



<b>Mayor</b> Elise Partin	<b>Mayor Pro-Tem</b> Tim James	<b>Council Members</b> Phil Carter Hunter Sox Byron Thomas	<b>City Manager</b> James Crosland	<b>Deputy City Manager</b> Michael Conley
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**City of Cayce  
Regular Council Meeting  
Budget Work Session  
Wednesday April 16, 2025**

The April 16, 2025, Regular Council Meeting and Budget Work Session was held this evening at 5:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Those present included Mayor Elise Partin, Mayor Pro Tem Tim James and Council Members Phil Carter, Hunter Sox and Byron Thomas. City Manager Jim Crosland, Deputy City Manager Michael Conley, Assistant City Manager Wesley Crosby, Municipal Clerk Mendy Corder, Finance Director Kelly McMullen, Human Resources Director Lynn Dooley, IT Director Jamie Beckham and City Attorney Will Dillard were also in attendance.

Mayor Partin asked if members of the press and the public were duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the FOIA. Ms. Corder confirmed they were notified.

**Call to Order**

Mayor Partin called the meeting to order and Council Member Sox gave the invocation. Mayor Partin led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comment Regarding Items on the Agenda**

There was no public comment.

**Discussion Items**

**A. Discussion of Proposed FY2025/2026 General Fund Budget**

City Manager Crosland stated that staff was going to do an overview of the General Fund and reminded Council that the draft budget was what was requested by staff and not the final recommended budget from Administration. He stated that there was an 114% increase in liability insurance, a 22% to 38% increase in health insurance, and an 18% increase in fuel and repairs. He stated that the City did see some increases in franchise fees this past year and also expected to see anticipated growth in the Local Government Fund.

Finance Director Kelly McMullen stated that staff member Allison Barrs, the Reporting Financial Manager, was going to start the budget discussion. Ms. Barrs stated that she was going to review some of the trends and revenue and reminded Council that the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) was separate from the operating budget. She stated that in the requested budget, Council would only see operating expenses and small capital and each department had their large capital project requests

separate. She stated that was done so Council could make the decisions on CIP with any excess revenues that was left to allocate towards those purchases and projects. She stated that staff talked about how inflation had fluctuated during the Utilities Fund budget meeting but were going to review it again. She stated that from FY11 to FY22 the Consumer Price Index (CPI) averaged 1.66%, in FY24 the CPI peaked at 8% and then it started to come back down and in FY25 the CPI was at 4.12%. She stated that currently the CPI was at 2.9%. Ms. Barrs stated that unlike the Utility Fund budget, the General Fund budget was very personnel heavy and the salaries and fringes accounted for 75% of the overall budget. She stated that this created a different kind of challenge for the General Fund budget with insurance and workers compensation. She stated that the General Fund was less prone to negative impacts from the inflation increases but still had several inflationary increases that had a significant impact on it.

Ms. Barrs stated that before COVID, the General Fund was able to historically allocate \$600,000 to \$800,000 to capital projects without having to use reserves or fund balance. She stated that changed last year and dropped to no funding for capital projects but they were able to allocate \$620,000 to capital purchases. She stated that thanks to Council actions, staff was able to use alternative funding. She reviewed fund balance and reserves accounts next and stated all those numbers were in in the FY24 ACFR and were available online for everyone to see. Ms. Barrs stated that the City had \$196,542 in State Accommodations Tax funds available for restricted purchases related to tourism and community development and \$1,682,705 in hospitality tax funds in restricted funds for tourism and community development. She stated that local option permit, or ABC funds, had \$71,681 but were also restricted for certain activities. She stated that the fund balance for the City's TIF debt service was \$5,046,605 and that was restricted for just debt service. She stated that the City's TIF redevelopment fund had \$900,662 and was restricted for capital projects and lastly the General Fund unassigned balance was \$8,174,721 and that number represented 43% of the FY26 requested budget expenses or five (5) months of operating funds.

Ms. McMullen stated that she was going to review the City's revenue sources and the different revenue streams. She stated that some of the City's biggest contributions to revenues included franchise fees, business licenses and property taxes. She stated that from 2022 to 2024 there was pretty good growth in the City's franchise fees. She stated that the market economy was doing well. She stated that the City had \$1.77 million in revenues in 2022 and that increased to \$3.26 million in 2024 and they were predicting that would probably stabilize somewhere around \$3.5 million depending on the market. She stated that business licenses were stable in FY2022 at \$2.6 million and in 2024 they were also \$2.6 million. Ms. McMullen stated that the City's sanitation fees, the fees charged to citizens for residential sanitation service, were \$775,000 which was no different than last year. She stated that the requested budget for sanitation was a little over \$1.5 million which meant about 51% of the sanitation budget was being funded from the sanitation fee, and the other 49% was being funded from General Fund revenues.

Ms. McMullen stated that the local government fund was planning to increase with the State and the State's budget increased 5% or more, so staff was anticipating a 5% increase to the local government fund this year. She stated that this was a reassessment year for Lexington County and with reassessment came roll back millage calculations. She stated that when comparing this year to next year, the City's assessment values increased from about \$66 million this current fiscal year to \$73 million in FY2026, which meant that the City could not have a windfall due to a reassessment so staff would have to calculate a roll back millage. She stated that staff would have to figure it out so the City could earn the same amount of tax revenues. She stated that staff was calculating the millage rate to drop from 62.1 to 56.4 and the City's value of one (1) mill would increase from \$66,000 to about \$73,000. Ms. McMullen stated that the City's tax revenues this current year were estimated at 4.1 and next year were estimated at 4.1 even with the new millage rate.

Ms. McMullen stated that the City did have some anticipated additional revenues for growth that amounted to \$100,000 meaning that next year, they were anticipating tax revenues to be a little over \$4.2 million which meant that if a homeowner owned a property currently valued at \$175,000 that was owner occupied receiving the 4% credit then the home had now increased 10% in value. She stated that the City had some unused look back for FY2024 that was approximately four (4) mills and the value of those mills was \$296,000. She stated that the look back for 2025 was currently two and a half mills, valued at approximately \$187,000 and the CPI was 2.95% this year which equated to 1.66 mills, or an additional \$120,000. Ms. McMullen stated that staff did not have the population data yet but the RFA was saying that it should come out in May.

Mayor Partin stated that Ms. McMullen stated that the reassessment would not cost citizens anything more but asked if their tax bill was going to go up at all. Ms. McMullen stated that some could go up but some would not. She stated that every home was revalued on a reassessment year but it was capped at a 15% increase by law, but that did not include things like if they had added a structure or enclosed a patio. She stated things like that that were exempt from a reassessment recalculation. She stated that most people would probably not see an additional increase

City Manager Crosland reviewed Council's Legislation budget. He stated that the only increase was \$18,000 for Election expenses. He stated that the Administration department had requested a municipal complex space study, which was estimated to cost \$50,000. He stated that it was in last year's budget but was cut. He stated that an administration prox card project was included in the budget and would get all City buildings onto the prox card program. Mayor Pro Tem James asked what the municipal complex space study could possibly staff and Council that they did not already know. Deputy City Manager Conley stated that staff did not know each individual space needs and the study would tell them that for each office. He stated that they used software that could design what the spacing looked like for those needs. He stated that the study could also tell them about funding mechanisms and how much it would cost so staff and

Council could start making decisions. City Manager Crosland stated that it would also give them design examples. Council Member Sox asked if all that was included for \$50,000. City Manager Crosland stated yes and stated that did not mean that the City had to use the group who did the study as engineers later to design anything. Mayor Partin asked if the study that was done several years ago would be helpful and suggested that staff take another look at that study.

IT Director Jamie Beckham reviewed his budget. He stated that the biggest difference in his budget was they had significant operational cost increases. He stated that Microsoft had a huge increase with the City's regular base license changes. He stated that the operating budget, as far as capital, only included standard replacements for equipment that needed to be rolled off every five (5) years. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that he did not see a huge amount of money for equipment in the IT budget and asked if it was spread out throughout all the other departments. Mr. Beckham stated that he took the utility side and spread it out between IT's budget. He stated that it was a light year for the General Fund but in a few years a lot of laptops would need to be replaced and they had to find a way to spread that cost out. City Manager Crosland stated they would start searching for grants now for that. Ms. McMullen stated that Finance's budget included a maintenance fee for the new software and it was a 50/50 split with utilities.

City Manager Crosland stated that he would review the Police Administration budget next. He stated that Chief Wade just started with the City the day before so staff would be working with his budget with him the next week. He stated that Police Administration was requesting one (1) vehicle and Police Investigations was requesting two (2) vehicle replacements – one was a F150 with 180,000 miles on it and one was a police vehicle. He stated that the Police Parks department was requesting two (2) additional golf carts and two (2) replacement vehicles.

Fire Chief Steven Bullard thanked Council for their continued support. He stated that they had requested a set of extrication equipment that costs \$55,000. He stated that the equipment was hydraulic so there were no cords that could be a trip hazard on the scene. He stated that they requested to replace their mobile and portable radios since they were at the end of their life and would no longer be able to be serviced. He stated that they were trying to spread the cost out over a couple of years and replace all the mobile radios that were in the trucks this year and then work on replacing the portable radios which were the ones the firefighters carry. He stated that they requested to continue the station improvement project and continue to make the firehouse a comfortable place for staff to eat and sleep. Chief Bullard stated that the new engine should be delivered any day and they would immediately start planning a big ceremony once it arrived. He stated that the rescue vehicle was back in service and the service truck that Council approved last year, should be delivered sometime in May and they would have a ceremony for that as well.

Mayor Pro Tem James thanked Chief Bullard for a great job and how he had led his staff. He stated that the City now had an ISO of two, which Mayor Partin and he continued to tout to make sure that citizens understood that was saving them a great deal of money on their insurance. He stated that the Fire Department staff often responded to medical emergencies and saved lives by getting there first. He stated that he appreciated Chief Bullard's leadership and the phenomenal job he and his staff were doing.

Sanitation Manager Thomas White reviewed the status of roll carts and the roll cart program. He stated that he was constantly looking for grants to fund replacement roll carts and was currently trying to get grant monies through DES to purchase an additional 250 recycling roll carts. He stated that in his Capital Improvement Plan, he requested a load of regular roll carts, so they could continue to change out the old ones. Mr. White stated that they had already changed out two (2) neighborhoods old roll carts. He stated that the only increase in his department's budget was in employee training because one could never have too much training. Council Member Thomas stated that during last year's budget process Council Member Sox asked if the City made any money from recycling and he believed Mr. White said no and asked if that was still correct. Mr. White stated that the City did not make any money from recycling and had to stop recycling glass which helped with the cost. He stated that the City currently paid \$67 per ton to SONOCO. Council Member Thomas asked if the City ever had situations where the recycling had to come back to the City. Mr. White stated that rarely happened. City Manager Crosland stated that he did not know that roll carts could be rebuilt. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that the community must know because they put their old roll cart and wheels out for the Sanitation Department to get. He stated that everything ran smoothly in Mr. White's department because that was the culture that he established in his department. He stated that Mr. White was one of the longest serving employees of the City and had truly built a culture in sanitation. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that kids ran to the sanitation trucks like they did to fire trucks and were just as excited to see them and it was phenomenal. He asked Mr. White to make sure that his staff truly understood how much Council appreciated them. He stated that Council got so many compliments on them.

Museum Curator Andy Thomas reviewed the Museum's programs. He stated that he was very grateful for their support for the Museum. He stated that most of his operating costs remained the same. He stated that he requested \$2,000 for gutters and \$1,200 for new conference chairs for the Visitors Center. He stated that as far as events and exhibits, he was making requests for six (6) different items out of Accommodations and Hospitality taxes. He stated that three (3) of them would come out of the operating budget for City events. He stated that the Colonial Village they had at Tartan Day South was very successful and thousands of people came through. Mr. Thomas stated that the African American Legends event was very successful as well as the Christmas Traditions Open House that they had held for over 30 years and was their signature event. He stated that there were also three (3) items in the Hospitality Tax

funding that he was requesting funding for to include development of exhibits. Mr. Thomas stated that the Public Safety exhibit needed just a little bit more time and money to be completed. He stated that he also requested monies to create a Revolutionary War exhibit and were hoping this would be a signature exhibit for the 250th anniversary of the Revolutionary War, which was coming up. He stated that he also requested money for their Catawba pottery exhibit that included 85 pieces of modern Catawba pottery. He stated that they would like the money to be used for design and development stage for that exhibit, since they thought it could be a really big draw for the museum.

Mayor Partin stated that she wished she had recorded the previous night's African American Legends event because it was so phenomenal and the story of the City that was told and the City's connection to the Smithsonian and to the Vatican was really impressive. She thanked Mr. Thomas for all that he was doing to aid that and to help bring history alive in the City and to make sure that the whole story was being told.

Deputy City Manager Conley stated that Parks staff did a wonderful job of really keeping their budget consistent and conservative. He stated that most of the items requested were items that they direly needed to make themselves efficient. He stated that more and more was being put on Parks as the demand on the City increased so anything that they could do to help them not only with efficiency but quality, they would definitely take a hard look at those items. City Manager Crosland stated that a lot of their capital items could be paid for out of Hospitality Tax funds such as an excavator, lawn mower replacements and a trailer mounted pressure washer.

Fleet Manager Bill Clark stated that he had requested an additional service truck since he often had to wait to respond to a call until the service truck came back from being on another call. He stated that the diesel diagnostic equipment they had was eight (8) years old and out of date and needed to be updated so they could work on the newer trucks.

City Manager Crosland stated that he wanted to commend staff and the directors for really reaching down and looking at their budgets to see what they really needed. He stated that Administration and Finance would review the capital items and look back to what was requested last year to the current year. He stated that the General Fund was currently out of balance by \$194,900 and that included a 4% cost of living adjustment for staff which Council asked staff to make sure was included. He stated that he thought they were in a good position for the General Fund and should be able to balance with no problem. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that staff started the budget work session by listing several inflationary items that would impact the budget that was out of their hands and asked staff to review those again. City Manager Crosland stated that there was an 114% increase in liability insurance, a 22% to 38% increase in health insurance and an 18% increase in fuel and repairs. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that staff had done a great job of managing the budget. He stated that obviously the City



was doing a good job of saving everything they possibly could. He stated that one of the budget line items was for streetlights and he did not think that citizens knew that the City paid close to half a million dollars for streetlights. He stated that Patrol Officers were the people who knew first when a streetlight was out since they were patrolling at night. He stated that it was important to get the outages reported so they could keep the lights shining and crime prevention going. Mayor Partin stated that amount was a \$100,000 more than the previous year. City Manager Crosland stated that Dominion had a rate increase. Mayor Partin stated that she would like to have the list of inflationary items and to include Dominion's rate increase as well as the City's overall Dominion costs.

Mayor Partin stated that she appreciated knowing that the local government funds were going up but \$17,000 based on all the other increases was not much. She stated that one had to take into account that the State was cutting everything else. She stated that it was unprecedented and a massive problem so anyone that wanted to call the City's State Representatives and ask them to figure out how they could get that money back because that would have a huge impact on what citizens got. She stated that the City was the lowest taxing entity and if one looked at their bill what the City got was so small compared to what the County and School Board got. She stated that it was absurd and the City's amazing team did so much with too little. She stated that she loved that Council said they were absolutely, without a doubt, making sure staff received a cost of living adjustment this year. Mayor Partin stated that Council needed to revisit some things that they had talked about over the years. She stated that they had a commitment for many years for the Sanitation Department to pay for itself and stated that every private sanitation company out there that people outside of the City paid for their services either made a profit or broke even and were not running at a deficit like the City's was. She stated that they were paying for half of it out of the General Fund and it was supposed to pay for itself. She stated that at the Federal level items would continue to increase in cost and be affected by the tariffs. She stated that she was curious how many of the capital items the City needed to buy would be affected and only get more expensive. Mayor Partin asked Council if they would be interested in having Administration gather a list of all the capital improvement needs that were going to be affected by tariffs and possibly go ahead and spend some of that money so Council was doing a good job for citizens in spending less of that money. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that was very proactive and stated that it should be pretty easy for Administration to take a look at what items in the budget would be impacted.

### **City Manager's Report**

City Manager Crosland introduced new Police Chief Bruce Wade and stated that he was excited to have him there. He stated that Chief Wade walked in his office the day before in a Cayce uniform with Cayce patches and had already met with his executive command staff for two and a half hours and then had a full department

meeting that afternoon. He stated that Chief Wade knew the area and the people and was what Cayce needed.

### **Council Comments**

Council Member Carter stated that he appreciated all the work that went into the budget and it was the most informative flow of information he had seen. He stated that the details were phenomenal and he could understand it, which was really appreciated. He stated that there was not anything where he could come back in six (6) months and say he did not know about it because absolutely everything was there.

Council Member Thomas congratulated DeZyah DeWitt of Cayce Elementary School on her amazing cheeseburger cupcakes and winning the annual Future Chef's Challenge. He stated that she was in the running for the nationals. He stated that voting would start May 1 through May 7 and asked everyone to be on the lookout for that information on the School District's website, because it would be an honor to see her win that. He told Mayor Partin he would love to work with her in recognizing DeZyah and her family in Council Chambers. He stated that Mayor Partin was doing a great job working with the youth in the schools and he would like to invite them once a quarter to a Council Meeting to lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. He stated that there were several schools in Lexington School District Two that were in the City so why not have their student council members lead in the Pledge of Allegiance since it was their Council Chambers as well. He stated that the best way for the youth to get involved was by Council giving them opportunities and he would be honored to work with Council to see how to get the City more involved with the youth.

Mayor Partin stated that she received a text from Pope Walker with Rose Talbert saying that he met three (3) Cayce Police Officers that morning at their store and the City had first class men. She stated that she also received the sweetest picture of five (5) little kids sitting on steps along with a text from one of the moms thanking her for making Cayce a community where they could meet neighbors in real life, on the streets, walking, playing at parks, getting their caffeine fix and stated that was rare these days. Mayor Partin stated that she could not wait to get the attendance numbers from Tartan Day South since it seemed to be one of the most heavily attended ones and between that and the City's Soiree on State more and more people were enjoying the City and coming there.

### **Executive Session**

- A. Receipt of legal advice and discussion of proposed contractual arrangements relating to
  - i. Avenues Drainage Project – Agreement with American Engineering
  - ii. SCDOT Intergovernmental Agreement regarding Avenues Drainage Project



Mayor Pro Tem James made a motion to move into Executive Session. Council Member Sox seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

### **Reconvene**

After the Executive Session was concluded, Mayor Pro Tem James made a motion to reconvene the Regular meeting. Council Member Thomas seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote. Mayor Partin announced that no vote was taken in Executive Session other than to adjourn and resume the Regular meeting.

### **Possible actions in follow up to Executive Session**

#### **A. Approval of an agreement with American Engineering**

Council Member Sox made a motion to authorize the City Manager to sign the letter reinstating the construction supervision service agreement with American Engineering. Council Member Carter seconded the motion. Mayor Partin stated that she would not be able to support this, even though she was thrilled for American Engineering to do the work, but she did not have data on whether or not it would have saved the City money to go with SCDOT. She called the question. Mayor Pro Tem James and Council Members Carter, Sox and Thomas voted yes. Mayor Partin voted no.

#### **B. Approval of SCDOT Intergovernmental Agreement regarding the Avenues Drainage Project**

Council Member Sox made a motion to approve and authorize the City Manager to sign the revised IGA agreement with SCDOT for the Avenues Drainage project. Council Member Thomas seconded the motion. Mayor Pro Tem James and Council Members Carter, Sox and Thomas voted yes. Mayor Partin voted no.

### **Adjourn**

Council Member Sox made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mayor Pro Tem James seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:31pm.

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Elise Partin, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Mendy Corder, CMC, Municipal Clerk

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK ON A MATTER APPEARING ON THE MEETING AGENDA, PLEASE COMPLETE THE INFORMATION BELOW PRIOR TO THE START OF THE MEETING.\* *THANK YOU.*

## COUNCIL MEETING SPEAKERS' LIST

*Date of Meeting*      *April 16, 2025* \_\_\_\_\_

Name	Address	Agenda Item

**\*Appearance of citizens at Council meetings - City of Cayce Code of Ordinances, Sec. 2-71.** Any citizen of the municipality may speak at a regular meeting of the council on a matter pertaining to municipal services and operation, with the exception of personnel matters, by notifying the office of the city manager at least five working days prior to the meeting and stating the subject and purpose for speaking. Additionally, during the **public comment period** as specified on the agenda of a regular meeting of the council, a member of the public may speak on a matter appearing on the meeting agenda, with the exception of personnel matters by signing a speakers list maintained by the city clerk prior to the start of the public comment period. The number of speakers at a council meeting may be limited in the discretion of the mayor or presiding officer, the length of time for any speaker's presentation is limited to a maximum of five minutes, and a presentation may be curtailed if determined to be uncivil, contentious, or disruptive in the discretion of the mayor or presiding officer or by majority of vote of council.