



Mayor Elise Partin	Mayor Pro-Tem Tim James	Council Members Phil Carter Hunter Sox Byron Thomas	Interim City Manager James Crosland	Interim Deputy City Manager Michael Conley
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**City of Cayce
Regular Council Meeting
Tuesday, October 1, 2024**

The October 1, 2024, Regular Council Meeting was held this evening at 6:00 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. Interim City Manager Jim Crosland, Interim Deputy City Manager Michael Conley, Municipal Clerk Mendy Corder, Fire Chief Steven Bullard, Finance Director Kelly McMullen, Human Resources Director Lynn Dooley, IT Director Jamie Beckham and City Attorney Danny Crowe 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. Mayor Partin stated that she would like to take a quick moment of personal privilege. She stated that there were a lot of people to thank for their efforts during and after Hurricane Helene. She thanked Council for getting the word out about everything that was going on in the City. She stated that everyone pulled together to make a difference so that the City's citizens knew what was going on and how to be safe. She stated that the City's Police and Fire staff were in Riverland Park Sunday, as soon as City staff knew there was an issue with possible flooding and went door to door to reach residents and to let them know that the river was rising. She stated that Council Member Thomas helped knock on doors as well. She stated that the Sanitation and Parks teams immediately went to work after the Hurricane getting the downed trees cleared so the roadways were usable again and they had all that done before the end of the day. Mayor Partin stated that they were absolutely amazing. She stated that Council owed the citizens a lot of thanks since the City asked for a voluntary evacuation and many people evacuated so they would be safe but also to keep City staff safe. She stated that in 2015 the City did over 100 rescues from homes and from cars and that gave the City the ability to be able to communicate and that was a blessing for citizens to be able to make an informed decision about their property and about their own safety. She stated that Council was also thankful to the citizens for sharing facts, because there was so much misinformation that was out there. Mayor Partin stated that it was not correct that the bridges to Cayce were closed. She stated that they were never closed. She stated that it was not correct that there was ever any concern about the City's water being unsafe to drink and the City did a great job getting that word out. She stated that the City's Public Information Officer worked around the clock with staff to give regular updates so that everybody was informed.

Mayor Partin stated that the City's plants were designed in a way that there was never danger from floodwaters. She stated that was why the City invested in infrastructure in that way, so they could ensure the drinking water was safe and to continue to always protect the rivers with clean wastewater as well. She stated that the City's Utility staff were amazing and made sure that throughout the storm and even everything afterwards that they were at the plants and everything was functioning. She stated that the City was proactive about its municipal responsibilities and would continue to coordinate the solution to storm water issues, but being the lowest taxing entity, and not owning the roads that most of the storm water was coming off of, it was incumbent that the County, State and Federal partners help handle that part.

Mayor Partin stated that there was more thanks to offer to all the citizens that reached out and offered to volunteer and the City churches, in particular, Cayce United, Methodist, Mill City, Trinity Baptist, Cayce Presbyterian, and also Green View Park in Columbia. She stated that they had been great and stepped up as soon as they were asked. She stated that there was still flooding in the interior of Riverland Park and there were still a few people that were displaced, but thankfully, for the large part, the City was out of a crisis situation. She stated that Old State Road was still closed and was badly damaged by the flood waters that came through and that would affect the boat landing. She stated that the boat landing was still under water and the road to get there was currently closed. She stated that Dominion let City staff know that there were still 153 citizens that were without power. Mayor Partin stated that the Riverwalk was still flooded so it was closed, but the City's Parks staff pride and joy was to get the Riverwalk open for use as soon as possible. She stated that the City's Fall Fest was that Saturday and was still being held because that was what got everyone through the floods, being connected and being together and working together. She stated that coming together as a community was a great thing to do. Mayor Partin stated that the City had added an opportunity for people to be able to bring canned goods to donate to help others in need.

Approval of Minutes

Council Member Carter made a motion to approve the September 3, 2024, Regular Council Meeting and the September 11, 2024, Special Council Meeting minutes as written. Council Member Thomas seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Public Comment Regarding Items on the Agenda

Mr. Steve Davis – Item III. A. Mr. Davis stated that he had requested the rezoning on Middle Street. He stated that he had a lot that he had plans to put three (3) houses on and already had three (3) families lined up for them with Habitat for Humanity. He stated that he would be taking an empty lot and putting three (3) families in single family homes on Middle Street.

Ordinances and Resolutions

- A. Discussion and Approval of Ordinance 2024-10 Amending the Zoning Map and Rezoning Properties Located on Middle Street (Tax Map Numbers 005764-01-009, 005764-01-010 and 005764-01-011) from C-3 to RG-2 – First Reading

Interim City Manager Crosland stated that Council approval was needed for the First Reading of an Ordinance to rezone three (3) properties located on Middle Street from C-3 to RG-2. He stated that Central South Carolina Habitat for Humanity was the applicant. He stated that the properties were undeveloped and did not currently have addresses but addresses would be assigned later. He stated that the RG-2 General Residential District was intended to accommodate rented apartments and a variety of housing types on small lots to permit flexibility in meeting the demands of the changing housing market. He stated that the proposed map amendment complied with the City's Comprehensive Plan and the applicant intended to build much-needed single family homes on the properties. Interim City Manager Crosland stated that Central South Carolina Habitat for Humanity had been a notable presence in the City and had built many houses in the City. He stated that the subject properties were located among other residential uses which were zoned C-3 and RG-2. He stated that the Planning Commission held a regular scheduled meeting on September 16, 2024, and voted unanimously on the map amendment to rezone the three (3) properties on Middle Street from C-3 Central Commercial to RG-2 General Residential. He stated that no one from the public spoke in favor or against the map amendment.

Council Member Sox made a motion to move to approve the rezoning. Council Member Carter seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

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
- B. Discussion of a Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of Real Property of Approximately 4.4 Acres Consisting of a Portion of TMS 004685-01-026 in Congaree Bluff
- C. Discussion of a Condemnation Action for Utility Easement

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

Reconvene

After the Executive Session was concluded, Council Member Carter 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. Discussion and Approval of Purchase of Real Property of Approximately 4.4 Acres Consisting of a Portion of TMS 004685-01-026 in Congaree Bluff

Council Member Sox made a motion to approve a Resolution authorizing the purchase of real property of approximately 4.4 acres consisting of a portion of TMS 004685-01-026 in Congaree Bluff. Council Member Thomas seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

- B. Discussion and Approval of a Condemnation Action for Utility Easement on Vacant Land on M. Avenue, TMS 004653-07-018

Mayor Partin stated that the next item was actually a friendly condemnation, though that was not a legal term. She stated that the owner was completely in support of it. Council Member Sox made a motion to approve a Resolution authorizing the condemnation action for utility easement on a vacant lot on M Avenue, TMS #004653-07-018. Council Member Thomas seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

- C. Other

There was no action under this item.

Committee Matters

- A. Approval to Enter the Following Committee Approved Minutes into the City's Record
 - Cayce Housing Authority – May 21, 2024
 - Planning Commission – June 17, 2024
 - Events Committee – July 11, 2024
 - Museum Commission – August 14, 2024

Council Member Sox made a motion to enter the approved minutes into the City's record. Council Member Thomas seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

B. Appointments and Reappointments

Board of Zoning Appeal – One (1) Position

Municipal Election Commission – One (1) Position

Standard Technical Codes Board of Appeals – One (1) Position

Mayor Partin stated that there was one (1) open position on the Board of Zoning Appeal since Ms. Cindy Pedersen's term expired in September. She stated that Ms. Pedersen was filling an unexpired term and had only served on the board since 2023. She stated that Ms. Pedersen would like to serve again. Council Member Sox made a motion to reappoint Ms. Pedersen. Council Member Carter seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Mayor Partin stated that there was one (1) open position on the Municipal Election Commission since Ms. Mary Safko's term expired in September. She stated that Ms. Safko was filling an unexpired term and had only served on the Commission since January of this year and would like to serve again. Council Member Thomas made a motion to reappoint Ms. Safko. Council Member Sox seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Mayor Partin stated that there was one (1) open position on the Standard Technical Codes Board of Appeals since Mr. Lawrence Gardner's term expired in August. She stated that he had served on the Board since 2015 and would like to serve again. Council Member Sox made a motion to reappoint Mr. Gardner. Council Member Thomas seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

City Manager's Report

Interim City Manager Crosland stated that he could not thank staff enough for their hard work during and after Hurricane Helene. He stated that the Parks crew removed 12 trees out of the streets that were blocking the road and the Sanitation team had removed more than 33 tons of yard debris. He stated that the Police Department responded to approximately 100 storm related calls and the Fire Department responded to 75 calls not including the normal duty calls they received. He stated that the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, Lexington County, Richland County, Town of Irmo, Town of Lexington, City of West Columbia, SC DOT, Dominion Energy and the Town of Batesburg Leesville all reached out to the City offering any assistance needed. Interim City Manager Crosland stated that the City of West Columbia assisted the City with water evacuations and helped refill the City's White Knoll water tank, using their inner city connect. He stated that the City assisted West Columbia with providing water for one (1) of their neighborhoods. He stated that those partnerships meant so much. He stated that the City's Communications Officer, Ashley Hunter with MPA Strategies, posted 16 social media posts on Hurricane Helene and five (5) media updates on the hurricane. He stated that the City had 13,776 Facebook followers and 4,500 Instagram

followers. He stated that there were stories on WLTX, WIS, ABC, USC Press, West Metro News, Lexington Chronicle, Columbia Daily, Columbia Today and MSN.

Interim City Manager Crosland stated that the City's Finance Department had released Cayce's second annual comprehensive budget book for FY24-25 and it was available to view on the City's website. He stated that the City's budget book was intended to serve as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide and communications tool for anyone interested in learning more about the City. He stated that it was developed to reflect guidelines established by the National Advisory Council on State and local budgeting, as well as the GFOA best practices on budgeting. He stated that publishing a comprehensive book was not mandatory but the City believed that publishing one only increased the transparency in the City. He stated that the City received its first ever budget award for the 23-24 budget, joining a group of 12 other cities and towns across the State. He stated that they were confident they were going to receive it again this year and would love to bring that information back to Council.

Council Comments

Mayor Pro Tem James stated that he would like to speak about the storm as well. He stated that he was speaking with one of the citizens of the community who said that the community did not often experience things like the effects from the hurricane but when they did, they quickly recognized the strength of our community. He stated that the definition of community was a group of people with a common fellowship and the City had a common fellowship. He stated that over the past few days, they had seen amazing things take place throughout the community, citizens helping one another. He stated that they brought ice to people who did not have air conditioning yet, they took people out to dinner, brought food to neighbors and City staff. He stated that City staff always put their mission above themselves and again, this time, they put mission above self, working long hours. He stated that what impressed him more than anything was when City staff knew the storm was coming, even though at that particular time it was not forecasted to hit the City like it did, staff were spending hours and hours of pre planning on what to do when it did happen.

Mayor Pro Tem James stated that through a series of meetings he had with local businesses and school leadership and superintendents, he recognized that the business leaders and school leaders had the same heart as City officials did. He stated that Superintendent Brenda Hafner told him it was easy for her to cancel school but it was harder for her to say parents had to stay home and take care of their kids, and it may impact businesses that need parents there and how were they going to feed all these children that normally come to school to get fed. He stated that Superintendent Hafner opened the local schools so that kids could come and get fed and get refreshed. He stated that business leaders were bringing kids to work. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that the Joint Municipal Water and Sewer Commission delivered 800 cases of water to first responders and to the linemen that were working throughout the Midlands

area and sent eight (8) pallets of water to North Carolina. He stated that he had to give accolades to Dominion because what they had accomplished was close to magical. He stated that the City went from 2,400 homes without power to 111 in just a few days. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that two (2) days before the storm hit, all the chambers throughout Lexington County met to prioritize what the important issues were for the rest of 2024 and into 2025. He stated that since the storm hit, most businesses now wanted to put Emergency Preparedness at the top of the list.

Council Member Thomas stated that the City was very blessed that its families came together and business community came together. He stated that he loved that City officials and staff were proactive and went door to door in Riverland Park giving residents the choice to evacuate if they wanted to. He stated that the residents appreciated the City being proactive and having a place for them to go if they chose to evacuate. He stated that he received a lot of comments from constituents and people outside the City reaching out to see what they could do to help. He stated that once the water receded he would like to see if there was a way for the City to have a citizen clean up in the Riverwalk and partner with the City of West Columbia. He stated that he knew how much tourism and how much the Riverwalk meant to the entire state.

Council Member Sox thanked staff, the City's Public Information Officer, first responders, the City's neighbors and everyone who played an effort in what all had been done. He stated that there was still work to do since a lot of homes were still without power locally and in the Upstate and North Carolina and everyone's hearts were with them.

Council Member Carter stated that City staff were beyond phenomenal. He stated that he saw Officer Lopez working one intersection, then the next day saw him at another. He stated that City staff were everywhere and it was absolutely appreciated.

Mayor Partin stated that one of her mentors, Mayor Joseph Riley, one of the longest serving mayors in the nation, said disaster meets you where you are, and that was what the City had worked to do. She stated that it was not what you do in the disaster, it's what you do prior, which is that connected community. She stated that it was the work the City had done to connect with all of the local pastors so they could reach out quickly to see who was available to help. She stated that one of the residents in Riverland Park when the waters were really up hugged her and started crying. She stated that the resident was so thankful for City staff and the way that everybody communicated and went above and beyond knocking on doors just so people could make that informed decision. Mayor Partin stated that one of the neighbors was a great chef whose home was on higher ground and he got his kayak and kayaked over to his neighbors and brought them fresh, cooked food. She stated that was the love and the connection everyone had witnessed and were beyond thankful for. She asked everyone to come to the Fall Fest Saturday and bring some canned goods so they could pay it forward. Mayor Partin asked everyone to keep the Saluda volunteer fire

department in mind with the loss they had just experienced. She stated that the City knew what that felt like and she knew as soon as they were out of crisis, they would be sending some love their way and looking out for them to offer support so that they could navigate that tough situation.

Mayor Partin stated that she wanted to end on a high note because there was so much to celebrate. She stated that School Resource Office Dee was at Cayce Elementary and started a program called Doves, which was about empowering young women. She stated that she was invited to be the keynote speaker for their induction ceremony and she had to fight back tears several times throughout the ceremony. She stated that the City's Officers not only protect the citizens but were also changing lives and investing in students, and they were beyond thankful for them.

Adjourn

Council Member Thomas made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Sox seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.

Elise Partin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Mendy Corder, CMC, Municipal Clerk

