Regular City Council Meeting
Tuesday September 15, 2026
Town Hall, Great Falls, SC

Councilmembers Present: Councilmember Wytricia Mack, Mayor Por Tem Jody Knight, Councilmember Monica Eagle, Councilmember Hope Sims, Councilmember Eric Owens, Councilmember David Dutton. A quorum was present.

Councilmembers Absent: Mayor Keevi Worthy

Staff Present: Municipal Attorney April Porter, Jessica Eubanks (Mayor Assistant), Erica Dooley (Clerk Treasurer), Buddy Bigham (PW Sup), Angela Cooper (Rec Director)

The public and media were duly notified of the date, time, and place of the meeting. Mayor Keevi Worthy called the Regular Council meeting to order at 7:00PM, led the Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Knight to amend the agenda by moving **"Chester County CPST Presentation – Brian Hester"** to the first item under New Business. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Owens. The motion passed unanimously, **6–0**.

ITEM 1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Document: Regular Council Meeting 09-15-26, Public Workshop 10-06-26

A motion was made by Mayor Por Tem Knight and seconded Councilmember Dutton to approve the previous meeting minutes. Following an opportunity for discussion, the motion was brought before Council for consideration.

The motion carried.

ITEM 2 PUBLIC SESSION

a. Hometown Association-Glinda Coleman

Glinda Coleman provided updates on the development of the Great Falls State Park, including the preliminary master plan presented by Earth Design. Proposed amenities include a ranger station, restrooms, a store and shower facilities, pavilions, hiking and biking

trails, primitive campsites, and observation areas overlooking the whitewater and historic structures.

Duke Energy is nearing completion of the pedestrian bridge and associated kayak launches. The kayak launch and bridge area are expected to be available for the spring 2027 whitewater recreation season. The Visitor's Center is progressing, with interior completion anticipated approximately 30 days after electrical service is connected. Parking lot paving is also planned.

Ms. Coleman reported that the gate protecting the rail trail had been damaged by a vehicle, leaving it unusable. An alternative solution will be needed to protect the approximately $700,000 investment in trail improvements.

She requested the Town's support in applying for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant, with applications accepted September 10 through October 8, 2026. The proposed $125,000 project would fund a connector trail between the Rocky Creek Trail and the rail trail, including a 20% match. Previously donated granite screenings from Duke Energy may be used as an in-kind match.

Ms. Coleman also announced the following community events:

- **The Patriot Movie Night:** September 26 at the Memorial Building, with a food truck at 6:30 p.m. and the movie begins at 7:00 p.m. Free popcorn and water will be provided.
- **South Carolina Nature-Based Tourism Association Fall Conference:** Scheduled for October 5–6 in Great Falls. Registration is available at scnatureadventures.com.
- **Fourth Annual Scarecrow Contest:** Thirteen of the 25 available poles had been reserved, and additional entries were encouraged.

The update concluded with continued efforts to promote tourism, improve recreational trails, and support community activities in Great Falls.

b. Heart & Soul Update- Elizabeth Bowen

Elizabeth Bowen provided an update on the Heart & Soul initiative and announced that the first annual Fall Palooza event is scheduled for October 23–24. Wytricia Mack, Town Council representative, was identified in connection with the community group. The group expressed its interest in working collaboratively with other local organizations to help ensure a successful and well-organized event. Planned activities include games, costumes, and coordination with the Masons regarding their scheduled event. Additional details and event information will be shared as they become available.

ITEM 3 REPORTS ON DEPARTMENT

a. Recreation Department- Angela Cooper

Angie Cooper reported that the first flag football game is scheduled for next week at Great Falls High School. New jerseys are on the way, and additional pants will need to be purchased for the younger players. Mayor Pro Tem Knight requested that the game schedule be distributed. Angie also identified the need for volunteers, chain crew assistance, and a scoreboard operator. Handicap

parking was discussed, and Chester County Administrator Brian Hester stated that printers are available to produce handicapped parking signs.

b. Public Works Department - Buddy Bigham

Buddy Bigham reported that the Buddy Bigham Bridge near Seaboard is completely closed until further evaluation determines how to address the existing issues. Discussion also included the removal of debris and concerns regarding property cleanups. Jody inquired about the cost of installing a gate. Buddy stated that no proposed solution, including the gate, could move forward until the underlying issues are identified and addressed.

c. Wastewater- Warren Skinner

Supervisor Warren Skinner provided an update on the Wastewater Department. Councilmember Dutton asked whether allowing on-call personnel to take a town vehicle home would be beneficial. Supervisor Skinner stated that it would be ideal from a time-efficiency standpoint. He also noted that his wife rides with him when he is on call.

c. Police Department- Chief Parker

No update

d. Administrative Department – Jessica Eubanks

The financial report for July 2026 indicated a positive start to the fiscal year for the General Fund, with revenues exceeding expenditures. The Wastewater Fund experienced expenditures exceeding revenues, primarily due to necessary repairs and operating costs. Staff will continue monitoring revenues and expenditure to ensure the Town remains on track with the annual budget.

Staff also reported plans to improve the organization and maintenance of financial records, including bank statements, checks, invoices, credit card statements, and receipts, to ensure accurate and timely reporting to Town Council.

The Town's new ProLiant payroll system was implemented, with the first payroll processed on August 5, 2026. The transition has been smoother and easier to manage, with no issues reported to date. Employees are continuing to familiarize themselves with the new time management system.

ITEM 4 OLD BUSINESS

ITEM 5 NEW BUSINESS

a. Chester County CPST presentation- Brian Hester

Brian Hester provided an overview of the Chester County Capital Project Sales Tax (CPST), explaining the purpose of the referendum, the project selection process, and the proposed projects benefiting Great Falls.

Hester emphasized the strong working relationship between Chester County staff and the Town of

Great Falls and reaffirmed the County's commitment to supporting the Town. He explained that the CPST is a continuation of the existing one-cent sales tax, previously approved in 2008, 2014, and 2020. The current referendum is scheduled for the November 2026 election because the existing tax is set to expire in 2028. If approved, the continuation would begin April 1, 2028.

Hester explained that the sales tax does not apply to essential grocery items, such as bread and milk, and that a significant portion of the revenue is expected to come from visitors and consumers outside the county. The revenue is used primarily to fund capital projects that would otherwise require substantial borrowing or increased property taxes.

Hester reviewed the project selection process, which began in 2025. A six-member committee was established in accordance with state law, with members selected to represent municipalities and areas throughout Chester County. The committee developed the application process, held community meetings, and received 67 project submissions. Projects were evaluated and prioritized within a conservative revenue estimate prepared by the County Treasurer. County Council approved the committee's prioritized project list through the ordinance process and could not rearrange the committee's project priorities.

Hester directed residents and Council members to the Chester County website for additional information about the referendum, previous CPST referendums, committee membership, the selection process, and proposed projects. He also offered to have County staff present information to community groups and organizations.

Regarding Great Falls, Hester highlighted the proposed **Great Falls Park Improvement project**, with an allocation of **$715,000**. He began reviewing the project location and its potential improvements as part of the presentation.

b. Great Falls On Call Proposal- Mayor Pro Tem Knight

Agenda amended item removed off the agenda

c. TextMyGov Proposal-Clerk Dooley

The Town Clerk provided an update regarding the Town's online employment application process. During the previous week, the Clerk spoke with Landon about providing online applications through the Town's website. Although access had been offered, the destination for submitted applications had not been properly configured. The issue was corrected over the weekend, and applicants can now submit employment applications directly through the Town's website when positions become available.

The Clerk also presented information regarding a proposed communication and notification system for the Town. The system would improve communication between Town Council, staff, and residents by providing timely updates regarding meetings, emergency alerts, service interruptions, community events, and other Town-related information. The platform could also provide residents with additional ways to receive information and submit concerns or service-related requests directly to the Town.

The current proposal from TextMyGov is $3,500 annually, with a one-time setup fee of $1,750, for a first-year total of $5,250. The annual cost after the first year would be $3,500. TextMyGov indicated a willingness to discuss the upfront pricing; however, the terms have not been finalized.

The Clerk emphasized that the information presented was not a final proposal or recommendation. Staff is continuing to gather information from TextMyGov and other vendors offering similar services to compare pricing, features, contract terms, and overall suitability for the Town's needs. The Clerk also reported receiving an email from YOPIFY, a company that works with utilities and municipalities. When asked whether staff had reviewed the vendors recommended by Councilmember Tisha the previous week, the Clerk explained that the review had not yet been completed because she was out of the office.

The Clerk requested that Council allow staff to continue evaluating the available options before making a final decision. The goal is to identify a practical investment that improves transparency, strengthens communication, and keeps residents informed and connected. Council members were given an opportunity to ask questions regarding the proposal.

d. Memorandum of Agreement for the Detention of Youth- Mayor Pro Tem Knight

A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Knight and seconded by Councilmember Owens to approve the Memorandum of Agreement for the Detention of Youth.

e. 810 Dearborn Agreement- Attorney Porter

Attorney Porter advised Council that the Town's current occupancy of the 810 Dearborn property is understood to be a month-to-month tenancy, with no formal lease agreement identified since 2021. She recommended establishing a current written lease agreement to protect the Town's tenancy while also exploring the possibility of acquiring ownership of the property.

Attorney Porter requested historical information regarding the understanding that the property, along with the adjacent theater and depot, would eventually be conveyed back to the Town after 20 years. She noted that the existing documents do not appear to reflect this understanding. Council discussed contacting the property owners, conducting a title search to verify ownership and title status, and determining whether property taxes have been paid. Brian Greer was also identified as a potential source of historical information.

Council expressed support for pursuing both options: securing a formal lease agreement and exploring the possibility of having the property conveyed to the Town through a quitclaim deed or donation. **Council unanimously authorized Attorney Porter to investigate the existing agreement, research the property's history and title, contact the property owners, and pursue the necessary documentation regarding the lease and potential conveyance of the property to the Town.** Attorney Porter agreed to proceed and report back to Council.

f. Discussion Regarding Formation, Purpose, and Structure of Proposed Citizens Recreation Committee- Councilmember Eagle

Council discussed concerns regarding a public announcement suggesting that the Great Falls Recreation Department and the Falls Social Club would operate together under one name. Council clarified that the Falls Social Club is a separate, independent volunteer organization and was not established by the Town Council. The group plans to organize community events and pursue nonprofit status. Council requested that a public statement be issued to clarify the group's independent status and confirm that the Town is not responsible for its funding or operations.

g. Discussion Regarding Organization/Structure of Town Recreation Functions – Councilmember Eagle

Council discussed Recreation Department expenditures, including the use of a Town debit card, travel and lodging expenses, and the lack of separate budget line items for certain expenditures. Questions were raised regarding the purpose of approximately $4,000 in lodging expenses, the individuals covered, and the source of funds used. Council requested additional documentation, including receipts and details of the purchases, to support further review. Members also discussed developing a standard operating procedure (SOP) or ordinance to establish clear spending guidelines, documentation requirements, and budget controls. It was noted that the Recreation Department also generates funds through its own fundraising activities.

h. Discussion Regarding Structure, Procedures, and Public Participation for Upcoming Council Workshops –Councilmember Eagle

Council discussed the purpose and format of workshops, including maintaining posted agendas, focusing discussions on designated topics, and allowing opportunities for public participation. Members expressed interest in making workshops more conversational and focused while remaining within applicable meeting requirements. Council discussed the importance of allowing residents to express their concerns while ensuring discussions remain relevant to the agenda. Members also discussed revisiting the previously approved resolution allowing a 15-minute public comment period at the end of meetings.

i. Discussion Regarding Employment Qualifications, Job Descriptions, or Employment Policies – Councilmember Eagle

Council discussed bonding requirements for Town personnel with access to municipal funds. It was confirmed that the Town Clerk is required to be bonded under the applicable ordinance. The bonding status will be verified, and documentation will be provided to Council. Members also discussed reviewing bonding requirements for other positions with direct access to municipal funds and considering whether Council members with bank-signing authority should be bonded. No final determination regarding additional bonding requirements was recorded.

j. 1st Reading of Ordinance for Garbage Collection – Mayor Pro Tem Knight

Mayor Pro Tem Knight presented the first reading of the proposed ordinance regarding garbage collection and solid waste disposal. Council discussed the ordinance's enforcement provisions, including penalties of up to $500 in fines or imprisonment for a period not exceeding 30 days for

violations. It was noted that these penalties are consistent with standard language used in municipal ordinances and would serve as a last resort for noncompliance.

Council also discussed how the ordinance would apply during natural disasters, including hurricanes and tornadoes. It was noted that state and federal disaster response regulations would generally govern debris removal and disaster-related cleanup.

Following discussion, Council voted, and the motion carried to approve the first reading of the ordinance. It was confirmed that a second reading would be required and that a public hearing would not be necessary.

k.Proclamation Celebrating Glinda Coleman's 25 Years of Service to the Town of Great Falls- Councilmember Owens

Councilmember Owens presented a proclamation recognizing Glinda Coleman for 25 years of dedicated service as Executive Director of the Great Falls Hometown Association. The proclamation acknowledged her leadership, commitment to community initiatives, development of partnerships, and contributions to preserving and improving the quality of life in Great Falls.

Councilmember Owens read the proclamation in its entirety and expressed appreciation for Ms. Coleman's longstanding service and continued dedication to the community. The Town Council presented the proclamation to Ms. Coleman in recognition of this milestone. Photographs were taken following the presentation.

The proclamation was dated September 5, 2026.

ITEM 6 MAYORS REPORT

The Mayor's Pro Tem Knight report included an update regarding the Municipal Association of South Carolina meeting. Mayor Worthy, Councilmember Mack, and Councilmember Owens attended the conference, while another Mayor Pro Tem Knight attended the Friday and Saturday sessions. Those attending reported that the training provided valuable information and new ideas that could help Council members and Town staff serve the community more effectively. Council expressed appreciation to the citizens for supporting the Town's training budget and stated that conference findings could be presented to the public at a future meeting.

ITEM 7 EXECUTIVE SESSION

ITEM 8 ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mayor Pro Tem Knight and seconded by Councilmember Dutton. Council then received a motion to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erica Dooley