



Town of Sullivan's Island, South Carolina
Town Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Town Council was held on the above date at approximately 6:00 p.m., all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been satisfied.

Present were: Patrick O'Neil, Mayor
Justin Novak, Mayor Pro-Tem
Melanie Burkhold, Councilmember
Ned Higgins, Councilmember
Carl Hubbard, Councilmember
Jody Latham, Councilmember
Laura Schroeder, Councilmember

Staff members present were Town Administrator Joe Henderson, Jason Blanton, Charles Drayton, Rebecca Fanning, Greg Gress, Fire Chief Anthony Stith, Assistant Fire Chief Amanda Hawver, Town Lawyer John Linton, Police Chief Glenn Meadows, Deputy Police Chief Monty Anders, and Bridget Welch.

Mayor O'Neil called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and stated the press and public had been notified in accordance with State Law. There were twelve (12) members of the public present and no (0) members of the media present. Mayor O'Neil led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence for prayer or reflection.

I. Presentations:

1. Stith Park Drainage Plan: Thomas & Hutton Engineering will be presenting the final drainage plan design options

Mark Yodice reviewed two options for the Stith Park Drainage Plan, which had been presented earlier in the month to the Recreation Committee. He first explained the purpose and goals of the project, which are to alleviate flooding on the park side of the Mound by directing it to the marsh as well as to alleviate flooding in the back field of the park, adjacent to the wastewater treatment plant. Option A (Pipe and berm) is a straight storm pipe with drop inlet filters and a landscape berm that would be approximately \$1.1 million. The berm would be slightly elevated with landscaping on top to help block the plant from the view of the few houses near it. Option B (Pipe, berm & bioretention area) is similar to option A but the pipe comes to a point behind the field and there would be a "bio-area," which is an open water body that meanders with some plant materials which becomes more of an aesthetic appeal. Option B would consume property at the back of the field and would be roughly 16% more expensive than Option A, at \$1.3 million. The landscape berm alone could cost between \$53,000-\$56,000 and would likely have native plants installed that do not need irrigation. He then took questions from Council. Council also questioned Director of Resilience and Natural Resource Management

Rebecca Fanning regarding her thoughts regarding each option and more there was more discussion regarding the pros and cons of each option. Mr. Yodice then took questions from the audience.

- Barbara Spell, 1702 Atlantic Ave – confirmed that Option A is less expensive than Option B, with less regular maintenance required. Also clarified the difference between a bioswale and the bio-area.
- Cheryl Clark, 2119 Pettigrew St – asked for clarification on what exactly he means by “bio-area” and how it’s different from bio-swale and bio-retention.

II. Format: Public Comments

- Ralph Byers, 3025 Middle St – commented on the proposed homes on top of the mound near Station 30 on Brownell Avenue. He gave a brief history of the area, voiced concerns, and requested a public hearing for the proposed construction.
- Brent Havens, 1746 Thompson Ave – does not support building the Palmetto Log Fort because Fort Moultrie already has information about it and it would invite extra people onto the Island to see it.
- Karen Byko, 2862 Middle St – supports the Tree Commission’s recommendation to create a non-native invasive plant removal program to help protect the maritime forest and would like Council to support it as well.

III. Council Action Items:

A. Approval of Minutes:

- January 20, 2026 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Motion was made by Councilmember Schroeder, seconded by Councilmember Burkhold, to approve the December 16, 2025 Regular Council Meeting Minutes, passed 6-0, with Councilmember Latham abstaining as she had not been able to attend that meeting.

- February 9, 2026, Public Facilities Committee Meeting Minutes (Committee Members Only)

Motion was made by Councilmember Schroeder, seconded by Councilmember Higgins, to approve the February 9, 2026 Public Facilities Committee Meeting Minutes, passed unanimously.

- B. Approval of site for use by SC250 Charleston for partial replica of 1776 Battle of Sullivan’s Island Fort, and authorization of Town staff and attorney to negotiate necessary agreements for the use – Public Facilities Committee recommendation

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Higgins, to approve the site for use by SC250 Charleston for partial replica of 1776 Battle of Sullivan’s Island Fort, and authorization of Town staff and attorney to negotiate necessary agreements for the use on top of the Mound, passed 6-1, with Councilmember Burkhold opposing.

Councilmember Schroeder would like more information about the stability of the replica and the budget. Mr. Henderson stated estimated costs from the Town would be \$20,600. The Town has/will provide around \$28,042

to other SC250 projects and had a \$50,000 FY26 budget overall for SC250 related projects. Brett Bennett from SC250 was in attendance to answer questions from Council. He reiterated that SC250 will be paying for the construction, maintenance, and deconstruction of the proposed fort.

C. Consideration of Stith Park Drainage Plan

Motion was made by Councilmember Burkhold, seconded by Councilmember Schroeder, to go forward with the concrete pipes with the filters, passed unanimously.

Mayor O'Neil confirmed Option 1 (A) which included the concrete pipes with filters and the landscape berm for 1.1 million.

Mr. Henderson stated next steps for option 1 (A) would be finishing the permitting process, putting the project out to bid, and establishing a proposed budget. Mr. Yodice predicts three to six months for the permitting process.

I. Reports and Communication:

- A. Mayor's Report: Reviewed the South Carolina Beach Advocates' meeting in January that was attended by Mayor O'Neil, Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, and Rebecca Fanning. At that meeting, Ms. Fanning gave a presentation on our Resiliency Plan alongside Kim Morganello from Coastal Science Engineering.

A letter from Governor McMaster is included in the packet that highlights events taking place around SC for the SC250 celebrations.

An article in the Island Eye News featured the Charlie Post run and Assistant Fire Chief Amanda Hawver running it in full fire gear.

B. February Correspondence:

- Norman Khoury, 1728 I'On Ave – Published letter in The Post & Courier regarding the status of the Maritime Forest
- Linda Perkis, 2871 Brownell Ave – In support of the Palmetto log replica
- Dean Kilpatrick, 1026 Osceola Ave – In support of the Palmetto log replica
- Susan Middaugh, 2420 Raven Dr – In support of the Palmetto log replica
- David DeAntonio, 2250 Jasper Blvd – Location suggestion for Palmetto log replica
- Cheryl Clark, 2119 Pettigrew St – Email to congratulate new and reelected members and thanking those who served. Happy to hear about the new youth council group meeting at Town Hall.
- Laurie Arthur, 2850 Middle St - Email with concern of the concrete dust from the construction project at 28.5
- Sally Pritchard, 2830 Middle St- Email with concern of the concrete dust and noise from the construction project at 28.5
- Scott Millimet, 2902 Brownell Ave – Email with concern for 3 new home sites on Brownell between Station 30 & 31
- David Smoley, 3303 Brownell Ave - Email with concern for 3 new home sites on Brownell between Station 30 & 31

C. Administrator's Report:

Personnel anniversaries:

- Tyler Yates, 1 year – Fire Department
- Becky Williams, 6 years – Municipal Court
- Mary Poole, 19 years – Administration Department
- Anthony Stith, 44 years – Fire Department

Special Events:

- Coffee with Council – first event scheduled for February 20, 2026 from 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. at Town Hall.
- A viewing of “The Battle of Sullivan’s Island” will be held in the evening on two to-be-determined dates at Town Hall, as well as a panel discussion afterwards.
 - a. Attorney’s Report: Town Attorney John Linton – Nothing to report
 - b. Boards and Commissions Report:
 - i. Planning Commission – Nothing to report
 - ii. Board of Zoning Appeals – Nothing to report
 - iii. Design Review Board – Nothing to report
 - iv. Tree Commission – the invasive plant removal plan will be discussed at the March 3, 2026 LUNR Committee meeting. The Tree Commission would like support from Council and is ready to assist in whatever is needed.

IV. Committee Reports – Discussion Items:

- A. Finance Committee – Work on the FY2027 budget has begun and there will be updates forthcoming. Comptroller Jason Blanton provided the financial report for January 2026 as well as some updates regarding the SCIIP project.
- B. Public Facilities Committee – Station 32 is the next project that will be reviewed with the Committee, as well as restarting the Ad Hoc Committee for Old Town Hall. Storage of boats and trailers on public property will also be discussed at the next meeting. Date to be determined.
- C. Land Use and Natural Resources Committee – The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 3, 2026.
- D. Administration Committee – The next meeting will be on Friday, February 20, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.
- E. Water & Sewer Committee – The last meeting was a deep dive into the FY2027 budget. The next meeting is to be determined but will be the week of March 10, 2026.
- F. Public Safety Committee –
 - Fire Chief Anthony Stith stated there was a fire on Thompson Ave last month that created two explosions. The first explosion was at 4:46 a.m. and the second explosion was at 4:52 a.m. and were both captured by a Ring camera. Chief stated that we have an automatic aid agreement with Mt. Pleasant and IOP, and that eight fire engines and two ladder trucks were on scene by 5:05 a.m., with the SIFD arriving at 4:53 a.m. Chief stated "there was a small glitch; it was a matter of the interlock mode. The interlock mode comes on; you have to get back up in the truck, take it out of pump and put it back into pump less than 30 seconds. We had water flowing

but did not have pressure behind it. Mt Pleasant got there one minute after Engine 1, and they were flowing at 2 ½ at that time. There was plenty of water." There were no injuries.

- Police Chief Meadows stated there was possible coyote activity on the 28th block of Marshall Boulevard due to dogs acting suspiciously.
 - The next meeting will be held Monday, February 23, 2026 at 9:00 a.m.
- G. Recreation Committee – The Committee decided against moving forward with adding ADA spaces in addition to golf-cart parking as part of the Stith Park Master Plan and discussed other options for ADA spaces. The possibility of a landscape berm will be discussed at the next meeting; the date is tbd. The Tot Lot is nearing completion.

V. Executive Session

Motion was made by Councilmember Hubbard, seconded by Councilmember Burkhold, to go into Executive Session at 7:42 p.m., passed unanimously.

Items Discussed:

1. **Legal:** Legal advice regarding Quit claim deed for 907 Middle Street (Attorney J. Linton)
2. **Legal:** Legal advice regarding Ordinances 50-08 C and 150-38P and restrictions on landscaping near lift stations (Attorney J. Linton)
3. **Legal:** Litigation regarding personnel Case No. 2025-CP-10-03045 (Connelly and Linton)

Motion was made by Councilmember Latham, seconded by Councilmember Schroeder to return from Executive Session at 8:55 p.m., passed unanimously.

There were no votes taken or motions made during Executive Session.

VI. Upon Returning to Open Session, Council may take action on items discussed during Executive Session

Motion was made by Councilmember Schroeder, seconded by Councilmember Burkhold, to approve an adjustment plat for 907 Middle Street plat

Attorney John Linton reviewed the reason for the adjustment plat at 907 Middle Street.

Motion was made by Councilmember Schroeder, seconded by Councilmember Higgins, to amend the first motion to approve the title, passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilmember Schroeder, seconded by Councilmember Higgins, to approve amended motion, passed unanimously.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Novak, seconded by Councilmember Burkhold, to refer to and request a report from the Planning Commission analyzing any modifications that the Town can or would need to make under our ordinances in accordance with state and federal law in order to permit the Town to plant landscaping immediately adjacent to the lift stations on the Island, passed unanimously.

VII. Adjournment

Motion was made by Councilmember Latham, seconded by Councilmember Higgins, to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m., passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Bridget Welch