

Mayor Elise Partin	Mayor Pro-Tem Tim James	Council Members Phil Carter Hunter Sox Byron Thomas	City Manager Mike Conley	Assistant City Manager Wesley Crosby
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**City of Cayce  
Regular Council Meeting  
Wednesday, June 18, 2025**

The June 18, 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. City Manager Jim Crosland, Deputy City Manager Michael Conley, Municipal Clerk Mendy Corder, Finance Director Allison Barrs, Human Resources Director Lynn Dooley, Police Chief Bruce Wade, Fire Chief Steven Bullard, IT Director Jamie Beckham 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 Regular Council Meeting to order and Council Member Thomas gave the invocation. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that normally Mayor Partin had someone lead the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance and being that tonight was City Manager Crosland's last night leading as the City Manager and he was a veteran of the Coast Guard and a previous law enforcement officer, it was his honor to be able to ask him to lead the Pledge. City Manager Jim Crosland led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Public Comment Regarding Items on the Agenda**

There was no public comment.

**Presentations**

**A. Presentation by Central Midlands Council of Governments on Solar Project Memorandum of Understanding**

Ms. Jocelyn Falkenstine stated that she was the program manager with the Central Midlands Council of Governments Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) implementation grant. She stated that she was going to review the GOG's municipal solar and smart surfaces or their S3 fund. She stated that the total grant was for \$8.7 million and the time frame was going to be from November 2024 to November 2029. She stated that it was a five (5) year grant and the CMCOG was the awardee and they would

be doing it in partnership with local municipalities. Ms. Falkenstine stated that they had eight (8) projects in Phase One, to include the City. She stated that the project was a 15-acre solar project at the Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant and was a two megawatt solar installation. She stated that it was anticipated to generate revenue for about 30 years and they were going to be leveraging grant funds to improve their project economics. She stated that what they were looking at currently was the memorandum of understanding (MOU). She stated that it was a no cost commitment at this time and the City could withdraw at any time. She stated that the MOU enabled the different utilities in the community to participate in the RFP process.

Ms. Falkenstine stated that once they got a little further down the line, they would replace the MOU with an intergovernmental agreement but that would not happen until they knew their full costs and their full benefits. She stated that the benefits that they were looking at was the ability to use predictable income to leverage grant funds for future grant matching and to benefit low income communities through potentially community assistance funds for paying for utilities and to decrease regional air pollution by using cleaner energy. She stated that it was a collaborative project with multiple different utility providers to build community. Ms. Falkenstine stated that the estimated project timeline was spring or summer of 2025 to establish the MOU and do a pre-RFP site and in the fall of 2025 they would send out the RFP which should be open for about 30 to 60 days. She stated that they would get bids in and then could get more in depth on what the actual benefits were and what the actual costs of this project was going to be. She stated that in the fall of 2025 they would look at transitioning into the intergovernmental agreement and contracting an actual firm to get the project on the ground. Ms. Falkenstine stated that in the spring of 2026 or the fall of 2027 they should be breaking ground and starting construction of the solar arrays and should be wrapping up with construction in the fall of 2028 and beginning to collect their post construction data. Mayor Partin stated that Ms. Falkenstine's presentation was very helpful and stated that Council was excited about the project.

**B. Presentation by Ardurra Group/WK Dickson re Qualifications for Engineering Services**

Mr. Jeremy Brashears stated that he was with the Ardurra Group and in October 2024 WK Dickson merged together with Ardurra. He stated that Ardurra was a national group and gave WK Dickson more resources, but Ardurra really did not have a presence in the southeast so the 250 person firm that was WK Dickson actually ended up growing by about 100 people that integrated into the region in the south, making them an even larger presence in the south. He stated that they still had the same team that had been serving the area with for the last 97 years. Mr. Brashears stated that they had a local office in Columbia, as well as offices across South Carolina and the Southeast. He reviewed their staff that would be working on the project. He stated that they had not only the resources on their local team but they could draw from across the country and get any technical expertise they needed for their projects. He stated that they had 41 offices in the southeast, five (5) offices in South Carolina, and over 450 professionals in the southeast that could support on just water and wastewater across the country.

Mr. Brashears stated that Ardurra Group/WK Dickson went beyond just water and wastewater but water and wastewater was probably about 45% of the work that they did but they also did watershed services. He stated that they were excellent at funding and regulatory guidance program management. He stated that they did work with seven (7) of the top 10 land development companies in the United States and had a very large transportation group. He stated that they were one of the top aviation firms in the southeast already but had gotten even stronger as part of Ardurra. He stated that they had in-house electrical instrumentation and control and had been helping quite a bit with disaster management. Mr. Brashears reviewed some of their clients and stated that they did a lot of work with the Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) and when the RIA needed to do the Utility Sustainability Assessment statewide, they chose WK Dickson and the Ardurra team to do that for them and to develop the toolkit for them to analyze the needs prior to the ARPA funding coming out. He stated that the RIA used a lot of their recommendations to help guide the assembly to figure out how much money to allocate for those since that time and had also chosen them to help them develop more curriculum for training of municipalities across the state, as well as technical assistance grants that were coming up.

Mr. Brashears stated that Ardurra had extensive municipal experience, knew water and wastewater and their approach was always to look at how they could leverage funds into the projects so that not only was the municipalities funds being used, but the funds that were available on a public basis were also being considered. He stated that they liked to hear what the stakeholders had in mind before moving forward and they focused on long term partnerships. He stated that they prided themselves on having the resources as a big company to continue to serve their clients locally even better than they had in the past. Mr. Brashears stated that they excelled in funding guidance and making sure that their client's dollar was being used to the best it possibly could be. He stated that they could design anything their client wanted them to as an engineer, but also if they were looking at the scheduling of the available funding through many different programs that may be out there that their client could tie to each of their projects, they could get even more done with their dollars and help them schedule and use those responsibly into the future.

Council Member Thomas asked how it was navigating with the new administration regarding funding and FEMA and EPA grants that they had helped cities get for projects. Mr. Brashears stated that they kept up to date on the Federal level, the regional level and the State level on how funds were being appropriated on a day to day basis and offer those updates to their clients. He stated that they did recommend that their clients proceed full steam through pursuing what makes sense for their projects so they were in the proper position to utilize the funds that were allocated at present.

### **Proclamations and Resolutions**

#### **A. Approval of a Proclamation – Post Traumatic Growth Day**

Mayor Pro Tem James made a motion to approve the Proclamation for Post Traumatic Growth Day. Council Member Thomas seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Mr. John Tjaarda, the Director of the Big Red Barn Retreat invited everyone to visit them to see what they were all about. He stated that Mr. Lamont Christian was with him and was the Executive Director of the Retreat. He stated that Mr. Christian was the lifeblood of what was happening at the Retreat with post traumatic growth. He stated that they had a range of services and programs available to veterans, first responders, active duty and family members. He stated that all their services and programs were offered at no cost, and they built better lives for American heroes, those who served their communities and those communities deserved their service, so they were happy to be in attendance and to be recognized.

Mr. Christian stated that they supported the country's defenders, the people that defended our communities as well as our nation. He stated that first responders were often left out of some of the robust health systems so the Big Red Barn Retreat looked at it from a mental wellness as opposed to a mental health approach so they could get in front of the issues that they were dealing with in society. He stated that was how they gave back and through the investment of the community supporting them they were able to do this at no cost to the members as well as their family members. Mr. Christian stated that they were really thankful for the opportunity to identify something that most people might not be aware of. Mayor Partin stated that post traumatic growth was an important concept. She stated that people tend to think they go through tough times and can only be diminished by them, but the post traumatic growth information was really critical, and people could actually be better after a traumatic event.

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

##### **A. Discussion and Approval of Greater Cayce-West Columbia Chamber of Commerce's Budget of Planned Expenditures of Accommodations Tax Funding**

Mayor Pro Tem James stated that he would be recusing himself from this item. His recusal form is attached. Council Member Thomas stated that he was recusing himself as well. His recusal form and statement is attached. He stated that he had been volunteering at the Chamber since 2022 even before he was a Cayce Council Member. He stated that he was advised by the City Attorney that his volunteer work with the Chamber did not create a conflict of interest in this matter. Council Member Thomas stated that he also consulted an outside legal counsel experienced in municipal law, who likewise confirmed that this did not create a legal conflict. He stated that as a member of City Council, he had a duty to vote on the matters that come before Council. He stated that a question was raised about a possible conflict of interest. He stated that he entered public service to work for the greater good of Cayce citizens and did not want this concern to distract from the important work Council was trying to do for the betterment of the City. Council Member Thomas stated that he believed the community expected

leadership that focused on solutions, not distractions, to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest. He stated that in his first speech as a Council Member he said that the C in Cayce stood for community and that remained his guiding principle.

Mayor Partin asked if there was anyone to present on this matter. City Manager Crosland stated that there was not anyone to present from the Chamber. Mayor Partin stated that City Attorney Dillard asked for this item to be on the agenda. City Attorney Dillard stated that at the last Council Meeting, Council voted to select the Greater Cayce West Columbia Chamber of Commerce as the sole recipient of the 30% Accommodations Tax funds. He stated that under State law, the City was required to take 30% of the Accommodations Tax funds and select one (1) or more local organizations that perform tourism, advertising and publicity services, and give those 30% funds to that organization. He stated that at the last Council Meeting, the local Chamber was selected by a vote as the sole organization to receive those funds. City Attorney Dillard stated that at the start of the fiscal year, the City was required to disburse those funds but the statute also required the organization that was receiving the funds to submit before the start of the fiscal year for approval, a budget of planned expenditures for the funds that could be done as part of the same vote. He stated that there was not a budget of planned expenditures for this recipient at the last Council Meeting therefore he requested it be added to the agenda to make sure that everyone involved is complying with that statutory process where the budget of planned expenditures was produced in the City and brought to Council for its consideration. City Attorney Dillard stated that it was not a vote on selecting the recipient, because that was already done and those funds would go to them but it was a vote on whether to approve the proposed budget of planned expenditures.

Mayor Partin asked how Council could do that without anyone representing the Chamber in attendance to answer questions. City Attorney Dillard stated that Council had the information in the agenda packet that was submitted by the Chamber. Council Member Carter made a motion to accept the Chamber's budget as presented. Mayor Partin asked if someone could show her where the budget was. She stated that she did think she had it. Council Member Carter stated that he was reading the White Paper from the Chamber. Mayor Partin asked if he was referring to the letter from the Chamber and stated that it was not a budget. She stated that the law stated to approve a budget that was designed to be used for advertising and promotion of tourism and she did not see a budget that did that. She stated that the amount from the motion was \$44,175 and that was only supposed to be spent in Cayce. She stated that accommodations tax money was not Cayce citizens tax money but was from when people came to the City and stayed in a hotel, so it was people coming from other places, coming to the City, staying in City hotels. Mayor Partin stated that amount was supposed to be used by State law to bring more tourism inside the City. She stated that it did not matter what entity did it as long as they had a dedicated tourism arm. She stated what mattered was that the money was spent to benefit people coming to Cayce and could only be used for programs in Cayce.

Mayor Partin stated that she was really confused why there was no one there from the Chamber to help Council navigate this because she had a lot of questions. She stated that she was looking at the Chamber website and looking at the staff and their job titles, and there was no one on staff that was solely focused on tourism and that was a concern. She stated that the letter that the Chamber submitted stated that the unexpected increase in grant money allowed them to hire a dedicated employee for the Greater CWC Visitor Program. Mayor Partin asked if that person was only going to be doing work for Cayce, because that was how that money should be used. She stated that if they were going to use that \$44,175 for a position, then that person should be dedicated only to the City, not working in the Greater CWC. She asked if the law even allowed for that money to be used for advertising and promotion of tourism to hire a person with. She stated that her understanding was that it did not. She stated that the money was meant to bring people to the City's amazing museum, the 12,000 Year History Park, the City's restaurants and hotels. She stated that the Chamber's letter stated that the website was updated daily, but she had to look really hard to find a number of the City's businesses. She stated that all of the City's restaurants should be on the website but they were not. She stated that the Chamber talked about their website being a big source, but she did not know how many people actually went to that website.

Mayor Partin stated that they did not have any zip code data on how many people attended the Chamber's annual Christmas parade. She stated that Tartan Day South submitted zip code data from all the people that went to that event so they knew they were pulling people in from far away. She stated that she loved the parade but did not know if it was pulling people from 50 miles out that would stay in the City's hotels. She stated that was the data Council needed to know. She stated that was Council's fiscal responsibility with the money. She stated that the letter stated that \$102,000 was spent on the Chamber's Visitor Center but she was not sure that State law allowed money to be used on a building. She stated that a building was not advertising and promotion of tourism. Mayor Partin stated that another item listed was the office and kiosk were available four (4) days a week which meant it was not even open on the weekends when people were going to be in the City to go to the Riverwalk or when they needed hotel information or restaurant information.

Mayor Partin asked why the City would not use agencies like Experience Columbia and Lake Murray Country that have trained professionals that literally that was their job and they had been doing it for years. She asked why they would create that redundancy. She stated that it was her understanding that Lake Murray Country and Experience Columbia got matching money from the State so their money went further. She stated that she would have loved to have answered if that happened at the Chamber and it was her understanding that it did not so the City was missing out on a whole lot of money that could benefit its hotels and restaurants. She stated that it was her understanding that Experience Columbia and Lake Murray Country had collective bulk ad buys, meaning that money went further, because they could get things for less. She stated that she would have loved to know if that was the same with the Chamber and it was her understanding that it was not, but there was no one there to tell her if that was



the case. Mayor Partin stated that this was not a budget for \$44,175 to be spent in Cayce and that was what Council was supposed to be approving. She stated that she would like to have this item postponed to the next Council Meeting so that someone from the Chamber could be at the meeting to answer her questions. She stated that if Council was interested in that, she would love to see if at the next meeting, something that might help Council, because she knew Council believed passionately that this was the right thing. She stated they could have someone on the next agenda to present what the Chamber did with last year's money, because that would make everybody feel better to see where all that money went, and so Council could know they made a wise decision and that the money went really far. She asked if Council would be in favor of adding that to the next agenda.

Council Member Sox stated that he was under the impression until that day that someone from the Chamber was presenting. He stated that he wanted to move forward with this item but also would love to see last year's as well, so they could ask them to come give a presentation. He stated that the money had already been allocated. He stated that he wanted to keep the money as local as they could. He stated that there were local restaurants and hotels on the Lake Murray Country and Experience Columbia websites. Council Member Sox stated that he did want to see a presentation, because he believed he had heard some of the numbers from the parade and they were pretty awesome so he wanted the public to know that as well.

Mayor Partin asked City Manager Crosland to arrange for a presentation for the next Council Meeting to show Council what they did with last year's money and particularly if they could put the receipts in the Council packet so everybody could see it and then make everyone feel better.

Council Member Carter stated that since the City Attorney addressed the potential issue with Council Member Thomas the last time it was raised in a newspaper, he wanted to briefly address it. He stated that he found it almost despicable that a newspaper would target an individual acting officially. He stated that it was horrible in so many different ways. He stated that the facts were that Council Member Thomas sits on the board of one of the subcommittees of the Chamber, and yes, he did vote, and he chose to recuse himself that night which was certainly his prerogative. He stated that he thought about some things in the past and thought back to many years ago when the Airport High School Educational Foundation had a tennis tournament and they would always apply for hospitality funds. He stated that he served on that Board and asked if that was an ethical violation. He stated that the Tartan Day festival worked through the River Alliance and Mayor Partin served on the River Alliance's board. He asked if that was an ethical violation. He stated absolutely not and stated they could not eliminate everyone that voted as a member of a board. He stated that there was an elected official of the County that served on the Lexington Country Recreation and Department of Aging Commission board and different boards that received money from entities and there had never been an ethical violation raised. He stated that he was disgusted that Council Member Thomas was targeted in this way, the new Council Member and new father and the most enthusiastic, highly energized person he had ever served with in 19 years of service.

Council Member Carter stated that he went back 10 years with the accommodations tax and did a little homework and what he learned was somewhat interesting. He stated that there had been some dysfunction from the City's standpoint over the years. He stated that initially there was a State accommodations tax and when a municipality exceeded a threshold, there was a formula as to how they allocated that money based on nights and lodging locations and if the threshold of \$50,000 was exceeded a municipality had to have an advisory committee. He stated that the City added a 3% accommodations tax. He stated that in 2015, the City gave \$18,000 to the Chamber and \$1,000 to the Columbia Metro Convention and Visitor Center, which is now called Experience Columbia and in 2016 it appeared to be almost the same numbers. He stated one of the documents he read stated that the 30% entities did not have to submit an application to receive funding. He stated that in 2018, no 30% requests were submitted. He stated that in 2022, the third entity, Lake Murray Country, entered the picture so then there were three (3) agencies or entities vying for the money. Council Member Carter stated that the law stated that the 30% entities needed to come back at some point before the next allocation and justify the money spent. He stated that since 2015 he could only find one entity that came back and presented what they did with the money. He stated that the award letter the City sent stated that they must present to Council at the end of the fiscal year but asked if the City actually followed up with that. He stated that it was convoluted and it appeared that the City had not played by the rules. Council Member Carter stated that it was certainly nothing malicious. He stated that the 30% entities were all great entities and the money went to the right place.

Council Member Carter stated that the City needed to build good administrative rules and procedures and protocol on how to handle the money. He stated that there was a law related to the money so it was obviously important. He stated that the City had to do better and one of his top five goals for the next City Manager was to clean up the process and make it very clear. He stated that the money was going to good causes. He stated that in the fall of 2021 he told staff he needed to know how accommodations tax worked and how much money the City could carry over and still had not been trained on it. Council Member Carter stated that he did think it was Council's job to tell people how to do their budget. He stated that Mayor Partin stated that it was not actually City money but he would not concede that point, because any money they collected under the City's coffers was taxpayers' money and was collected on behalf of taxpayers. He stated that they spent it on behalf of taxpayers.

City Attorney Dillard asked if he could clarify something for the record. He stated that Council Member Carter mentioned that Council Member Thomas was on a board with the chamber but he wanted to clarify that he was not on a board but a volunteer committee. He stated that his understanding was that Council Member Thomas was on the board of a foundation that was affiliated with, but legally distinct from the Chamber, but not on the board of the Chamber itself. He stated that last year the foundation did a grant application and Council Member Thomas rightfully recused himself.



Mayor Partin asked which entity presented to Council. Council Member Carter stated Lake Murray Country presented in February 2024. Mayor Partin stated she was glad Council Member Carter pulled all that information out but the City did have an Accommodations Tax Committee and it concerned her that for two (2) years in a row Council as a body had ignored the recommendations that came from that committee. She stated that while all of that was good information on the past, she was looking at the present. She stated that Council had businesses that were counting on them and they had a taxing responsibility to their citizens. She stated that Council Member Carter was right about that but asked that he not confuse that money came from them, unless they stayed in Cayce hotels sometimes but that was usually not what Cayce citizens were doing. She asked if Council was comfortable with supporting a budget that stated it was going to hire a dedicated employee but that might not be legal.

Council Member Carter stated that there were words actually in the law that if one did not have an entity they could create one. Mayor Partin stated that one could create an entity, but they had to use the money for advertising and promotions. She asked if Council was comfortable missing out on the matching money from the State. Council Member Carter stated that his motivation was to simply leave the money in the City. He stated that he was comfortable with the budget presented. Mayor Partin called the question. Council Members Carter and Sox voted yes. Mayor Partin voted no. Council Member Carter asked if he could bring a point of order. Mayor Partin stated yes. Council Member Carter stated that it was his understanding that the City had an Ordinance that Council could not pass substantive legislation with only two (2) affirmative votes. He asked City Attorney Dillard if that was correct. City Attorney Dillard stated that was correct. He stated that procedural votes could be passed by a two (2) one (1) vote, but anything other than a procedural vote required an affirmative three (3) votes. Council Member Carter asked what would happen if the motion failed. City Attorney Dillard stated that the State statute did not address this particular situation where there was approval of the allocation and a selection of the entity to receive that pot of money, but there was not a vote to approve the budget they had submitted. He stated that his opinion was those were two (2) separate issues, so the money had been allocated, and he thought the City was required to disperse it to the entity that had been selected based on the vote at the last Council Meeting. City Attorney Dillard stated that as to next steps, Council certainly could request that the recipient, or the Chamber in this situation, resubmit a budget in a different format with different details and different information but either way, he believed that State law required that it be disbursed at the start of the fiscal year.

Council Member Carter stated asked since the statute stated that they shall present the budget prior to the next fiscal year and the next Council Meeting was after the beginning of the fiscal year would that suffice. City Attorney Dillard stated that the Chamber had submitted their information and numbers prior to the start of the fiscal year and if they wanted to submit new information for Council to consider again, he believed they certainly could. He stated that the law was not clear on this specific, unusual situation, but they had at least checked the box of submitting it for Council's review.

**B. Discussion and Approval of Memorandum of Understanding for Solar Project**

City Manager Crosland stated that the Central Midlands Council of Government did the presentation earlier in the meeting and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) presented was the first step of the project and had no cost to any party at this time, and any party could withdraw at any time. He stated that the MOU provided a structure for all parties to collaborate on the Request for Proposal (RFP) bid review process and had discussions regarding co-investment on the project's cost of projected profits that were known at that time. He stated that the MOU would be replaced by entering into an Intergovernmental Agreement Council of Government Agreement in greater detail.

Council Member Sox made a motion to authorize the City Manager to execute the memorandum of understanding with Columbia Water East Richland Utilities and Richland County, which would allow collaboration with the regional utilities and grant funds solar project. Mayor Pro Tem James seconded the motion. He stated that it was wonderful that it would generate energy savings. City Manager Crosland stated that it would create so much energy they could sell that power back to Dominion. Mayor Partin called the question which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

**C. Discussion and Approval of Contract Award for Sewer System Master Plan and Hydraulic Model**

City Manager Crosland stated that Council approval was needed to accept Ardurra Group/WK Dickson's proposal for the City's sewer system master plan and hydraulic model project and authorize the City Manager to receive the contract for this work. He stated that staff recommended Council approve the acceptance of the proposal from Ardurra/WK Dickson and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a contract with the consultant. He stated that the cost of the project was approved in the FY25 Utilities Administration budget for \$325,000.

Council Member Sox made a motion to approve the acceptance of a proposal from Ardurra/WK Dickson and authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a contract with the consultant. Council Member Carter seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

**D. Discussion and Approval to Ratify an Agreement Approved by the City Manager, Under the Emergency Powers of Sec. 2-146, with G.H. Smith Construction, Inc., for the Emergency Repair of a Sewer Main Failure**

City Manager Crosland stated that Council approval was needed to ratify an agreement approved by the City Manager under emergency powers for G.H. Smith Construction on May 15, 2025, for an emergency repair of a sewer line failure that was located on American Avenue. He stated that the project consisted of replacing approximately 275 of linear pipes, reconnection of services, repair of asphalt, driveways,

roadway and curb and gutter. He stated that the price of the emergency repair was \$48,325 and staff recommended Council ratify the City Manager's actions. He stated that \$48,325 would be funded from the Utilities Wastewater Collection O and M budget.

Mayor Pro Tem James made a motion to ratify the agreement. Council Member Sox seconded the motion which was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

### **Committee Matters**

#### **A. Approval to Enter the Following Approved Minutes Into the City's Record Accommodations Tax Committee – May 13, 2025**

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

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

City Manager Crosland stated that FEMA was in the City the past Wednesday touring the City's Riverwalk and Granby Gardens Park looking at the storm damage. He stated that staff had received quotes for the demolition of the pavilion and that would come to Council for approval at the July Council Meeting. He stated that Finance staff were prepared to load the FY25/26 budget on July 1. He stated that the City had implemented the Avenues Drainage Project communication procedures with instructions on ways to receive real time updates. He stated that starting July 14, the Naples Avenue entrance to the Riverwalk would be closed for construction. He stated that staff would have a better timeline of the project at the July Council Meeting. He stated that the Cayce Historical Museum was hosting Celebration of Freedom , a free event, that coming Saturday and would have a storyteller in the morning and sweetgrass craft maker as well. He stated that there was also a Juneteenth Celebration at the speedway with food trucks and music and they had not requested a noise extension. City Manager Crosland stated that the Police Department was hosting their Character Camp from July 14 through July 24 from 8am to 3pm Monday through Thursday and breakfast and lunch would be provided. He stated that there were spots still available. He stated that the City's second annual Cayce Cool Down was being held Saturday, July 26 from 11am to 1pm.

Mayor Partin stated that City Manager Crosland stated that the Naples Avenue entrance to the Riverwalk would be closed with the storm drainage repair and asked if staff was going to put out information on where people could access it in other places. She stated that possibly a sign could be installed at the entrance telling people where they could go.

### **Council Comments**

Mayor Pro Tem James asked if the Naples Avenue entrance parking lot was going to be completely shut down. City Manager Crosland stated that it would be completely

closed. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that staff would need to overcommunicate this as quickly as they could. He stated that there were people that utilized the Riverwalk every single day. He stated that there were two (2) things that had come to his attention over the last couple of weeks and he thought it was important for the City to refer these items to the Planning Commission. He stated that there was a tragic incident across the river at a short term rental, and they had discussed this in the past, but never came to a conclusion on what do we do with short term rentals like VRBO's and Airbnb's. He stated that he believed that other cities sometimes wished they would have gotten a hold on short term rentals before it got as big as it was. He stated that the tragic situation in Columbia occurred and now they were putting a moratorium in. He stated that the City was fortunate right now in the vast majority of short term rentals were owned by people who were respectful and the City did not receive a lot of complaints. Mayor Pro Tem James stated that the City needed to have some type of procedure in place to ensure that the folks that were utilizing the short time rentals so that the people who lived close by were not disturbed because of it. He stated that he would like for the City to look deeper into the issue and possibly refer it over to the Planning Commission. He stated that Council did not have to take 100% of what the Commission recommended but they did want the Commission to give them guidance on what they thought.

Mayor Pro Tem James stated that the City was continuing to grow and lighting pollution was an issue for larger cities. He stated that when a larger business was built behind a home and they had bright lights that shined all night it was an issue. He stated that the City did not really have Ordinances to address that and the City needed to get ahead of that as well. He stated that he encouraged staff to either dive into both of those topics or refer them to the Planning Commission.

Council Member Thomas stated that staff had moved the African American cemeteries to its priority list and Assistant City Manager Crosby was working on it. He stated that it was important that it be finished so families could pay their respects to their ancestors. He stated that a survey was done by Stantec in 2023 that stated most of the cemeteries would benefit from additional vegetation removal and ground penetrating radar testing. He stated that he brought to City Manager Crosland's attention the safety of the new Wi Fi in City parks. He thanked Mayor Pro Tem James for spearheading free Wi Fi in all City parks. He stated that he proposed a new Ordinance to make sure illegal activity using the free Wi Fi was not going to be tolerated, as they wanted the public to be safe using the Wi Fi. He stated that they also wanted to make sure that nothing could fall back on the City if people were doing illegal activities in the City parks. He asked City Manager Crosland when Council could expect that to reach the agenda. City Manager Crosland stated it should be July or August.

Council Member Thomas stated that a constituent sent Mayor Partin and Council a sweet email and the resident said he could share it with the assembly. He stated that he was going to read an excerpt from it – "in regard to our amazing Cayce city parks. I ride by the parks often and I have followed the work with Glenwood Park. It was typical to go by several times and see the basketball court being used by people. What a great opportunity for Cayce police to build a rapport with our youth by shooting a hoop or two

with them while patrolling. And I heard that Chief Wade has a beautiful jump shot, so I can't wait to hear him being out there with kids. I've seen young and old children enjoy swinging on a new swing while others waited for their turn. It's wonderful to see." Council Member Thomas thanked City Manager Crosland for showing the citizens what investment looks like. He stated that when the City invested in its parks, they were investing in families. He thanked City Manager Crosland for working to look at additional basketball courts in the City. He stated that the City had few opportunities for middle and high school students to continue to enjoy City parks. He stated that he had a parent call him recently and said they were in Kelly Jones Park and their 11 year old stated that he had outgrown the playground equipment and there was not anything for him to do in that park. He stated that it meant a lot to him and Council to find out how they could not only upgrade City parks but figure out how to keep the middle schoolers and highschoolers visiting parks so they were not having problems in the community. He stated that they were going to continue to fight for City parks. He wished City Manager Crosland luck and stated he hoped he had good endeavors at the Town of Irmo. He stated that they were getting a great city manager.

Council Member Sox stated that City Manager Crosland was going to be missed and he made a huge impact on the City over the more than a decade he had been with Cayce. He stated that they greatly appreciated it and wished him good luck in Irmo.

Council Member Carter stated how much they all appreciated City Manager Crosland for a job well done.

Mayor Partin stated that she had said a lot since City Manager Crosland made his announcement about leaving. She stated that he picked up a hot bowling ball for the City and ran with it and she thanked him for that.

### **Executive Session**

- A. Receipt of legal advice relating to claims and potential claims by and against the City and other matters covered by attorney-client privilege
  - i. Claim for Improvements to Taylor Street at New State Road
- B. Discussion of Employment Matter – City Manager Position

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. She stated that Council had asked to meet again on Monday to continue their discussions around the City Manager position. She stated that they would narrow the meeting time

down and staff would send that out on Friday, so everybody would know what time on Monday they were meeting, and of course, staff would notice that meeting properly

**Possible actions in follow up to Executive Session**

A. Other

No action was taken in follow up to Executive Session.

**Adjourn**

Mayor Pro Tem James 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 8:55pm.

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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**      **June 18, 2025**

[illegible]

**\*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.

## RECUSAL STATEMENT

Member Name: Tim James

Meeting Date: June 18, 2025

Agenda Item: Section V. Number A

Topic: Approval of Greater Cyace West Columbia Chamber of Commerce's  
Budget of Planned Expenditures of Accommodations Tax Funding

*The Ethics Act, SC Code §8-13-700, provides that no public official may knowingly use his office to obtain an economic interest for himself, a family member of his immediate family, an individual with whom he is associated, or a business with which he is associated. No public official may make, participate in making, or influence a governmental decision in which he or any such person or business has an economic interest. Failure to recuse oneself from an issue in which there is or may be conflict of interest is the sole responsibility of the council member (1991 Op. Atty. Gen. No. 91-37). A written statement describing the matter requiring action and the nature of the potential conflict of interest is required.*

Justification to Recuse:

☐ Professionally employed by or under contract with principal

☐ Owns or has vested interest in principal or property

☒ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

June 18, 2025  
Date

  
Member Signature

Approved by Parliamentarian:

\_\_\_\_\_

## RECUSAL STATEMENT

Member Name: Byron Thomas

**Meeting Date:** June 18, 2025

Agenda Item: Section V. Number A

**Topic: Approval of Greater Cyace West Columbia Chamber of Commerce's Budget of Planned Expenditures of Accommodations Tax Funding**

*The Ethics Act, SC Code §8-13-700, provides that no public official may knowingly use his office to obtain an economic interest for himself, a family member of his immediate family, an individual with whom he is associated, or a business with which he is associated. No public official may make, participate in making, or influence a governmental decision in which he or any such person or business has an economic interest. Failure to recuse oneself from an issue in which there is or may be conflict of interest is the sole responsibility of the council member (1991 Op. Atty. Gen. No. 91-37). A written statement describing the matter requiring action and the nature of the potential conflict of interest is required.*

Justification to Recuse:

\_\_\_\_\_ Professionally employed by or under contract with principal

\_\_\_\_\_ Owns or has vested interest in principal or property

☒ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

June 18, 2025

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Member Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Parliamentarian:

## **Mendy Corder**

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**From:** Byron <byron4cayce@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 18, 2025 8:56 AM  
**To:** Mendy Corder  
**Subject:** Recusal A Tax

I will recuse myself from voting on this matter. The matter before Council would award funding to the Greater Cayce-West Columbia Chamber of Commerce.

As many of you know, I have been volunteering with the Chamber since 2022 — even before I became a Councilman.

I have been advised by the City Attorney that my volunteer work does not create a conflict of interest in this matter. I also consulted outside legal counsel experienced in municipal law, who likewise confirmed there is no legal conflict. As a member of City Council, I have a duty to vote on matters that come before us. However, a question has been raised about a possible conflict of interest.

I entered public service to work for the greater good of Cayce's citizens, and I do not want this concern to distract from our important work.

I believe our community expects leadership that focuses on solutions, not distractions.

To avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest, I have chosen to recuse myself from this vote.

In my first speech as a Councilman, I said, *"Our C stands for Community."* That remains my guiding principle.

### **Byron Thomas**

City of Cayce Councilman for District 2

C: 803-293-5585

Our "C" stands for Community

May God Bless the United States of America