

Minutes

McClellanville Town Council

February 2, 2026 – 7:00 PM

McClellanville Town Council met on the above-noted date and time. Notice of the meeting was published in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act. Mayor Pro Tem Jim Scott presided. Council members Malcolm Baldwin, Chris Bates, and Bob Gannon were present. Mayor Rutledge Leland was absent from the meeting. Others present included Chief Joshua Whitworth with the Awendaw-McClellanville Consolidated Fire Department and Town Assistant Jessie Thomas. Town Administrator Michelle McClellan and Zoning Administrator Kathryn Basha joined by conference call.

Mayor Pro Tem Scott requested Council to review the minutes from the January 5 Council Meeting. Councilman Bates made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Scott and passed unanimously.

Chief Joshua Whitworth of the Awendaw–McClellanville Consolidated Fire Department presented the monthly report, noting no significant incidents, and reminded Council that the community is entering wildfire season. Chief Whitworth also notified Council that a home in Awendaw scheduled for demolition had been donated to the department to be used for training opportunities. Councilman Gannon asked about the station's firetruck stationed near the Mt. Pleasant Department of Motor Vehicles. Chief Whitworth confirmed that the department also provides services to certain areas of unincorporated Mt. Pleasant.

Mayor Pro Tem Scott read the proclamation celebrating the centennial of the Town of McClellanville. Councilman Gannon made a motion to approve which was seconded by Councilman Bates and passed unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tem Scott presented two special events applications for consideration: the CREECS Oyster Roast fundraiser scheduled for February 21 and the CREECS Shrimp Festival and Blessing of the Fleet scheduled for May 3. Councilman Gannon made a motion to approve both events which was seconded by Councilman Baldwin and passed unanimously.

Next, Council discussed fundraising efforts for the gym at the old middle school. Town Administrator Michelle McClellan provided an update, noting that an upcoming meeting is scheduled to plan a fundraising event. Council then discussed potential fundraising options for necessary repairs and a possible timeline. Council also discussed potential name options for the former McClellanville Middle School. After some discussion, Mayor Pro Tem Scott requested that a notice be included in the upcoming newsletter inviting the public to submit ideas for a new name.

Councilman Gannon made a motion to approve the Article VI Tree Conservation Ordinance as presented for the first reading. Councilman Baldwin seconded and all Council

members were unanimously in favor. Council then discussed the procedure for providing input on the ordinance and the upcoming Joint Public Hearing with Planning Commission.

Councilman Baldwin raised a question regarding Section 6.2(B), which states that the Tree Committee will provide support, noting that the Committee's official duties should be clearly defined. Kathryn Basha confirmed that these duties are defined in Article 12.5. Councilman Baldwin also proposed changing the terms "Significant Tree" and "Grand Tree" to "non-exempt trees," to avoid confusion as well as a more precise definition of multi-trunk trees. In reviewing Section 6.4, Councilman Baldwin discussed whether a septic drain field should be considered a utility and whether wetlands included ponds. Kathryn Basha confirmed that language could be added to include "drain ditches" and "ponds" for clarity.

Council reviewed Section 6.5(F) and expressed concerns regarding canopy area requirements, noting that measuring and platting canopy and root zones could be costly.

Councilman Scott raised a question regarding the criteria for removal of diseased trees, asking whether an arborist should be required if a tree is clearly dead. Kathryn Basha suggested that language could be added to Section 6.8(a) to clarify that the current requirement applies to significant trees to address this concern.

Council also discussed Section 6.6(C) regarding signage requirements. Kathryn confirmed that this provision had been added by the consultants and could be removed if Council so desired.

Councilman Bates expressed concerns regarding the removal of larger trees, stating that 8-inch trees should not be classified as significant. He suggested raising the threshold for significant trees to 16 inches and for grand trees to 32 inches, noting that tree size should be considered relative to the location and that the current guidelines are overly burdensome.

Councilman Bates also expressed concern with Section 6.4, noting that minimum tree requirements should be based on total trunk diameter rather than number of trees, due to differing definitions of what constitutes a "tree."

Next, Council addressed the guardrail at Pinckney Street and Society Street. Town Administrator Michelle McClellan reported that the state had initially denied the town's request for its replacement. Councilman Gannon recommended sending a letter to the state highlighting their responsibility for the guardrail's upkeep, citing its current condition as a potential safety hazard. Per Councilman Baldwin, the shoulder was also damaged during the recent collisions which will need to be rebuilt as well. Town Administrator Michelle McClellan agreed to follow up with the state and submit a letter if needed.

Councilman Bates made a motion to go into executive session which was seconded by Councilman Gannon and pass unanimously.

Upon returning from executive session, Mayor Pro Tem Scott stated that no action had been taken during executive session.

Councilman Gannon made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Scott and passed unanimously. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jessica Thomas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jessie Thomas
Executive Assistant