

Mayor Elise Partin	Mayor Pro-Tem Phil Carter	Council Members Tiffany Aull Byron Thomas Alice Rose	City Manager Mike Conley	Assistant City Manager Betsy Cathings Wesley Crosby
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**City of Cayce  
Regular Council Meeting  
Wednesday, April 22, 2026  
5:00 p.m. – Cayce City Hall – 1800 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
[www.caycesc.gov](http://www.caycesc.gov)**

The April 22, 2026, Regular Council Meeting was held this evening at 5:00 p.m. in Council Chambers. Those present included Mayor Elise Partin, Mayor Pro Tem Phil Carter, and Council Members Byron Thomas, Tiffany Aull, and Alice Rose; City Manager Michael Conley; Assistant City Manager Wesley Crosby and Assistant City Manager/Utilities Director Betsy Catchings; Municipal Clerk Kristen Hall; Human Resources Director Keisha Brunson; and City Attorney James Smith.

Mayor Partin asked if members of the press and public were duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Ms. Hall confirmed they were notified.

#### Call to Order

Mayor Partin called the Regular Council Meeting to order, Mayor Pro Tem Carter gave the invocation, and City of Cayce Assistant Police Chief Jonathan von Moltke led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### Public Comment Regarding Items on the Agenda

Seven individuals addressed Council regarding Item 9A, which concerned the proposed installation of a Thomas Dambo Troll sculpture in the City of Cayce.

Robin Reese – opposed the project, stating that the city has more pressing needs, including public safety, parks, and infrastructure improvements. She questioned whether the sculpture would generate sufficient tourism and economic benefit to justify the expenditure.

Joe Long - supported the sculpture, describing it as a world-class public art installation and a strategic tourism investment. He noted that the project has already generated significant media attention and argued it would provide year-round economic benefits without using general fund or property tax revenues.

Clyde Alley - did not take a position for or against the project but emphasized the need for detailed project planning, including feasibility studies, site selection, security, maintenance, construction oversight, liability, and transparency regarding all associated costs.

Ron Wright - objected to the matter being discussed in Executive Session and expressed concerns about the lack of transparency. He questioned whether comparisons to other cities were applicable to Cayce and suggested hospitality tax funds would be better used to improve existing assets such as the Riverwalk.

Renee Eshelman - President of the Cayce Arts Guild, expressed support for the project as a continuation of the City's commitment to the arts and the Cayce Arts District. She stated that the Arts Guild would assist with volunteer efforts as needed.

Chip Salak – objected to the matter being discussed in Executive Session and stated that Cayce should focus on maintaining and enhancing current amenities, including the Riverwalk, Timmerman Trail, and gateways into the city, before undertaking a large-scale art project. He indicated support for the concept only if funded through private donations rather than public funds.

Vickie Davis - Executive Director of Capital City/Lake Murray Country Regional Tourism Board, presented data from comparable installations and stated that Thomas Dambo sculptures have proven to attract tens of thousands of visitors and generate substantial media exposure and economic impact. She noted that her organization would assist in marketing the attraction to regional and out-of-state visitors.

### **Presentation**

Mayor Partin and Council presented Mrs. Ann Malpass with a Key to the City for her years of leadership and dedicated service to the City of Cayce.

### **Items for Discussion and Possible Approval**

- A. Discussion and Approval to Amend the May 5, 2026, Council Meeting Date

City Manager Conley stated that the May 5, 2026, Council Meeting was being held therefore no action was needed for this item. Mayor Partin did advise that she would not be in attendance for this Council Meeting.

- B. Consideration and Approval of a Financial Participation Agreement for the FY27 State Victim Assistance Grant

Council Member Thomas made a motion to approve the financial participation agreement for the FY27 State Victim Assistance Grant. Council Member Rose seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

### **Ordinances**

- A. Discussion and Approval of Ordinance 2026-03 Amending the Zoning Map and Rezoning Property Located at 1511 Middle Street (Tax Map Number 5764-01-013) from C-3 to RG-2 – Second Reading

Council Member Thomas made a motion to approve Ordinance 2026-03 amending the zoning map and rezoning property location at 1511 Middle Street (Tax Map Number 5764-01-013) from C-3 to RG-2. Council Member Aull seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

### **Committee Matters**

- A. Approval to Enter the Following Committee Approved Minutes into the City's Record

## Cayce Historical Museum Commission – March 4, 2026

Mayor Pro Tem Carter made a motion to enter the committee approved minutes into the City's record. Council Member Rose seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

### B. Appointments Events Committee – Two (2) Positions

Council Member Thomas made a motion to appoint both Felicia Thomas and Vanessa Mota to the Events Committee. Council Member Aull seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

### City Manager's Report

City Manager Conley announced several upcoming community and employee events. The Cayce Public Safety Foundation will host its annual Chicken Bog Fundraiser on April 23 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., with proceeds benefiting the City's first responders. The Women's Club of Cayce will hold the Hot Flash 5K on May 2 to support the organization's community initiatives. In addition, the City's Employee Appreciation Luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday, May 13.

### Council Comments

Council Member Thomas encouraged participation in the Women's Club of Cayce Hot Flash 5K on May 2 and invited residents to join a community litter cleanup in Riverland Park on May 9 in observance of Earth Day. He also discussed efforts to develop a golf cart ordinance, noting coordination with the West Columbia ordinance as a possible model to enhance safety and provide consistency for residents. In addition, he promoted the Cayce-West Columbia Block Party on June 13, which will include free blood pressure screenings provided by Prisma Health.

Council Member Thomas also shared that he had received significant public input regarding the proposed Thomas Dambo troll sculpture project. He acknowledged both the potential tourism and economic benefits and the concerns expressed by residents about transparency, total project costs, maintenance obligations, and the extent of private funding and partnerships. Based on research into similar projects in other communities, he noted that many were funded primarily through private donations and nonprofit partnerships and emphasized the importance of full transparency and responsible stewardship of hospitality and accommodations tax revenues.

Mayor Partin highlighted several programs and events hosted by the Cayce Historical Museum, including recent presentations on Catawba pottery and upcoming African American Legends programming at the Lexington County Innovation Center. She also announced a candlelight vigil to honor fallen Officer Drew Barr, recognizing his service and lasting impact on the community.

### Executive Session

- A. Discussion of negotiations incident to a proposed contractual arrangement with artist Thomas Dambo for the creation and installation of public art within the City, including at the Riverwalk or another City location, and receipt of related legal

advice, as permitted by the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act

- B. Receipt of legal advice relating to claims and potential claims by and against the City and other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege

Council Member Thomas made a motion to move into Executive Session. Council Member Rose seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

#### **Reconvene**

After the Executive Session was concluded, Mayor Partin announced that no action was taken in Executive Session other than to adjourn and resume the Regular meeting.

#### **Possible Action in follow-up to Executive Session**

- A. Possible action to approve a contractual arrangement with Thomas Dambo for the creation and installation of public art within the City

Council Member Aull made a motion to continue this matter; stating they decided to put together a presentation for the public with details of the contract on Monday, April 27 at 5:30 p.m. Council Member Rose seconded the motion which was passed with a 3/2 vote.

- B. Possible action, if any, relating to claims or potential claims discussed in executive session, as appropriate and as permitted by law

There was no follow-up action for this item.

#### **Adjourn**

Council Member Rose made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Aull seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:53 p.m.

  
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Elise Partin, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Kristen Hall, Municipal Clerk

