



Mayor  
Elise Partin

Mayor Pro-Tem  
Tim James

Council Members  
Phil Carter  
Hunter Sox  
Byron Thomas

City Manager  
James Crosland

Deputy City Manager  
Michael Conley

**City of Cayce  
Regular Council Meeting  
Wednesday, February 19, 2025**

The February 19, 2025, Regular Council Meeting 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. 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, Fire Chief Steven Bullard 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 Carter 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.

**Presentations**

- A. Presentation by Mr. Maruice Pearl, Executive Director of the COMET, Regarding Services Offered

Mr. Pearl stated he wanted to present to Council what the COMET did as a public transit and what they did for the community. He stated that the COMET covered the Central Midlands region and was a quasi-governmental agency. He stated that 72% of the COMET's funding sources were from the Richland County sales tax, 9% from inter-governmental, 11% from fares and contract services, and 7% from operating and non-operating, and then 1% from Lexington County. He stated that since 2012 the COMET's miles had increased nearly 40% from just over 1.6 million to 2.3 million in 2023. He stated that they added 29 new routes, bringing the total to 47 and added 29 new busses for a total of 97. Mr. Pearl stated that their ridership had increased since 2012 up 35% from 1.4 million to 1.9 million and currently topped over 2 million. He stated that they had 15 benches and no shelters in 2012 and now had 160 bus shelters and 196 benches and continued to add those amenities for their ridership and passengers.

Mr. Pearl stated that for every dollar invested in public transportation, about \$4 in economic returns was generated. He stated that the COMET transported passengers to hospitals, restaurants, and multiple businesses. He stated that public transportation had less emissions than cars. He stated that currently there were 28 trips through Cayce every day. He referenced the COMET's website and stated the schedule and routes were on the website as well as a trip planner where a rider could enter in where they were currently located and where they wanted to go and the app would tell them the times, the vehicles, where to walk to and how to get there.

Council Member Thomas asked how often the COMET contacted municipalities to see if residents were asking for additional stops. Mr. Pearl stated that they received feedback all the time and they reviewed it and communicated to Lexington County that additional services were being requested. Mayor Partin asked Mr. Pearl if he could touch on the grant programs that were available in addition to the COMET buses that people might be able to connect with for maybe medical appointments, or other ridership opportunities. Mr. Pearl stated that in addition to their fixed route service they were mandated to provide paratransit service, or DART service, for those that require further need and are unable to ride the fixed route busses. He stated that the DART service extended three quarters of a mile from all their routes. He stated that they had services with the universities they have agreements with and a night service where they cover the first mile and last mile.

### **Ordinances and Resolutions**

- A. Discussion and Approval of Ordinance 2025-03 Establishing New Municipal District/Ward Lines for the Election of Council Members Reflecting Population Changes in the Year 2020 Census and Repealing All Previous Ordinances Establishing District/Ward Lines – First Reading

Deputy City Manager Conley stated that Council approval was needed to give First Reading to an Ordinance establishing new district lines for municipal elections in response to the issuance of the decennial census data, since the City was obligated to undertake a redrawing of its districts, if determined necessary, and with the work of South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office to complete this process. He stated that after reviewing the City census data, Revenue and Fiscal Affairs identified a topic population for each district of 3,445 individuals to achieve a recommended population deviation of 5%. He stated that District Two needed to increase in population and District Four needed to decrease in population. He stated that in March 2023 City Council adopted a Resolution outlining standards by which it would use to achieve its redrawn district boundaries and in June 2023 Council considered the proposed changes to the district lines for First Reading, but decided to defer redistricting until the November 2023 municipal elections were over to ensure that all affected residents were informed of those changes. He stated that additionally, Council moved to defer the First Reading at the February 4, 2025, Council Meeting.

Mayor Partin stated that staff was trying to get further information on a question she had and asked if they had received a response yet. Deputy City Manager Conley stated that he had not. Council Member Sox made a motion to give First Reading approval of an Ordinance establishing new municipal district and ward lines for the election of council members, reflecting population changes in the year 2020 census, and repealing all previous Ordinances establishing district and ward lines. Council Member Carter seconded the motion.

Council Member Carter stated that District Four had two (2) parcels on the south side of old Taylor Road that extended from 12<sup>th</sup> Street Extension to Old State Road. He stated that he thought one was owned by Martin Marietta and the other by DNR. He stated that those parcels were moved out of District Four but they were not buildable so there should not be any population base there. He asked why they were removed from District Four and placed in another district since there was no possibility of houses ever being built there. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that there were changes made to the Districts since the last Council Meeting, but one thing they were able to say at the last Council Meeting was that everyone who was being impacted had been notified. He asked if staff was in the process of doing that. Deputy City Manager Conley stated that if the amended district map was approved to move forward, staff would reach out to residents between the two Council Meetings prior to Second Reading. Mayor Partin stated that she had a citizen ask her about cleaning up the lines a little bit more, so that was some of the answers that she was waiting for. She stated that the amended map certainly did more to try to clear it up but she would have liked to have some of those answers before that night's meeting. Deputy City Manager Conley stated he could consolidate the questions and answers and get them out but he was still waiting on the answer to Mayor Partin's question.

Mayor Partin stated that there were potential changes to the district map and she did not want staff to have to notify citizens if it was going to change again so Council could postpone it until the next Council Meeting to make sure all those things were cleared up. Council Member Sox stated that the next Council Meeting was in two (2) weeks so maybe they could get the questions answered and pushed out with the mail and asked if they should push out second reading. Deputy City Manager Conley stated that Council Member Carter's question would not really affect the mailings since there was not a population and it was just land mass. He stated that the question Mayor Partin had could depending on if it moved within its deviation. He stated that it was a question for the City Attorney. City Attorney Dillard stated it would be fine to make changes on Second Reading and approve it as amended at that point. Mayor Partin stated that did not address what Mayor Pro Tem James was concerned about. She stated that the City really did try to communicate a lot with citizens and if Council did not know until Second Reading if there were any changes, that was not ideal. City Attorney Dillard stated that an alternate approach would be to move forward with First Reading and if there were changes at Second Reading and Council decided that more time was needed to notify affected residents, they could defer Second Reading and send out

additional letters. Mayor Partin stated that people might get multiple letters about various changes. City Attorney Dillard stated that it depended on how quickly staff found out the answers to the questions and how many single letters were initially sent out. Mayor Partin stated that the answers to the questions could change the district maps.

Council Member Carter stated that he was okay with going ahead with First Reading, while Council certainly did not want to confuse citizens and wanted to keep them very informed, everyone had lived through district changes on almost every level of government. He stated that he felt Council needed to move forward. He stated that the 2020 census was delayed but it was 2025 and there was a City election in November. Mayor Pro Tem James asked how quickly staff could get the questions answered. He stated he would advise against doing the mailings until the questions were answered. He stated that they needed to make sure they were communicating clearly before Second Reading. Mayor Pro Tem James asked if the Mayor's questions would change the Districts that much. Deputy City Manager Conley stated that Mayor Partin asked about one particular section to see if it could be moved. He stated that it depended on the deviation and the maps. Mayor Pro Tem James asked if it would only affect one area. Deputy City Manager Conley stated that was correct. Mayor Pro Tem James asked if staff could mail notifications to the people that it would not affect. Deputy City Manager Conley stated that staff would be thoughtful communicating with citizens and then communicate with Council and get some directive from them. Mayor Partin called the question. Mayor Pro Tem James and Council Members Carter, Sox and Thomas voted yes. Mayor Partin voted no. She stated that she voted no because of citizens who had asked her to continue to look into it. She stated that she believed letters were going to go out between First and Second Reading, which was in two (2) weeks. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that he would be cautious about the letters and if staff knew something could change, he would not send those knowing that it could change. Deputy City Manager Conley stated that he would look into Mayor Partin's question and see what the probability was of that taking place and they could decide from there.

**B. Discussion and Approval of Ordinance 2025-01 Amending the Zoning Map and Rezoning Property Located on Dixiana Road (Tax Map Number 006899-01-027) from M-1 to M-2 – Second Reading**

Deputy City Manager stated that staff had received some late information from the property owners on this item and would ask that it be deferred since staff was not able to get that new information to Council. He asked that they defer it until the March 4, 2025, Council Meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem James made a motion to defer Ordinance 2025-01 until the March 4, 2025, Council Meeting. Council Member Sox seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

C. Discussion and Approval of Ordinance 2025-02 Annexing Two (2) Properties Located on Dixiana Road (Tax Map Number 006899-01-029 and 006899-01-030) and Assigning M-2 Zoning Designations – Second Reading

Deputy City Manager Conley stated that this item went with Ordinance 2025-01 and asked that it be deferred until the March 4, 2025, Council Meeting. Mayor Pro Tem James made a motion to defer Ordinance 2025-02 until the March 4, 2025, Council Meeting. Council Member Sox seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

D. Consideration and Approval of Resolution to Approve Financing for Purchase of a Fire Truck

Deputy City Manager Conley stated that Council approval was needed to approve a lease agreement with PNC Bank for the purchase of a fire truck. He stated that the purchase was approved at the February 4, 2025, Council Meeting and staff recommended that Council approve the Resolution authorizing the City Manager to negotiate, enter into and execute a lease purchase agreement with PNC Bank for the finance of a fire truck, for a lease purchase principal amount to not exceed \$530,940 to be financed over seven (7) years at an interest rate of 5.45%.

Mayor Pro Tem James made a motion to approve the Resolution authorizing the City Manager to negotiate, enter into and execute a lease purchase agreement with PNC Bank for the financing of a fire truck, for a lease purchase principal amount to not exceed \$530,940 to be financed over seven (7) years at an interest rate of 5.45%. Council Member Sox seconded the motion.

Mayor Pro Tem James stated that it was important that citizens recognize and understand that not only were the fire trucks there for the safety of the community, but the safety of the men and women who operate them every single day. He stated that the age and the status of the City's current apparatus would continue to decline to the point that Council needed to respond to this. He stated that City leadership found the fire truck. He stated that it took over a year to build a fire truck and they had found a truck at a very reasonable rate. He stated that this was a return on investment for the community because Council had fought to make sure that the Fire Department got the equipment needed because it improved the City's ISO rating. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that the ISO rating was Insurance Service Organization, and the City's score was a two. Hed stated that one was the highest score. He stated that the City had been at a two for many years but at one time was at a four or five. He stated that the ISO score directly impacted the cost of insurance on a home and business. He stated that the better the apparatus and equipment, the safety of the men and women who operate them every single day, it went back to a great return on investment for the City's citizens.

Mayor Partin stated that it was important that Council was being proactive about their municipal responsibilities because it did save the citizens money in the long run. She stated that they were happy to support the Fire Department and thanked them for everything they did.

City Attorney Dillard stated that the motion referred to the \$530,940 purchase price and he wanted to clarify that the purchase price was higher than that and that higher price was approved at the last Council Meeting. He stated that the \$530,000 was the amount to be financed as set forth in the Resolution. Mayor Partin thanked him for the clarification. She called the question which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

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

#### **A. Discussion and Approval of Lease of Office Space and Furnishings**

Deputy City Manager Conley stated that the Cayce Municipal Complex was at its capacity and more office space was needed. He stated that the City had the chance to move some City offices to the local Bank of America building located at 440 Knox Abbott Drive. He stated that the space had four (4) offices and a meeting space and a small lobby, which would be perfect for the Utilities Administration staff.

Council Member Sox made a motion to authorize the City Manager to enter into a lease agreement with Colliers International South Carolina for office space at the Bank of America building and approve one time expenditures up to \$30,000 for office furniture. Council Member Thomas seconded the motion. Council Member Carter asked if the lease cost included utilities. Deputy City Manager Conley stated that it did include utilities. Council Member Carter asked if the City's insurance would cover an auxiliary building. Deputy City Manager Conley stated that it was covered. Mayor Partin stated that she was delighted to be able to negotiate to get the City free rent for March and April. She called the question which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

#### **B. Discussion and Approval of a Grant Award from the South Carolina Department of Crime Victim Assistance**

Deputy City Manager Conley stated that the City was applying for a State Victim Advocacy Program continuation grant through the South Carolina Attorney General's office to support victim advocacy for the victims of crime. He stated that the grant was intended to help programs that assist victims in recovery and assure that their rights were protected. He stated that the Police Department had victim's advocacy for quite some time. He stated that the total cost was \$74,359.00 and it was an 80/20 match.

Council Member Sox made a motion to authorize the City Manager to submit the grant application, and if approved, to set the grant award with expenditures of up to \$14,871.80 from the General Fund fund balance to pay the required 20% grant match for the victim advocacy program. Council Member Thomas seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

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

Deputy City Manager Conley stated that Administration was watching the wintery weather to ensure that staff could safely get to work the following morning. He congratulated Ms. Shelley Smith for her promotion to the Director of Development and Services. He stated that Administration looked forward to continuing to watch Shelly succeed. He stated that she had done a wonderful job with business licenses and they knew she would do a great job leading the department, which consisted of Planning, Zoning, Building Codes and Business Licenses.

### **Council Comments**

Council Member Thomas stated that he was honored for the partnership with Keep the Midlands Beautiful, for bringing a free mural to One Love Mart in Cayce Council District Two. He thanked muralist Johnna Blyton for doing an amazing job with the mural and bringing the message of keeping the planet safe and clean to life. He thanked One Love Mart for working with them and allowing the mural to be placed on their building. He stated that to his knowledge, this was the first mural on the other side of 12th Street on Frink Street. He stated that he was doing a cleanup on March 1 at 7:45 a.m. at One Love Mart to clean up and get up any trash around the area.

Mayor Partin stated that the Soiree on State was on March 22 and it was going to be a great day and a great time for everyone to come together as a community. She stated that it was the party in the street, in the original heart of the city, but as many people knew, it was actually an economic development engine that had brought many of the businesses into that area without really much cost at all. She thanked the Soiree sponsors who made a difference with the event.

### **Executive Session**

- A. Receipt of legal advice relating to claims and potential claims by and against the City and other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege
  - i. Fire truck warranty litigation
  - ii. Zoning appeal litigation (1028 Michaelmas Avenue)
  
- B. Discussion of Lexington County economic development projects relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses within the City

- C. Receipt of legal advice and discussion of proposed contractual arrangements relating to:
  - i. Avenues Drainage Project

Mayor Partin asked if there were items for economic development to be discussed in Executive Session. Deputy City Manager stated that there was not any economic development items to discuss. 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, Council Member Sox 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. Other items discussed in Executive Session

### **Adjourn**

Council Member Sox made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Thomas seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

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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*     *February 19, 2025***

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Agenda Item</b>

**\*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.