oak Industrial Park Water Improvements New Well 38 Project. **Approved**

Motion: Councilwoman Kennedy Second: Councilman Hastie Vote: 6-0



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- c) Consider **Resolution Number 981** authorizing the purchase of one (1) Quint Aerial Truck for the Sumter Fire Department. **Approved**

Motion: \_\_\_\_\_ Councilman Davis      Second: \_\_\_\_\_ Councilwoman Kennedy      Vote: 6-0

**6. MAINTENANCE GUARANTEE/DEED OF DEDICATION**

Consider acceptance of a Maintenance Guarantee/Deed of Dedication for Phase Two (2) of Crystal Downs Subdivision, consisting of lots 1-35 located along Citation Street. **Approved**

Motion: \_\_\_\_\_ Councilman Hastie      Second: \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor Pro Tempore Blessingame      Vote: 6-0

**7. COUNCIL REPORTS**

- |                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mayor Merchant                | - The City of Sumter’s second annual Junk Removal initiative took place February 3-7, 2025. Collections included 467 tons of general waste, 14 tons of e-waste, and 30 tons of tires, totaling 511 tons of waste collected.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Mayor Pro Tempore Blessingame | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Will have to leave the meeting at 6:30 p.m. to attend an event associated with Morris College’s Religious Emphasis Week extending from February 18-21, 2025. The culminating Mid-Winter Banquet will be held on Friday, February 21, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.</li><li>- Dr. Said Sewell’s Investiture Ceremony as the eleventh president of Morris College, has been scheduled for Friday, April 4, 2025. Additional details will be announced at a later date.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Councilman Hastie             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The Festival on the Avenue will be held April 10-12, 2025, kicking off with the annual golf tournament. Requested that the City of Sumter develop a team to participate.</li><li>- Reminded Councilmembers and citizens of the Doris Hastie-Fulwood Scholarship Foundation Heart Health Luncheon and Scholarship Drive to be held on Saturday, February 22, 2025, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church.</li><li>- The South Sumter Park Revitalization Project is progressing well. Hoping that the annual Veterans Association Memorial Day celebration can be held there.</li><li>- A small number of the City’s homeless population have been utilizing the Sumter United Ministries nightly winter shelter (available based on temperature). He suggested the need to explore transportation needs in the future.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Councilman Davis              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provided an update from the December 18, 2024, Sumter Area Transportation Study Policy Committee meeting, where Senator Jeff Zell was welcomed as a new member. The Committee approved the addition of the following projects to the Fiscal Year 2024-2033 Transportation Improvement Plan:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- <b>U.S. Highway 15 South Bridge Project:</b> Includes engineering, right-of-way acquisition, and construction for the southbound bridge over the Pocatoligo River.</li><li>- <b>Harvin Street Complete Street Retrofit:</b> Funded through the 2024 Sumter Penny for Progress Program.</li><li>- <b>County Road Improvements:</b> \$21 million allocated for resurfacing, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, evenly distributed from FY 2025 to FY 2032.</li><li>- <b>Community Sidewalks &amp; Paths:</b> \$3.5 million allocated for construction, distributed from FY 2025 to FY 2029 under the 2024 Sumter Penny for Progress Program.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The Manning Avenue Bridge Replacement project is scheduled for bid solicitation in May 2025.</li></ul></li></ul></li></ul> |
| Councilwoman Kennedy          | - Reported that The Heart of Sumter Neighborhood Association's brick pavers project is advancing to the installation phase, with discussion regarding Memorial Park placement underway.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |



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8. CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

- Deron McCormick
- Each member of Council was given a copy of the January 2025 Financials.
  - Collection will commence in May 2025 for the extra penny sales tax approved through the Capital Projects (Penny) Sales Tax Referendum in November 2024. Sumter County is working on bond anticipation notes to obtain funding to begin some of the projects soon.

9. COMMENTS BY CITY CITIZENS

| Citizens      |
|---------------|
| Ruth McKinney |
| Ben Singleton |
| Dia Clyburn   |

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:43 p.m.

Motion: Councilman Hastie Second: Councilwoman Kennedy Vote: 6-0

Respectfully submitted:

Linda D. Hammett

Linda D. Hammett  
City Clerk

February 14, 2025 Certification of Public and Media Notification