



Town of Hilton Head Island
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 3:00 PM
Minutes

Call to Order

Mayor Perry called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Council Members present: Alan Perry, Mayor; Alex Brown, Ward 1, Mayor Pro-Tempore; Patsy Brison, Ward 2; Steve DeSimone, Ward 3; Tammy Becker, Ward 4; Steve Alfred, Ward 5; Melinda Tunner, Ward 6

Others Present: Marc Orlando, Town Manager; Curtis Coltrane, Town Attorney; Kim Gammon, Town Clerk

Invocation – Rev. Bill Ward, Providence Presbyterian Church

Reverend Bill Ward of Providence Presbyterian Church delivered the invocation.

Adoption of the Agenda

Ms. Becker made a motion to amend the Agenda by removing items 11b. and 11d. from the Agenda (Executive Session). The motion was not seconded and did not carry.

Mr. Alfred moved to approve. Ms. Brison seconded. Motion Passed 6-1 (Ms. Becker opposed).

Approval of the Minutes

Regular Meeting Minutes of February 10, 2026

Mr. Alfred moved to approve. Ms. Becker seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Workshop Meeting Minutes of February 24, 2026

Mr. Alfred moved to approve. Ms. Becker seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Presentations and Recognitions

Report of the Town Manager

Mr. Orlando stated that the Town has received the highest possible credit rating from the nation's 3 major credit rating agencies, Moody's, Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings, in connection with the Town's proposed issuance of general obligations bonds and that these top

tier ratings affirm the Town's strong financial stewardship, fiscal management and commitment to long term sustainability. Mr. Orlando stated that pursuant to previous meetings and workshops, the Town plans to issue \$35 Million in GO Bonds Series 2026 to fund a new fire rescue headquarters, an emergency operations center, potential CIP projects and land acquisition costs.

Mr. Orlando provided updates on the re-opening of Old Schoolhouse Park, the status of repairs and maintenance performed at Coligny Beach, expected completion of Coligny Circle Pocket Park, the completion of the soccer field at Barker Field Extension, continuation of paving of Mitchelville Road, Beach Renourishment and work on the breakwater structures and tilling on Pine Island. He thanked everyone for their patience and relayed that the projects were on track, on budget and on schedule.

Mr. Orlando reminded everyone of upcoming March events: the 40th Annual Hilton Head Island St. Patrick's Day Parade, Hilton Head Island Wingfest, and the Hilton Head Island Wine and Food Festival. He congratulated and thanked Fire Chief Blankenship and his team for their success over the past year - Town Council and the Mayor attended the Fire Rescue Awards and Recognitions Program.

Disabilities Awareness Month Proclamation - Mayor Alan Perry

Galen Sturup Comeau, Chair, Beaufort County Board of Disabilities and Special Needs was present to accept the proclamation on behalf of the Beaufort County Board of Disabilities and Special Needs.

Beaufort County School District Character Education Student of the Month - Mayor Alan Perry

Mayor Perry recognized and congratulated Annabella Williams from Hilton Head Island Elementary School for Creative Arts, who was selected as a Beaufort County School District Student of the Month for the character trait, perseverance.

Reports from Members of Town Council

General Reports from Town Council

Council Member Becker raised concerns regarding Executive Session procedures, Agenda transparency, and communication of Council-related matters.

Ms. Brison reported on the Darius Rucker Intercollegiate Golf Tournament held at Long Cove Club on March 3rd through March 5th and reminded everyone of the upcoming Hilton Head International Piano Competition taking place at St. Luke's Anglican Church and First Presbyterian Church March 16th through the 21st.

Report of the Lowcountry Area Transportation Study - Councilmember Tamara Becker

No report.

Report of the Lowcountry Council of Governments - Councilmember Steve Alfred

No report.

Report of the Beaufort County Airports Board - Councilmember Melinda Tunner

Ms. Tunner stated that no March meeting was held and that Phase I construction continues, jet bridges have been installed and painting and landscaping are 90% complete. Ms. Tunner also stated that a grand opening for the public will be forthcoming.

Report of the Southern Lowcountry Regional Board - Councilmember Patsy Brison

Ms. Brison reported that they met on February 23rd at the New Riverside Barn in Bluffton for presentations from delegates of Beaufort and Jasper counties on the proposal of legislation that will affect the Lowcountry. Ms. Brison also reported that the next meeting will be on March 24th.

Report of the Island Recreation Association Board - Mayor Pro Tempore Alex Brown

Mr. Brown provided an update on upcoming events, including the Easter Eggstravaganza, Kids Night Out and upcoming CIP work at the Recreation Center Pool.

Report of the Beaufort County Economic Development Corporation - Mayor Alan Perry

Mayor Perry reported that he, Mr. Orlando and Mr. John O'Toole met to discuss reaching out to high-tech firms for recruitment and were able to receive a grant to go out and do some recruiting in the high-tech area. Additionally, Mayor Perry reported that the Converge Meeting took place at Sun City and was well-attended. Mayor Perry also reported that he and Ms. Tunner attended a Strategic Action Plan with other county and community leaders to set a path over the next 24 months for the Economic Development Corporation and he expects there to be additional discussions regarding such path.

Report of the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation - Mayor ProTempore Alex Brown

Mr. Brown reported that the Gullah Geechee Historic Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation will meet on March 18th. The agenda will include the monthly report from the Executive Director, discussion of a potential name change for the CDC to better reflect the work the organization has begun and will undertake in the future, and a review of the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 budget.

Report of the Community Development and Public Services Committee - Councilmember Tamara Becker

Ms. Becker reported that a meeting was held March 9th, where they received the Fire and Rescue Annual Report and a report on pedestrian and bike incidents data, as well as to vote to recommend approval of a Resolution to be provided to Town Council regarding a revised beach services chair and umbrella plan. Ms. Becker also reported that the next meeting will be

held on April 6th to review Board and Commissions vacancies.

Report of the Finance and Administrative Committee - Mayor Pro Tempore Alex Brown

Mr. Brown reported that the Finance and Administrative Committee will meet on April 6th. The Committee's agenda will include the monthly Fiscal Year 2026 financial update, funding recommendations for the Town's affiliated agency applications for Fiscal Year 2027, and discussion of the results of the sale of General Obligation Bonds.

Consent Agenda

Consideration to Amend an Ordinance of the Town of Hilton Head Island Municipal Code Title 2, Chapter 11, Section 2-11-40 to Modify the Practice Location Requirement for the Town Attorney - Second Reading - Lisa Stauffer, Human Resources Director

Background and a summary regarding the item was provided. There were no changes since the First Reading on February 10, 2026.

Town of Hilton Head Island Municipal Code Title 2, Chapter 11, Section 2-11-40, requires that the Town Attorney have a practice established in town. That requirement significantly limits the number of attorneys eligible to serve in that capacity. The revision broadens the field to include attorneys with a practice established within Beaufort County. The change continues to focus on attorneys familiar with the complexities and nuances of our area while removing the overly restrictive requirement that their practice be located on the Island.

Mr. Brown moved to approve. Ms. Brison seconded.

Mayor Perry asked for public comment. There was none. Concluding Council discussion, questions and comments, the **Motion carried 7-0.**

New Business

Consideration of an Ordinance of the Town of Hilton Head Town Council to Amend the Budget for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2026; to Provide for the Budgeted Appropriations of the Prior Year Budget Roll Forward and Certain Other Appropriations and Commitments and the Expenditures of Certain Funds; to Allocate the Sources of Revenue for the Said Funds; and to Provide for Severability and an Effective Date - First Reading - Dave Byrd, Finance Director

Dave Byrd provided an overview regarding the item and recommended that the Town Council consider proposed budget amendments for Fiscal Year 2026 to the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Fund, Debt Service Fund, General Fund, and the Town of Hilton Head Island Master Fee Schedule as follows:

- Proposed amendments to the CIP to address budgeted carry forwards for existing projects or contracts; funding for new improvement projects that have arisen since the Fiscal Year 2026 budget development; funding for land acquisitions previously approved by Town Council; and bond proceeds from the Special Revenue Beach Bond and upcoming General Obligation

Bond.

- Proposed amendments to the Debt Service Fund to address the payments on the Special Revenue Beach Bonds and the upcoming General Obligation Bond.
- Proposed amendments to the General Fund to address additional staffing, operating and equipment costs related to the planned enhancements to the Short Term Rental program, additional Fire Rescue equipment funded by a generous donation from the community, and additional Affiliated Agency funding for the Lowcountry Regional Transit Authority (LRTA).
- Amendment to the Town of Hilton Head Island Master Fee Schedule proposing a Short-Term Rental Permit Fee change from a flat fee of \$250 per property to a fee of \$150 per bedroom, plus the addition of a \$250 late fee.

Pursuant to Section 5 of the Town's adopted Fiscal Year 2026 budget Ordinance, for all funds, all outstanding encumbrances as of June 30, 2025, will carry forward into Fiscal Year 2026 to the same department, account, or project for which they are encumbered in Fiscal Year 2025 subject to approval by the Town Council via an appropriate budget amendment.

Therefore, as part of the annual budget review process, the Town evaluates its current budgeted funds following the closure of the previous fiscal year to determine if a corresponding budget amendment is necessary. With Fiscal Year 2026 now underway, it is recommended that the Town Council consider several budget amendments provided for within Mr. Byrd's Staff Report dated March 10, 2026. A detailed description for each of the recommended budget amendments is detailed in said Staff Report, a copy of which is attached to the Agenda of the Town Council Meeting of March 10, 2026, and a brief list of each of the recommended budget amendments is as follows:

1. Capital Improvements Program Fund Amendments – Totaling \$46,929,034:

- a) Budgeted Carry Forward Adjustments - \$5,958,531
- b) New Capital Improvement Project funding for items that have arisen since budget development - \$3,988,373
- c) Land Acquisition Funding - \$10,081,300
- d) General Obligation Bond Proceeds – Up to \$35,000,000 (\$8,377,008 of which is funding the new Fire Rescue Headquarters addressed in sections b and c above; \$26,622,992 remaining)
- e) Special Revenue Bond Proceeds and Cost of Issuance - \$19,277,838

2. Debt Service Fund Amendments – Totaling \$12,220,198

- a) Special Revenue Bond Payments - \$289,310
- b) General Obligation Bond Payment - \$11,930,888

3. General Fund Amendments – Totaling \$607,939:

- a) Donation to Fire Rescue - \$80,000
- b) Additional Staffing, Operating and Equipment costs related to the amendment of the Short-Term Rental Program Ordinance - \$475,411 for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2026

- c) Lowcountry Regional Transit Authority (LRTA) Affiliated Agency Funding - \$52,528

4. Short-Term Rental Permit Fee Amendments:

- a) Short-Term Rental (STR) Permit Fee
- b) Late Fee

5. Short-Term Rental Program Impact:

The additional STR revenue fully funds enhanced inspections and enforcement, a Town-operated 24/7 response capability, improved coordination with public safety partners, expanded communications and transparency tools, and required personnel and equipment. This funding approach aligns with best practices in peer communities and supports the Town's strategic priority to protect neighborhood quality of life while maintaining a well-managed visitor economy.

Mayor Perry asked for public comment. There was none.

Following discussion, comments and questions by Town Council, **Ms. Brison moved to approve. Ms. Tunner seconded. Motion carried 7-0.**

Consideration of a Resolution of the Town of Hilton Head Island Town Council Approving and Submitting a Proposed Project List for Consideration in Connection with the Beaufort County Transportation Sales Tax - Shawn Gillen, Assistant Town Manager

Shawn Gillen provided an overview regarding the item with the following information.

On November 10, 2025, the County Council of Beaufort County approved the creation of a Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) to make recommendations to County Council regarding a possible 2026 Transportation Sales Tax.

The TAC has met four times as of March 4th, 2026. The next meeting of the TAC will be on March 11th in the Town of Hilton Head Island Town Council chambers. At this meeting the Town is expected to present to the TAC a list of projects that the Town wishes to be a part of the transportation sales tax referendum.

In an email from Jared Fralix, Assistant County Administrator, to the Town Managers within Beaufort County, the Towns were asked to consider three categories for selecting projects:

- Widening Projects
- Safety and Intersection Improvements
- Resurfacing and Dirt Road Paving Projects

The projects presented for consideration include:

- William Hilton Parkway – Gateway Corridor
 - Squire Pope/WHP Intersection Improvements

- Spanish Wells/WHP Intersection Improvements
- Gumtree Road Improvements
- Main Street Road Improvements
- William Hilton Parkway - Chaplin Corridor
- Sea Pines Circle

The proposed resolution supporting the projects discussed at the February 24, 2026, Town Council Workshop also contains several stipulations that the Town Council asked staff to include in the resolution. If approved by the Town Council at the March 10, 2026, Town Council Meeting the projects will be presented at the meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee, to be held at the Town of Hilton Head Island Town Council chambers.

Mr. Alfred moved to approve. Ms. Tunner seconded.

Mayor Perry asked for public comment.

Stu Rodman addressed Council regarding the bridge project and the proposed Beaufort County Transportation Sales Tax Referendum.

Christopher Cliffe addressed Council regarding his concern that the Resolution will appear to the public to be a commitment by the Town Council to the Beaufort County Transportation Sales Tax Referendum and Beaufort County Council.

Members of Council held a discussion regarding the request and proposed Resolution noting this was a list of some of projects included in the Capital Improvement Project List that need a funding source. Ms. Becker expressed her opposition to the proposed Resolution and her reasoning for such.

Ms. Brison moved to amend the Resolution with the following:

Move the last of the 6th Whereas to be #1

Renumber 1-6 to be 2-7, and including striking the language in the next to last line "express the sense of the Town Council regarding the proposed project list and other matters related thereto" and substituting in lieu thereof the following phrase "respond to the request of the Beaufort County Council to provide a list of projects for consideration of a County 2026 Referendum"

Mr. DeSimone seconded.

Following additional discussion, comments and questions by Town Council, **Motion to amend the Resolution carried 7-0; Motion to adopt the Resolution carried 6-1 (Ms. Becker opposed).**

Public Comment - Non Agenda Items

Mayor Perry asked for public comment.

Skip Hoagland addressed Council regarding Town Council financial decision and fiduciary responsibility.

Richard Bisi addressed Council regarding concerns over Town Council non-public meetings.

Bobby Tillison addressed Council to thank them for the volleyball courts at Coligny and reported they were well-used with little in the way of maintenance and suggested Council consider adding another volleyball court based on demand. He asked the Council about the finality of the Pickleball Courts project at Crossings Park and suggested that 19 courts were not needed.

Executive Session

Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Contractual Arrangements and Discussions for the Proposed Sale or Purchase of Property (Pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act Section 30-4-70 [a][2]) related to:

1. Jonesville Road Area
2. William Hilton Parkway - Regency Parkway Area
3. William Hilton Parkway - Chaplin Park Area
4. Squire Pope Road Area

Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Contractual Arrangements [Pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act Section 30-4-70(a)(2)] related to:

1. Circle Center Outparcel Covenants, Parking & Access Easement, and Sign Easements

Discussion of Personnel Matters (Pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act Section 30-4-70[a][1])

At 4:49 p.m. Mr. Orlando stated the need to enter Executive Session for the reasons listed on the Agenda.

Mr. Alfred moved to enter into Executive Session for the reasons cited by the Town Manager. Mr. Brown seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Action from Executive Session

Council returned to the dais at 7:34 p.m., Ms. Brison moved to end the Executive Session. Ms. Becker seconded. Motion carried 7-0.

Mayor Perry asked if there was any business as a result of Executive Session. There was none.

Adjournment

At 7:35 p.m., Ms. Brison moved to adjourn. Ms. Becker seconded. Motion carried 7-0.



Alan R. Perry, Mayor



Kimberly Gammon, Town Clerk

The full recording and a transcript of this meeting can be found on the Town's website at www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov