



**Ways and Means Committee Meeting**  
**June 4, 2025, 6:00 PM**  
**Minutes**

- 1. Opening of the Ways and Means Committee** – *Mayor Green opened the meeting at 6 PM.*
- 2. Prayer and Civility Pledge:** *Mayor Green asked everyone to bow their heads in a silent prayer. Afterward, Councilman Prause was asked to read the Civility Pledge. She turned the meeting over to Councilman Frazier.*

**3. Roll Call:**

*Present: Mayor Green, Councilman Prause, Councilman Brown, Councilman Frazier, and Councilwoman Helms*

*Absent: Councilman McNeal and Councilman Ketchens*

**4. Discussion on the following Ordinances:**

- **Ordinance 2025-09:** An Ordinance to Adopt the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year General Fund for the Town of Awendaw, SC, Starting July 1, 2025, and Ending June 30, 2026
  - **Ordinance 2025-10:** An Ordinance to Adopt the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year Water Fund for the Town of Awendaw, SC, Starting July 1, 2025, and Ending June 30, 2026.
- *Councilman Frazier began by stating that this meeting was to continue the discussion regarding the fiscal year budget (General and Water). He felt there was a need to review some line items and allow any council person, the mayor, and the town administrator to bring up issues or questions about the general budget and/or the water budget. Councilman Frazier said he met with Katherine earlier in the week to discuss some of the items, and she will provide the requested information. Based on the feedback received, the Council may vote on this sooner than two or three weeks from today, depending on what happens in this meeting. So, with that, Councilman Frazier opened the floor for others to make comments or ask questions.*
- *Councilman Frazier went through the few things that concerned him, then he said the others could go through what concerns and questions they had. The main things that he focused on were staffing, personnel, and insurance expenses. Recommendations were made to implement certain policies and procedures, create job descriptions, and he asked for updates on those things that haven't been forthcoming yet. We need to add some staff to the town. We know this, Katherine knows this, and we just need to sort these things out. We're being asked to pass a budget with projections that he doesn't even know are accurate or not. So, he wants to make sure that they are. Councilman Frazier wants to get as much clarity as possible on them.*

*His other concern was the issues with the water system that we need to resolve. He had a meeting with Ron Bycroft two weeks ago to discuss possible solutions and learn more about the water system. There are some people complaining about the smell of the water right now*

*He's not asking us to solve the water system problems tonight or in this budget, but what he envisions is setting a course of action that we can take, whether it's capital expenses that we include in the budget to*

*fix issues. We need to have a plan for both the personnel and the waterfront.*

*Money for the Housing Department: Councilman Frazier questioned the money that's paid out of the budget or from the county as part of the reimbursement process. Katharine Watkins explained Charleston County will reimburse the housing administrator's salary up to \$20,000, and the remaining part of the salary will be reimbursed by the town. At the budget retreat, it was discussed to hire a full-time person, with the town able to pay up to \$20,000 of the \$40,000.*

*Councilwoman Helms discussed the hiring of the Utilities Manager (\$70,000). The question was asked if the part-time Code Enforcement Officer for McClellanville could work part-time for the Town.*

*Councilman Brown discussed the smelly water and the addition of 800 more septic systems, stating that the town will have fecal-contaminated water.*

*(Time Stamp: 30:17): Councilman Prause stated the following: "The system was never built to the specifications and the plans for which the money was going to."*

*(Time Stamp: 30:42 through 36:42): Councilman Prause continued, "That's where the problem starts. Now you can say that it is water under the bridge, and it is. We can't wind back, or go back in a time machine. But if you don't understand the mistakes you made in the past, you are doomed to those repeat those in the future going forward. Now that's the first aspect of it. Whatever we do, whatever plan we have, and we absolutely need a plan, it's got to be managed better than how this whole thing has been managed up and including right now. That's paramount. No matter what we do with it. If that doesn't occur, we might as well just start a fire in the parking lot and burn money up there. So, that's part of it. The expectation, and I don't know where this coliform stuff comes from in Summerville, I assume they have a municipal water system. And they get their water from an entirely different water source. They go to the Goose Creek aquifer. They don't go to the Midorf aquifer like we do. You're not going to find fecal coliform in the Midorf aquifer. You're not gonna ever. The people that have problems with fecal coliform don't have proper wells. And we're not talking about the uncleanness or toxicity or whatever. We get monthly reports. We're required to get that from the EPA. We have to and if there is anything wrong with it, there would be a more serious problem on that. That's not an issue. We are talking about people's expectations that they are getting a monthly bill and their water quality is not the same as some of the other people that are paying the exact same amount of money that they are getting. My solution would be, you'd be much better off with your own deep water well. And if you have a problem with X, whatever causes the rotten egg smell, then you deal with it in an appropriate fashion. It could involve expending a good bit of money to have some type of personal filtration system on your own personal well. But that's your deal. That's your expense. That's your own private home. And you do it if you want to do it. If you can tolerate the smell, you tolerate the smell. Whatever. It's not that you don't have clean drinking water. And if they're going to be charged money, then they are owed an expectation of having the same quality of water, even if it is just a cosmetic thing. I've looked online about a lot of this stuff, too, and you're right, a lot of this stuff will say that it is in your own house, and there are things you can do to improve that quality. But that's not what's going on here. This is coming from a source that is going to people that goes to people's houses. So, I think what needs to happen, and I'm not a water expert, but from all what I've heard and read and taken in, the water system needs to be built to the specifications and standards that it was designed to be built to begin with, which has never occurred. That's going to cost money. Where's that money going to come from? Whatever it can come from. What we got now was mainly financed through two low-interest loans from the RDA, which we'll be paying off for both are 40 year loans I believe. We can continue to take loans. We can get grants if we can get them. We can raise rates. From what I understand the rates have not been raised in I don't even know how long. We also have people that are by law are supposed to be tied into the system that have been allowed to not tie into the system and pay the base rate. They don't even use water they just pay the minimum base rate. I would like to know a whole lot more about this stuff. How many customers do we have? What's our average monthly bill? How many are residential? How many are unresidential? How many are in the town? How many are not in the town? I think there's all these things. But there's nobody in this room that can answer*

*these questions that I know of. But, I mean, the information is there. It's right there in that next building. We don't have it here right in front of us. We don't know how many people are delinquent on their water bills. We know we've had problems in the past with water billing. That was pointed out, is it in the audit we're undergoing right now, it was in one of the ones I read where that was one of the red flags that we had to fix. So there are all these things that need to happen. We need to have a comprehensive plan to address it. We can't just keep stumbling along and expecting things to get better. So I agree with Frank. And the way to probably make that work would be a capital improvements plan. I don't know. We don't have a capital improvements plan for any of the capital assets that we have in this building, the park. Those are our three biggest capital assets. This water system, this building and its grounds, and the park. Nothing for any of it. We should have a capital improvements plan. We don't even have an operations and maintenance program for the capital facilities. This building sat for who knows how long. It just went to rack and ruin. We were lucky enough to get some money from the federal government with no strings attached that we were able to fix some of the things here. We need to have that in a budget..."*

*Mayor Green said we needed to get feedback from HM Northcutt, and Mickey Seabrook on the salary range.*

*Councilman Brown had to leave early (7:08 PM)*

*Councilman Prause said we need a plan moving forward to not move funds from the General Fund to the Water Fund.*

*Public Hearing: Final Reading/2<sup>nd</sup> Reading (25-09/25-10) the Budget, June 23rd @ 6:00 PM with a backup on June 30<sup>th</sup>.*

*The Center for Heirs Property will be having a meeting on June 25th at Berkeley Electric at 6:00 PM. They're working on a flyer that should be coming out and will be advertised, but it's open to everybody who would like to learn more about Heir's property.*

- 5. Schedule an additional meeting of the Ways and Means Committee.** *The council noted that there would be no need for an additional Ways and Means Committee meeting before the second reading and public hearing.*
- 6. Adjournment:** *Councilwoman Helms made a motion for adjournment, and Councilman Prause seconded it. All in favor. The Meeting was adjourned at 7:25 PM.*