MINUTES
UNION COUNTY COUNCIL
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 8, 2025, AT 5:30 P.M
103 W MAIN STREET UNION, SC

Present: Chairman Phillip Russell, II, Councilman Danny Bright, Councilman John Glenn, Vice chair David Sinclair, Councilwoman Annie Smith, Councilwoman Carolyn Rutherford, Councilman John Flood, County Attorney Jennifer Williams and Clerk to Council Kindra Horne.

Notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda giving the date, time, and place of the meeting was posted on the bulletin board in the hall in the Union County Government Building, a copy was mailed or emailed to the members of the Union County Council, the County Attorney, Daniel Prince at WBCU Radio Station, Anna Brown at the County News, as well as to elected officials and heads of various county departments and offices. A notice of the meeting and a copy of the agenda were also posted on the County's website and social media accounts.

Chairman Russell opened the meeting at 5:30 PM. Councilman Danny Bright gave the invocation and Vice chair David Sinclair led the Pledge of Allegiance. The Clerk performed the roll call with the following results:

District 1 Danny Bright was present.
District 2 John Glenn was present.
District 3 David Sinclair was present.
District 4 Annie Amith was present.
District 5 Carolyn Rutherford was present.
District 6 John Flood was present.

The next item on the agenda was to request approval of the minutes from the June 17th, 2025 Council meeting. Councilperson Smith made a motion to accept the minutes as written, Councilperson Rutherford seconded. Chairman Russell called for a vote which carried unanimously.

Chairman Russell presented service awards to the following County employees:
Cindy Fore, Veterans Affairs – 40 years
William Lawson, Clerk of Courts Office – 15 years
Blane Lancaster, County Fleet Maintenance Shop – 10 years
Tommy Littlejohn, Parks & Recreation – 25 years
Lee Brannon, Emergency Management Division – 10 years
Michael Brewington, EMS – 10 years
Patrick Craig, EMS – 10 years
Kevin Faile, EMS – 10 years
Jason Garrett, EMS – 10 years
Charles Gill, EMS – 10 years
Veronica Grant, EMS – 10 years

Andrew Lawon, EMS – 10 years
Brian Martin, EMS – 10 years
Robert Martin, EMS – 10 years
Chris Patterson, EMS – 10 years
Gerald Privette, EMS – 10 years
James Thompson, EMS – 10 years
Mark Williams, EMS – 10 years
Mark Wade, EMS – 10 years

Chairman Russell moved on to Board appointments:

Tax Assessment Board of Appeals – 4 vacancies in Council Districts 2,3,5, & 6. There were no applications and no appointments were made.

Building Code Board of Appeals – 1 vacancy for an alternate position (at large). There were no applications and no appointments were made.

Bonham FD – 2 vacancies (at large). Councilperson Smith made a recommendation to appoint Jeremy Gallman, Councilman Bright seconded. Chairman Russell announced that Mr. Gallman was not a relative of anyone already serving on the board or the Fire Chief. The vote was unanimous. Councilperson Smith made a recommendation to appoint Charles Monroe, Councilman Flood seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Buffalo FD – 1 vacancy (at large). Councilman Flood made a recommendation to appoint Jemel Lawter, Vice chair Sinclair seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Kelly Kelton FD – 2 vacancies (at large). Councilman Bright made a recommendation to appoint Nancy Garner, Councilman Flood seconded. Chairman Russell stated that Nancy was very distantly related to Fire Chief Kevin Garner. The vote was unanimous.

"Will be installing" correction made 08/27/2026, after review of recording. KWH 8/27/26

Chairman Russell called on Elise Ashby to give updates on the Robinhood Group and the Union Farmer's Market. Ms. Ashby stated that she was the Executive Director of the Robinhood Group which manages the Farmer's Market. They install community gardens in the area, and* have installed* a commercial kitchen to prepare and sell produce items. The group also distributes senior vouchers to ensure that the seniors in the County have access to fresh produce. Their number of vouchers distributed has increased from 400 to 1200 in the last few years. Ms. Ashby provided Council with statistics related to elderly and low-income citizens, as well as the citizens who are diabetic and have received cancer diagnoses. Ms. Ashby stated that the Robinhood Group has helped to decrease the number of citizens who do not have access to fresh and affordable produce. By the end of next year, the group will have installed a community garden in each of the municipalities in the County. The group has distributed 1800 bags of fresh produce to pre-diabetic and diabetic citizens in the County since 2023. Ms. Ashby stated that this has lowered the rate of citizens being diagnosed in the County. They have received numerous grants that have allowed them to deliver produce to other groups of people in the County. The group also trains people and students in the Food Management division. Ms. Ashby stated that they would like to be a part of the budget on an annual basis. They have to hire personnel to run the

markets, manage the gardens, manage the kitchen, etc. She stated that they have requested a number. Chairman Russell stated that the request will be brought to the Finance Committee. However, the budget has been balanced for FY 26-26 so it would be difficult to approve funding at this time. Chairman Russell thanked Ms. Ashby for her hard work in Union County.

Chairman Russell moved on to the next item on the agenda which was for Council to consider approving $500,000 from Capital Funds for overage for the Joint City/County Maintenance Shop. Chairman Russell stated that it was estimated by engineers to cost around $4 million and the lowest bid came in at $4.435 million. The City and County will combine efforts to complete projects related to the construction of the shop such as electrical and cosmetic. Chairman Russell stated that the $500,000 would be used to cover any overage in construction costs and provide a buffer for any unforeseen expenses. The goal is to be in the facility by this time next year. Vice chair Sinclair made a motion to approve $500,000 in Capital to be used as overage for the joint City/County shop, Councilman Flood seconded. Councilperson Rutherford asked who the lowest bidder was. Chairman Russell responded that it was Sossoman Construction, who did the Jail Addition and substation in Carlisle. The City of Union put out the RFP and awarded the project. Chairman Russell called for a vote, which carried unanimously.

Chairman Russell moved on to accept any grants needing approval. The first grant was a Solid Waste Management Grant from SCDES for the Public Works Department in the amount of $13,404.13. There is no County match. Council person Smith made a motion to accept the grant, Councilman Glenn seconded. Chairman Russell called for a vote, which was unanimous. The next grant was a Used Oil Recycling grant from SCDES for the Public Works Department in the amount of $9,730. There is no County match. Councilman Flood made a motion to accept the grant, Council person Rutherford seconded. Chairman Russell called for a vote and it carried unanimously. The third grant was a Body Armer Assistance Grant from the Department of Public Safety for the Sheriff's Office in the amount of $17,631. The grant covers the cost to purchase ballistic vests. Councilman Bright made a motion to accept the grant, Council person Smith seconded. Chairman Russell requested the vote which carried unanimously. The last grant was a Timken Foundation Grant for the Sheriff's Office in the amount of $30,000. Funds from the grant will be used to purchase a UTV. Council person Rutherford made a motion to accept the grant, Council person Smith seconded. Councilman Flood asked if the grant will cover the entire cost of the UTV and any accessories and equipment needed? The Sheriff stated that it would. Chairman Russell called for a vote which carried unanimously.

Vice chair Sinclair made a motion to enter into Executive Session to receive information on an Economic Development and contractual matter, Council person Smith seconded. There was no discussion, all voted in favor of the motion. Council entered into Executive Session at 6:02 PM.

Council came out of Executive Session at 6:27 PM/ Councilperson Rutherford made a motion to end the session and Councilman Flood seconded, the vote to exit executive session was unanimous.

Chairman Russell announced that the executive session was closed with no action taken during the executive session.

Chairman Russell called for any Committee reports. Vice chair Sinclair, Chairman of the Committee on Public Works, Roads, Bridges and County Properties recommended that the idea of changing SCC milage and transferring property to SCC be sent to finance committee.

Chairman Russell called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Council person Rutherford made a motion to adjourn, Council person Smith seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 6:37 PM.

Phillip G. Russell, II, Council Chair

Kindra W. Horne, Clerk to Council

UNION
COUNTY SC

July 8, 2025

June 2025 Supervisor's Report

Staff are working on their area's Annual Report. These should be ready by our August Council meeting

July 10, 2025 SC Department of Commerce will recognize Project Spring in Columbia Project Springs is; Fine Organics America LLC

Projects:

Jail Addition Project

- Pending
  - Fire Marshal Approval
  - SCDC Approval
  - Building is ready to occupy

Sell / Donation of Property

- FAA has denied our request to sell Loverslane Property
- We are waiting on our attorney for the ordinances to sell the following:
  - 501 Flat Drive
  - Have 2 more properties found in Buffalo
  - Chrysler Building – when available
  - 2 Hospital Buildings – further in this report

Boards and Commissions

- Met with DIADOS regarding future of Drug and Alcohol. DIADOS and State Department of Mental Health will be in Union on Thursday, July 17th for a meeting
- Burr Forman Attorney's have provided a draft 501C3 creation for the fair grounds
  - Burr Forman is working on policies and bylaws presently

Spartanburg / Union County line:

- Survey has been completed, and signed off by two other survey teams
- All information has been provided to the Governor's Office
- Burr Foreman Attorney working with State Government to process this project as prompt as possible at this time

Buffalo Mill Property update:

- Property Transfer will be in our August Council Meeting
- Commerce has approved the project

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Buffalo Mill Pond improvements

- Bids were opened last week, and the most responsive bidder was $400,000.00 over the allocation of ARC and County funds.
- Our County CTC Committee will fund the walking trails to the park.
- ARC has agreed to fund the residual amount ($263,000.00 =/-) to the grant
- Union County at this time will not have any other expenses other than the $180,000.00 agreed match at the initial grant awarding.

Gateway Signs

- Vendor advised that by Jully 15, 2025 all gateway signs will be completed as contracted, or Union County will move to another contractor to complete.

Disc Golf Course

- Course will be ready for opening very soon.
- Installation of catches and other small details are planned
- Park has received a great cleaning by a local contractor.

Wallace Thompson Hospital Property

- Still Pending being released from Bankruptcy
- Having Phase I of the large hospital building and yellow office house as due diligence on our part, as the intent is to sell these structures.

Maintenance Shop Proposal

- The lowest Bidder at the bid opening was Sossamon Construction at $4,435,824.00

New Animal Shelter

- Master plan of Chain Gang project has been completed.
- Engineers are now providing a grading plan for final cost analysis.
- Have a meeting scheduled with our Bond Attorney and financial consultant to determine options of funding to present to Council

Timken Sports Complex – Multi-use Sports facility

- Attorneys are working toward the closing and Union County's purchase of the property.
- Have a meeting scheduled with our Bond Attorney and financial consultant to determine options of funding to present to Council
- Engineer and Architects are working on a master plan design of the project for public and council consideration.

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Historic County Court House

- Thursday, July 10, an Architect and a Historical Engineer will meet with County Staff to discuss an evaluation of the court house.
- There has been no major upgrades to this court house in many years.
- Staff want to understand the buildings conditions, and determine needed maintenance, repairs, and upgrades that will allow this building to continue serving Union County for years to come.

Historic County Jail Building

- Carlisle and Associates are preparing a detailed plan of construction documents for the upgrading of this old historic jail.
- Mrs. Hunter and Mr. Tyler have met with the architect / engineers for the proposed design

Recycling Centers

- It has been staff's goals to provide improvements and upgrades to each of the County's Recycling Center locations.
- Clearing of land at John Hart will begin soon.

Fire Service Needs Assessment study

- The evaluation process is going slowly, as less than 30% of the fire service has completed an information package and returned it to the consultants.
- EMS, 911, and other supporting agencies have completed their packages and are assisting in the data collection process.

Additional Information

- Assisting as pass-through for Meansville Riley Road water system upgrades
- Assisting as pass-through for Santuc-Hebron Water system upgrades
- Working with the City of Union on Sewer to Spartanburg Co. Line

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