

TOWN OF AWENDAW

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Katharine Watkins | *Town Administrator*  
Donna F. Steed | *Clerk/Treasurer*



Chris Crolley | *Mayor*

*Town Council*

Paul Brown | Grace Gasper

Wendy Helms | Rodney

Porcher

Kent Prause | John

Timmons

**Agenda for the Awendaw Town Council Monthly Meeting**  
**The 2 of 12 meetings for the year 2026**  
**February 5, 2026, 7:30 P.M.**  
**Minutes**

1. **Call to Order:** *Mayor Crolley opened the meeting at 7:30 PM.*
2. **Roll Call:** *Atty Mac McQuillin, Mayor Chris Crolley, Council Persons: Wendy Helms, Grace Gasper, John Timmons, Rodney Porcher, Kent Prause, and Paul Brown.*
3. **Invocation:** *Mayor Crolley introduced Minister Greg Pinckney, who came forward to do the prayer.*
4. **Pledge of Allegiance:** *Mayor Crolley asked everyone to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.*
5. **Civility Pledge:** *Mayor Crolley asked Councilwoman Gasper to read the Civility Pledge.*
6. **Approval of the February Agenda:** *Councilwoman Helms moved to approve the February Agenda, and Councilman Porcher seconded it; all voted in favor.*
7. **Approval of the Previous Meeting Minutes**
  - a. **January 8, 2026 -Regular Meeting:** *Councilwoman Helms moved to approve the January 8, 2026 -Regular Meeting; Councilman Timmons seconded it; all voted in favor.*
  - b. **January 15, 2026 – Special Called Meeting:** *Councilwoman Helms moved to approve the January 15, 2026 – Special Called Meeting; Councilwoman Gasper seconded it; all voted in favor.*
8. **Approval of Previous Financial Statements:** *Councilman Prause asked that the minutes reflect that there was no Financial Statement report in the packet.*
  - c. **December 2025:** *Councilwoman Helms made a motion to defer the approval of the Previous Financial Statements for December 2025; Councilwoman Gasper seconded it; all voted in favor.*
9. **Charleston County**
  - a. **Charleston County Sheriff's Office:** *None*
  - b. **Awendaw McClellanville Fire Department:** *Chief Willie reported in place for Chief Gadsden. Chief Willie thanked Mayor Crolley for trying to lend them the town's trailer to haul salt for the icy roads. The mayor apologized, stating the trailer was in no condition for use, but it has since been repaired. The Chief listed the other activities:*
    - 2 Medical Calls

- 1 Structure Fire
- *Reminder, please call before you burn trash or debris. If it is windy, do not burn.*
- *On Doar Road today, they responded to an overturned vehicle. No one was injured.*

**10. Public Comments: None**

**11. Report from Town Departments, Boards & Commissions**

- a. Municipal Park Foundation Board:** *William Pepper-Alston reported that the work has begun on the parking lot, they are waiting on the quotes for the signs, and the last thing was to amend the Municipal Park Foundation Board ordinance from a nine-member board to a seven-member board.*

*Councilwoman Helms made a motion for legal counsel to amend the Municipal Park Foundation Board Ordinance to reflect seven-members; Councilwoman Gasper seconded it; all voted in favor.*

*The town attorney noted this would need to be brought back for first reading.*

- b. Board of Zoning Appeals:** *Daniel O'Hara updated the council on items b, c, and d at the same time.*

**The Board of Zoning Appeals** met on Monday, February 2, 2026, to approve the minutes from the January meeting, but also to approve the final order of the town attorney's findings for the application. The order won't be available for viewing until the property owner is notified and has received the application.

**The Planning Commission:** *In January, they met three times and updated the council on the following items:*

- *Made a recommendation for the town council to approve ordinance 2026-01 pertaining to the extension of the moratorium.*
- *Made a recommendation for the town council to defer any action on ordinance 2026-04, pertaining to amendments to the tree preservation ordinance, until the town council can hear from an expert on this matter. Staff will have a more detailed account of the planning commission's recommendations and of the ordinances' second reading*
- *The Planning Commission denied a proposal for the Proposed 13 Lot subdivision for a vested plan development known as Shell Crossing.*
- *The Planning Commission finalized two proposed ordinances for the town's code of ordinances. A proposed ordinance to adopt a vested rights policy and a proposed ordinance to amend the plan development regulations. Once the staff has prepared these ordinances in a final draft, they will be presented to the town council for first reading.*
- *This month, in February, the planning commission will be meeting twice. The regular scheduled meeting for the 16<sup>th</sup> will be shifted to the 17<sup>th</sup> on the observation residence day, and they have a special call meeting on the 23rd. Both meetings will take place at the regular times at 6:00 PM.*

- *The planning commission will be reviewing ordinances 2026-05, 06, and 07 at the 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.*

**The Planning Department updates:**

- *They issued six zoning permits during the month of January.*
- *The planning department is looking to co-host a community seminar with the Clemson Extension on septic systems to do a community education session on maintenance and inspections. They are looking to do something in the first week of March. Staff is prepared to send out a community-wide detail regarding that session next week.*
- *The planning department is available Monday through Thursday, 8 to 5, if anyone has any questions.*

*Councilman Prause inquired about the final order from the Board of Zoning Appeals and when it will be available to the public. The town attorney clarified that once the final order has been signed and mailed to the applicant, it is available for public viewing.*

*Mayor Crolley thanked the current Planning Commission members: Ms. Cousino, Mr. Hardee, Mr. Reigart, Mr. Gardner, and Mr. Osguthorpe, for their service to the town. Mayor Crolley added they're very knowledgeable, have a wide skill set, and are doing an excellent job.*

**c. Planning Commission:** See b.

**d. Housing:** Donna Steed noted Charleston County will be monitoring the housing department on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Councilman Prause said he would like to attend.

**e. Planning:** See b.

**f. Water:** Ron Bycroft, the town's Water Consultant, updated the council on the status of the emergency procurement for the replacement of a fire hydrant and the repair of a fire hydrant. Mr. Bycroft noted some recommendations for the council to consider.

*Mr. Bycroft further recommended that the town council consider looping the water system in more places and noted some examples of this currently occurring.*

*Councilman Prause asked, "Why don't we require people to loop it like Charleston Water Service and Mount Pleasant Waterworks"? Councilman Prause asked would it be your professional recommendation that the town council adopt an ordinance to require developers, homeowners, whoever ties into the system to loop it whenever possible and to provide other techniques that can be used that will help if you don't loop it, because nobody's going to do it if council don't make them do it because it costs money. But every other water service provider, you name them, they all require it. The town has never required it, and its long past time that we do. He asked Ron if he could write something up for them or make some recommendations.*

- *Mr. Bycroft said yes, he could. Councilman Prause said that'd be great. Thank you.*

*Mayor Crolley asked if there are impact fees for developers. Mr. Bycroft said it's his understanding that two or three years ago, it was brought to the Town Council and tabled, and nothing ever happened. So, if you have impact fee money somewhere down the line, you're going to have to either increase the size of the wells that you have, or you're going to have to find another place to put in that takes money, and that's what Ron called a buy-in.*

## **12. Council Report**

### **a. Councilwoman Helms – Hometown Legislative Action Day**

*Councilwoman Helms thanked everyone who attended the HLAD. She said that everyone would be very proud of them. They jump right into the meeting, shaking hands with the legislators and making connections and relationships. She got at least an email from the director of one of the federal representatives; it was a lot to digest.*

*What she was most interested in was the South Carolina Department of Transportation, and she was thrilled to see they were on board. The secretary came and spoke, and it was eye-opening.*

- *She did not know that South Carolina is fourth in the nation for state-maintained roads. Miles of roads, over 40,000 miles of roads, are maintained by the state. Some states have more miles of roads, but they are maintained at a lower government level, such as county or town.*
- *But it's one of the top five. It's South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia. And she said she thought Texas was the only one that was naturally, because everything's bigger in Texas.*
- *They have a \$2.7 billion budget with a \$1 million shortfall. So, you might hear in the news some things; they're talking about modernizing the DOT, bringing some of their internal systems/their processes more up to date.*
- *We have a population of over 5 million people and by the reports she generated 30 more people a day are so not just the five mill over 5 million people that live here but you think about the third there's a interstate 85 and upstate where she's from interstate 95 as long as Florida all the way up through DC and past that all these people traveling through South Carolina and just the impact that it has on our roadways. And so, now that we've got that connection, hopefully, we can start building a relationship with our regional director. And so that's where we really need to focus our request.*
- *You might want to pay attention if you're reading the news, as she said, these are state-maintained roads, there is a movement to the state house where they are talking about transferring roads to the local level. Currently, it will be voluntary. We'll see how that works out in the future. They're working on a county list of non-essential roads. They're looking to offer incentives to the local government to take over that maintenance.*
- *They did talk to them about the town's concerns with the ditches, and how it might not seem like a big deal, but it is when we have these torrential thunderstorms or even tropical storms and how it really affects the safety of the citizens.*
- *And so, she didn't know if anyone else was interested in that, but she was really interested to know more about that. There were a lot of other good takeaways. She took a lot of notes.*

*That was the big one she also knows that people have a lot of concerns about all the development, the trucks, the intersection of 17 to See Wee, and 17 to Doar.*

*So just know they're trying, we're going to have to be a much squeakier wheel to get people's attention. But the mayor has made a connection, and hopefully, he can start building a good relationship with a regional person.*

### **Mayor Crolley's – Hometown Legislative Action Day**

*"The Hometown Legislative Action Day is basically an education for elected municipal officials where we're asked to go to Columbia and spend two full classroom days and become educated do better collectively. I don't know if y'all understood that it was the premise we learned so much about DOT from, which was mindboggling. I was like, did you say million or billion? Like they've got three different contractors. One working on one end of I-26, one working at the other end of I-26, and somebody working in the middle. Billions of dollars on bridges and roads, and see what happens to Awendaw, I don't know, you know, because there aren't that many up here or something like that. And we're making connections and developing relationships for changing that. We're going to have relationships with the county, the state, and various funding sources to make sure we're taking care of our roads and ditches for drainage and public safety. It was a great event, and we sent a very talented delegation to our capital city to participate in the Hometown Legislation Day. Mr. Timmons was there, we rode together, Ms. Gasper was there, Ms. Helms was there, and we were all very proud. Our own Councilwoman Wendy Helms graduated. You've got to see her walk and get her a piece of paper that we gave a big whoop. It was eye-opening, and continues to be, with humility and respect for what we've been elected to do; we're working hard and getting better. The keynote speaker came all the way from Utah, and her whole discussion was about dignity and how we treat each other with dignity and respect. That's the way the whole thing is conducted. The theme was how citizens interact, the way the government and all that sort of thing, and it was so good. So, it was very well put on by the Municipal Association of South Carolina. It was just great. I can't wait to go again next year, and then we'll get our diplomas."*

## **13. Mayor's Report**

### **a. Unfinished Business**

#### **i. HVAC Update:**

- *There are tens of thousands of dollars' worth of equipment in the attic,*
  - *The Ducts have been run.*
  - *Vents and returns have been cut; we have our great people at Jack Services out of Summerville who found us a better product that they had originally quoted, made in South Carolina, about \$5,000. People don't know the bid. So that installation is happening.*
  - *Berkeley Electric Co-op, BEC, love y'all. They like BEC will do for all of them. And they put us way ahead of the boarding schedule. They board them 4 in main to handle the 400-block breaker. It was in is done. I don't know if you saw the power pole that's on the lawn out there. Like nobody gets that kind of attention from BEC. If you look at the town of Awendaw, BEC was here from the beginning. They were instrumental, and, like, they paid the lawyer to incorporate the town; we've got a great relationship there. Our last is a citizen of, and the president is a citizen of all. Apparently, he likes this town.*
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- *The last bit to get going and get done has to do with our electrical contractor, and we asked them politely to sharpen their pencil, and they came off their bid for*

\$4,700. They're a Savic and they are waiting on an electrical permit and I don't know what it means if the mayor calls the permit office and says hey like could you please but that's what we're waiting on is that electrical that's the slow moving part of our otherwise quickly moving situation path and this significant and necessary upgrade to our town hall to our community building was after we fixed the roof after the count previous council fixed the roof after we made it so work all for I was a lot of work that got done this last session to get all of that ready and the HDC once we need to talk about replacing the windows and putting an RFP out for that and creating some insulation I can see daylight through the socket or soffit when I go up in the attic and see the contract got to protect our investment. Got to protect our equipment. Great work by the town council on getting that done.

**ii. Reschedule the Town Administrator Evaluation (Action Item)**

*After much discussion, on finding a day and time that worked for everybody, since, according to the Town Administrator's contract, she deserved a one-year administrative review of her performance, and it's overdue. A time frame was discussed to get this done quickly, looking at dates on February 17th, 18th, and 19th.*

***Councilwoman Helms made a motion to hold the Town Administrator's Evaluation on February 18, 2026, at 4:00 PM; Councilman Brown seconded it; all voted in favor.***

**b. New Business**

**i. Schedule Town Council Retreat and Budget Retreat (Action Item)**

*Councilwoman Helms made a motion to hold the Town Council Retreat on February 26, 2026, from 9:00 AM-2:00 PM; Councilman Prause seconded it; all voted in favor.*

*Councilwoman Helms made a motion to hold the Town Council Budget Retreat on March 30, 2026, from 9:00 AM-2:00 PM; Councilwoman Gasper seconded it; all voted in favor.*

**ii. Schedule Public Hearing and Second Reading on the following Ordinances:**

- 1. Ordinance 2026-01: An ordinance to amend Chapter 153, Zoning Code, Section 153.010 of the Code of the Town of Awendaw, South Carolina, imposing a temporary moratorium on the issuance of all residential and commercial zone change proposals (rezonings) and subdivisions of residentially zoned land (subdivision plat approvals) comprising more than five parcels of land for the purpose of providing town council to implement any necessary changes to the Zoning Ordinance, Land Use Regulations, and/or Comprehensive Plan now under review.**

*Ordinance 2026-01 is important and will be handled on the same day*

*as the Council Retreat Meeting on February 26, 2026.*

- 2. Ordinance 2026-04: An ordinance to amend Chapter 153, Zoning Code, Tree Preservation Requirements Division, Subsection 153.195 and 153.196, to restructure the review, mitigation, and site restoration process for the removal of protected trees.**

*The tree preservation planning commission requested a deferral. So, the council could seek expert opinion, come back to the planning commission, discuss other matters, and then make an additional recommendation that would be at the council's discretion.*

- 3. Ordinance 2026-05: An ordinance of the Town of Awendaw, South Carolina, to amend Title XV: Land Usage, Chapter 153: Zoning Code, Subdivision Regulations Division, Section 153.305 Water and Sewage Disposal of the Code of the Town of Awendaw.**
- 4. Ordinance 2026-06: An Ordinance of the Town of Awendaw, South Carolina, to Amend Title XV: Land Usage, Chapter 153: Zoning Code, General Provisions of the Code of the Town of Awendaw, South Carolina, by Amending Section 153.009 Definitions, adopting a new Section 153.065 Lighting Regulations, along with new Sections 153.066 through 153.070 thereto, providing for New Lighting Regulations.**
- 5. Ordinance 2026-07: An Ordinance of the Town of Awendaw, South Carolina, to Amend Title XV: Land Usage, Chapter 153: Zoning Code, Wetlands and Waterways Setbacks Division of the Code of the Town of Awendaw, South Carolina, by renaming the Division thereof to Wetlands Protection and repealing the Existing Section 153.225 thereto and adding a New Section 153.225, along with New Sections 153.226 through 153.238 thereto, Providing for the Protection of Tidal and Freshwater Wetlands, and all Effected Sections for Clarity; Section 153.009 Definitions to Include Proposed Definitions, Section 153.025 through 153.032 “Description of Zoning Districts” to reference the Wetlands Standards.**

*Mayor Crolley noted that the following ordinances (2026-05, 2026-06, 2026-07) are scheduled for public hearings and second readings. The Town Attorney and the Planning Manager clarified the required minimum advertising deadlines for the public hearings and the status of the Planning Commission's recommendations. The council discussed the timing of each ordinance and when to hold the public hearing.*

#### **14. Ordinances**

##### **a. Second Reading**

- i. Ordinance 2026-02: An ordinance to amend Chapter 30, General Provisions,**

**Subsection 30.049 (b)(2), Citizen Presentations/Comments; to amend the provisions for Public Comment.**

*Councilwoman Helms made a motion to accept the Approval of the Second Reading of Ordinance 2026-02: An ordinance to amend Chapter 30, General Provisions, Subsection 30.049 (b)(2), Citizen Presentations/Comments; to amend the provisions for Public Comment, and it was seconded by Councilman Brown. Discussion by Councilman Prause, stating that after he read it, he was ok with it. All voted in favor.*

- ii. **Ordinance 2026-03: An ordinance to amend Chapter 32, Boards and Commissions, and Chapter 154, Town Municipal Park, Subsection 154.010, Municipal Park Board; to include provisions for board, commission, or committee members to be removed by the town council.**

*Councilwoman Helms made a motion to accept the Approval of the Second Reading of Ordinance 2026-03: An ordinance to amend Chapter 32, Boards and Commissions, and Chapter 154, Town Municipal Park, Subsection 154.010, Municipal Park Board; to include provisions for board, commission, or committee members to be removed by the town council. Discussion by Councilman Prause it was agreed to change the number of members from nine to seven. Councilman Prause amended the motion on the floor, and Councilwoman Helms seconded it. All voted in favor.*

**b. First Reading**

- i. **Ordinance 2026-08: Annexation ordinance using the 100 percent petition method of Tax Map Number 629-00-00-059 (Broomstraw Hill Road).**

*Councilman Prause moved to defer Ordinance 2026-08: Annexation ordinance using the 100 percent petition method of Tax Map Number 629-00-00-059 (Broomstraw Hill Road), and Councilwoman Helms seconded it. All voted in favor.*

**15. Miscellaneous Items**

- a. **Appointment to fill the vacancy on the Board of Zoning Appeals**

*Councilman Prause made a motion to appoint Steve Wood and to confirm the appointment expiration for all members as follows: Allen Rioux's term to expire July 2026, Willette Alston Hockaday's term to expire July 2026, Gary Freeman's term to expire July 2027, John Brubaker's term to expire July 2027, and Steve Wood's term to expire July 2026; Councilwoman Helms seconded the motion.*

*Councilman Porcher asked the Town Attorney what the process was for considering another member. The Town Attorney clarified the process.*

*The council discussed the importance of clarity for the record of these terms and how to streamline the advertisement for all boards moving forward.*

*Using the original motion, the council voted as follows:*

*Ayes: Brown, Gasper, Helms, Prause, Timmons, Mayor Crolley*

*Nays: Porcher*

*The motion passed.*

**b. Consideration and discussion of volunteer corps for the Town of Awendaw**

*Mayor Crolley said there's a lot of garbage in the ditches, and he is looking for volunteers on Saturday, 2 pm – 4 pm.*

**c. Consideration and discussion of creating a housing department and restructuring of the housing program, in addition to CDBG funds received.**

*The town council discussed the importance of establishing a housing department and how to formalize it within the town. The council noted this will be discussed further at the upcoming town council retreat.*

**16. Adjournment:** *Councilman Porcher made a motion for adjournment, and Councilwoman Helms seconded it. The Meeting was adjourned at 9:22 P.M.*