



Public Hearing
Thursday July 23, 2026
Town Hall, Great Falls, SC

Councilmembers Present: Mayor Pro Tem Jody Knight, Councilmember Wytricia Mack, Councilmember Eric Owens, Councilmember David Dutton. A quorum was present.

Councilmembers Absent: Councilmember Hope Sims and Mayor Keevi Worthy

Staff Present: Jessica Eubanks (Mayor Assistant), Erica Dooley (Clerk Treasurer), Buddy Bigham (PW Sup), Warren Skinner (WW Sup)

Members of the public included Glinda Coleman, Cindy Johnston, Doreen James, Alison Howe, James Howe, and Elizabeth Howe.

The public and media were duly notified of the date, time, and place of the meeting. Mayor Pro Tem Jody Knight called the Public Hearing to order at 7:00PM, led the Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Hearing

1. 2nd reading of the Budget Ordinance for the 2026-01

Budget Overview: Jessica Eubanks Mayor Assistant conducted a page-by-page review of the proposed budget and invited questions throughout the presentation. The proposed budget totaled \$1,961,579, representing an increase of \$459,864 from the previous fiscal year. It was explained that several amendments and adjustments would be made before the second reading vote scheduled for the following day.

General Fund Revenues: The proposed General Fund revenues included \$475,000 in property taxes, \$98,000 in franchise fees, \$95,000 in local option sales tax revenue, \$300,000 in local option sales tax state credits, \$8,400 in accommodations tax, \$30,000 in business license revenue, \$230,000 in insurance premium reimbursements, \$95,000 in state aid to subdivisions, \$5,000 in local government grants, and \$4,500 in other fees. Police Department fine revenue was reduced to \$15,000 because portions of the fines must be distributed to the state and county. Sanitation revenue was adjusted to reflect a \$2 increase, bringing the monthly fee to

\$18 per garbage container. The budget also included \$300,000 in carryover funds resulting from revenues exceeding the prior year's projections.

Administration and General Government: The Administration budget included funding for salaries, payroll taxes, employee insurance, retirement, workers' compensation, professional services, training, Town Hall maintenance, communications, small equipment, demolition expenses, contingencies, and community contributions. Streetlight expenses were budgeted at \$80,000 due to increasing utility rates. Council discussed removing the Christmas bonus previously designated for the town attorney, who serves under contract, and reallocating that amount to the recreation director. The budget included \$20,000 for the annual audit; however, any cost associated with a forensic audit would be addressed later through a budget amendment once the final cost was known. Contributions included \$3,000 for scholarships, \$4,500 for the Rescue Squad, \$17,000 for the Hometown Association, \$10,000 for special activities and festivals, and \$10,000 for recreation. The total for the Administration and Court grouping was reported as \$551,495.

Municipal Court: The Municipal Court budget included \$703 for dues and training and \$11,500 for court supplies and new court software. The software onboarding cost was included in the budget. It was noted that additional equipment expenses may be requested later and, if approved, paid from contingency funds.

Fire Services: The proposed budget allocated \$100,000 for county fire services and \$4,500 for volunteer fire services. When the fire service expenses were added to the Administration and Court budget, the combined total was reported as \$655,995.

Police Department: The Police Department budget totaled \$685,994. The budget included \$343,814 for salaries, including three-percent employee raises and one additional police officer. Other expenses included payroll taxes, employee benefits, retirement, workers' compensation, vehicle repairs and maintenance, radio maintenance, insurance, communications, training, utilities, fuel, uniforms, equipment, and supplies. Communications were increased to \$13,000 to cover officers' cellular phones, in-car computers, internet, and Wi-Fi services. Vehicle fuel was budgeted at \$33,600, and \$65,000 was allocated for the purchase of a new police vehicle.

Public Works and Sanitation: The Public Works and Sanitation budget totaled \$619,590. Salaries and wages were budgeted at \$261,235 and included three percent raises and one additional full-time maintenance employee. The budget also included payroll taxes, employee benefits, retirement, workers' compensation, repairs and maintenance, insurance, communications, training, supplies, utilities, fuel, landfill fees, uniforms, and equipment. Solid waste disposal was budgeted at \$55,000 due to increased landfill costs. Capital expenditure

included \$129,000 for the purchase of a new truck. Council also discussed providing durable boots, rain gear, and appropriate safety clothing for employees working on the sanitation truck.

Recreation Department: Recreation revenues included recreation fees, sponsorships and donations, fundraiser proceeds, an \$8,000 county contribution, and a corrected \$10,000 contribution from the Town. The proposed expenses included insurance, referees and umpires, equipment, uniforms, scholarships, and miscellaneous expenses. Council discussed the \$10,000 scholarship allocation and whether the amount should be reduced, moved to miscellaneous expenses, or used to allow children to participate without paying registration fees. Concerns were raised regarding the need to establish limits because of the Town's available fields and facilities. Council also agreed that referees must be paid by check, with the required two signatures, to maintain proper documentation and financial controls. Staff agreed to verify whether a prior trophy invoice remained outstanding.

Wastewater Treatment Department: The Wastewater Treatment Department budget totaled \$729,000. Revenue included \$528,000 in user fees, other fees, interest revenue, and a \$200,000 carryover or transfer resulting from the closure of the Fairfield Agreement account. Sewer fees were proposed to increase by \$1 per month. Department expenses included salaries and wages, payroll taxes, employee benefits, retirement, workers' compensation, contracted services, engineering and laboratory services, equipment and vehicle repairs, pipeline and plant maintenance, insurance, utilities, supplies, fuel, sludge disposal, uniforms, small equipment, and contingency funds. Pipeline maintenance was increased to \$100,000, and \$125,747 was allocated for contingencies and emergency needs. Council also discussed Fairfield County's responsibility for 60 percent of qualifying repairs and maintenance performed within Fairfield County and the anticipated revenue associated with the Caroline Mitchell development once the lift stations became operational.

Additional Budget Discussions: Council discussed the need for a formal fund balance policy, consistent uniforms for Town employees, streetlight maintenance responsibilities, and previous Town Hall rent and maintenance charges. The upcoming penny tax referendum was also discussed, including wastewater and park projects identified as priorities. It was explained that the referendum would continue the existing penny tax rather than create an additional tax. Concerns regarding municipal credit-card use were raised, and Council discussed reviewing the Town's purchasing procedures and credit-card controls during a future workshop.

Proposed Amendments and Follow-Up Items: Before the final vote, staff was directed to correct the Town's recreation contribution, reallocate the attorney's bonus to the recreation director, and verify that anticipated wastewater revenue was included in the budget. Staff would also review Town Hall rent and maintenance records, determine responsibility for repairs to streetlight electrical outlets, verify the status of the trophy invoice, finalize procedures for

paying recreation officials, confirm Fairfield County cost-sharing entries, and monitor the anticipated lift-station completion date.

Adjournment: Following the budget presentation, questions, and discussion, the public hearing concerning the Town's proposed 2026–2027 budget was concluded. The second-reading vote for Budget Ordinance 2026-01 was scheduled for the Called Town Council Meeting on July 24, 2026.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erica Dooley