

CITY OF CONWAY
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CONWAY CITY HALL
229 MAIN STREET, CONWAY
MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2025 - 4:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Barbara Jo Blain, Mayor Pro Tem William Goldfinch, Amanda Butler, Julie Hardwick, Beth Helms, Justin Jordan, Larry White.

STAFF: Adam Emrick, City Administrator; Mary Catherine Hyman, Deputy City Administrator; John Rogers, Deputy City Administrator; June Wood, Public Information Officer; Jeff Leveille, Technology Services Director; Jessica Hucks, Planning and Development Director; Rock Rabon, Fleet Maintenance Director; Reggie Jenerette, Solid Waste Director; Ashley Smith, Parks and Recreation Director; Brandon Harrelson, Public Works Director; Dale Long, Police Chief; Kayla Fleming, Municipal Judge; Lynn Smith, Human Resources Director; Le Hendrick, Fire Chief; David Crotts, Procurement and Inventory Division Chief; Robert Cooper, Construction Services Director; Kym Wilkerson, Planning and Development Deputy Director; Katie Dennis, Planner; Johnny Lewis, Public Utilities Project Manager; and Alicia Shelley, City Clerk.

OTHERS: There were approximately 20 others in attendance.

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Blain called the meeting to order. There was a moment of silence in honor of Travis Overton. Eric Roberts of the Rock Church gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The requirements for posting notice of this meeting under South Carolina's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) were met.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Approval of a Resolution honoring Anna Claire Roof of Conway High School as the Class AAAA-AAAAA Girls Individual Tennis State Champion**
- B. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding with Myrtle Beach Police Department**
- C. Approval of a Special Event – Gullah Geechee Community Day – February 22, 2025**
- D. Approval of a Special Event – Waccamaw Sportsmen's Expo – March 28-29, 2025**
- E. Approval of December 2, 2024 Council Meeting Minutes**

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA: **Motion:** White made a motion, seconded by Hardwick to approve the January 6, 2025 consent agenda. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

ELECTION OF MAYOR PRO TEM FOR 2025: **Motion:** White made a motion, seconded by Jordan to elect Goldfinch as Mayor Pro Tem for 2025 by acclamation. There was no objection, and the motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC INPUT:

- Edna Dewitt informed Council that she had not heard from anyone regarding her city water issue that she spoke about at a previous meeting.
- Alphonso McCray – requested that the crosswalk be reinstalled on Fourth Avenue to get to South Conway Elementary School in front of his house at 3004 Fourth Avenue.

There was no further public input. **Motion:** Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Butler, to close public input. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

- A. Presentation of a Resolution honoring Anna Claire Roof of Conway High School as the Class AAAA-AAAA Girls Individual Tennis State Champion** – Blain presented Anna Claire Roof with a Resolution honoring her achievements and as the Class AAAA-AAAA Girls Individual Tennis State Champion.
- B. Presentation of Longevity Awards – December 2024 – 5 Years: Carla Richardson, Police; 5 Years: Andrew Settlemire, Police; 5 Years: Bryan Carney, Hospitality and Beautification; 10 Years: Neoshia “Nikki” Goldman, Court; 10 Years: Jackie Hinson, Construction Services; 10 Years: Susan Becton, Recreation** – Emrick and Butler presented the longevity awards.
- C. Discussion of a request to annex approximately 7.62+/- (total) acres of property located at (and adjacent to) 1705 Hwy 501 (PINs 383-01-02-0030 and 383-01-03-0002), and rezone from the Horry County Highway Commercial (HC) and High Bulk Retail (RE4) districts to the City of Conway Highway Commercial (HC) and Light Industrial (LI) districts.** Hucks stated that staff had been in discussions with the applicant regarding annexation of these properties since 2022. The request included 2 parcels, both of which are currently being used for one business. The applicant relocated their manufactured home sales business from another site in the county’s jurisdiction to these properties. In April 2023, staff spoke with the applicant about annexation of the larger tract fronting East Cox Ferry Road, and the applicant inquired about storage of the manufactured homes. Staff informed the applicant that it was not a permitted use, but manufactured home sales would be permitted in either the Light or Heavy Industrial zoning district, provided that the site complied with the requirements for commercial development and that a sales office would also be required on the same property where the manufactured homes were displayed. Other uses discussed with the applicant included a possible amazon fulfillment center and a mini-storage facility. Around that same time, the applicant received zoning approval to obtain a business license for the property fronting Highway 501, which is zoned Horry County Highway Commercial. The use of the zoning approval issued by the county at that time was for office use only, and the condition of approval was that no outdoor display was allowed; the smaller piece of property and not the property where the storage of the manufactured homes is occurring. The applicant began moving manufactured homes from the previous location of the business to the larger property to store, and according to the county at the time, they gave him some leeway to do so for a limited amount of time

for a limited number of units. The applicant also applied to rezone the property through the county from the Commercial Forest Agriculture district to the RE4 – High Bulk Retail district, which permits outdoor storage, although typically as an accessory to a permitted use.

Hucks said that city staff emailed the County's Planning Director at the time to inform the county of the restrictive covenants in place for the property being rezoned to RE4 and that the applicant had been aware of the requirement to annex before any development can occur on the property. The rezoning was granted, and the property is now zoned RE4, High Bulk Retail. Sometime thereafter, a large metal building that was not properly permitted was erected on the site, which is what prompted discussions between the city and the county as to how these violations could be addressed including how to remedy the situation. The biggest issue for the applicant, in addition to the current use of the property, is that for water to be provided to the site so that they could become compliant with the county, they would need water service from the city, which triggers the requirement to annex. For the city, the issue becomes that if annexed, the city would inherit a use and structures on property that were never permitted.

Hucks stated that staff began working with the applicant's attorney on how best to rectify the issues on the property. The applicant cannot come into compliance with city requirements unless and until the property is within the city's jurisdiction. Staff, along with the City Administrator, have agreed that should the property be annexed, that staff would delay any additional enforcement to give the applicant an opportunity to apply for any needed variances from the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Hucks said that Planning Commission is set to hold the public hearing on the request at their meeting on January 9 and staff will forward their recommendation to Council with first reading of the request.

- D. Discussion of a request to rezone approximately 5.63+/- acres of property located on Shoffner Road (PIN 325-13-02-0002) from the Light Industrial (LI) district to the Heavy Industrial (HI) district.** Hucks stated that the applicants submitted this rezoning application last month for the property, which is currently zoned LI. The applicants are seeking to combine the property with the abutting property they also own, and which contains the primary structure associated with the business; however, that parcel is zoned HI. Currently the property appears to be used for material or vehicle storage, so if combined with the other parcel, it would bring the property more in compliance than it currently is. However, the properties cannot currently be combined because they are not zoned the same. Surrounding zoning includes City of Conway Heavy Industrial, Horry County Heavy Industrial, City of Conway Highway Commercial, and City of Conway Professional district. Uses include a telecommunications tower, a dentist's office, and the Food Lion shopping center.

Hucks said that Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on this request at their January 9 meeting, and staff will forward their recommendation with first reading of the request.

Council and staff discussed the adjoining parcels and their zoning districts, and how this rezoning would affect the former Country Club Golf Course property once it starts to develop.

FIRST READING AND PUBLIC HEARING:

A. First Reading and Public Hearing of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (A), granting a non-exclusive franchise agreement to Project Smashburger mobile food truck to operate at the parking lot adjacent to Fourth Ave and Kingston Street (near Palmetto Taps).

Wilkerson stated that Project Smashburger has a valid City of Conway business license and two approved private property mobile food vending permits. One permit is for Rob's Auto Body, located at 909 Fourth Avenue and the other is for NAPA Auto Parts, located at 901 Church Street. Project Smashburger has requested a Franchise Agreement to operate the mobile food truck in the parking lot adjacent to Fourth Avenue and Kingston Street, near Palmetto Taps (PIN 367-01-01-0032). The requested hours of operation are 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday and Noon to 9:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. The site plan shows the food truck to be located next to the building, but the applicant has now requested that the food truck be placed in three parking spaces over by the ERF closer to Kingston Street.

Council had concerns with taking up business parking spaces for 5 years. There was some discussion regarding the possibility of working with DOT for a spot on Fourth Avenue, using the private property across Fourth Avenue, and other locations such as the old tennis center.

William Hensley, owner of Project Smashburger further explained this request and stated that he would be willing to shorten the lease.

Motion: Blain made a motion, seconded by White to close the public hearing. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

Motion: White made a motion, seconded by Blain to approve first reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (A) of a Franchise Agreement for a trial period of 6 months and then Council would revisit the request. **Vote:** Butler, White, Blain, Goldfinch, Jordan, Hardwick voted yes. Helms voted no. Motion to approve carried with a 6-1 vote.

B. First Reading and Public Hearing of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (B), granting a non-exclusive franchise agreement to Randall's Culinary Creations mobile food truck to operate at the property located at 7 Elm Street.

Wilkerson stated that Randall's Culinary Creations has a valid City of Conway business license and an approved private property mobile food vending permit for Coastal Carolina University. The applicant has requested a Franchise Agreement to operate the mobile food truck at the parking lot located at 7 Elm Street (PIN 367-08-01-0001). The requested hours of operation are 12:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. or 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Council had concerns with special events in this area, the vendor being in an isolated area, and the length of the agreement.

Wilkerson said that the franchise agreement does not allow the vendor to operate at any city approved festival or special event without prior permission from the event organizer.

There was no public input.

Motion: Blain made a motion, seconded by Goldfinch to close the public hearing. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Hardwick to approve first reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (B) for a 1-year Franchise Agreement and then Council would revisit the request. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

FIRST READING:

- A. First Reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (C), to annex approximately 0.19 acres of property located at 625 Lesia Lane (PIN 382-12-01-0002), and rezone from the Horry County Residential, no mobile homes allowed, (SF6) district to the City of Conway Low/Medium -Density Residential (R-1) district.** Dennis said that this is first reading for the application as a requirement to connect to city services. The property was transferred into the owner's name in November of 2010 and has a Restrictive Covenant on file. The property is located within the Pine Valley Estates subdivision. There is an existing manufactured home with brick underpinning on the property. Council has annexed 6 other properties within the Pine Valley Estates Subdivision with the most recent being last year and located across the street. The future land use map does identify the property as R-2, Medium-Density Residential and staff recommends approving the request to rezone the property to R-1.

Motion: Blain made a motion, seconded by White to approve first reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (C). **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- B. First Reading of Ordinance #2025-01-21 (D) to amend Title 1, Chapter 5, Article G of the Code of Ordinances, an incentive program which provides economic incentives for the redevelopment of existing vacant commercial buildings 25,000 sq. ft. or greater in the City of Conway.** Dennis said that this incentive currently offers reimbursements of the following: (a) Up to half of the water and sewer capital recovery fees; (b) Building permit fees; (c) Business License fees, Hospitality fees, and property taxes collected by the city for as many as 5 years. Dennis stated that staff is proposing to increase the number of years a developer is allowed to request property tax reimbursements from 5 years to 10 years. Staff feels this increase will provide a greater incentive to developers to modify, reestablish, update, or renovate existing facilities rather than building new ones. The ordinance was originally implemented in 2008 and was updated in 2023 to provide a clear reimbursement process that was more current with the standards used today. The number of years each project is awarded is on a case-by-case basis and is ultimately up to council.

Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Helms to approve first reading of Ordinance #2025-01-21 (D). **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- C. First Reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (E), to annex approximately 16.19+/- acres of property located at 370 Allied Drive (PIN 383-00-00-0353), and rezone from the Horry County Planned Unit Development (PUD) district to the City of Conway Light Industrial (LI) district.** Hucks stated that this property is located within the Atlantic Center Industrial Park, which contains property mostly zoned Horry County Planned Unit Development, except for a handful of properties that are within the city limits. The Atlantic Center Industrial Park is located between the Commerce Plaza Industrial Park and the Wild Wing Planned Development. The property changed hands in July of last year, triggering the requirement for the new owner to request annexation when changing over the utility accounts into the new owner's name. Businesses located within the building on the property include Allied Manufacturing and PODS Moving & Storage. The requested zoning upon annexation is Light Industrial (LI) and the city's future land use map identifies the property as Industrial as well.

Hucks said that Planning Commission held the required public hearing on the request and recommended approval at their December 12 meeting. Staff also recommends approval.

Motion: White made a motion, seconded by Blain to approve first reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (E). **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- D. First Reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (F), to annex approximately 21.55+/- acres of property located at 2951 Hwy 501 and on Gardner Lacy Rd (PINs 399-00-00-0404, 399-01-04-0002 and 400-04-02-0003), and rezone from the Horry County Limited Industrial (LI) district to the City of Conway Light Industrial (LI) district.** Hucks stated that this property is where Professional Plumbing Group is located, commonly known as Wolverine Brass. It's currently zoned Horry County Limited Industrial. The applicant applied for annexation last month; yet in this case, there has been no change of ownership at this point. Instead, the property owner requested annexation on their own. In addition to the property containing the Professional Plumbing Group businesses, 2 other contiguous properties have the same owner; one behind Professional Plumbing Group and one fronting Gardner Lacy Road, which currently contains a parking lot. In accordance with city ordinance, all properties contiguous to property seeking annexation as a condition of service shall also be subject to annexation.

Hucks said that Planning Commission held the required public hearing and recommended approval of the request at their December 12 meeting. Staff also recommends approval.

Motion: Hardwick made a motion, seconded by Butler to approve first reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (F). **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- E. First Reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (G), to annex approximately 11.17+/- acres of property located on East Cox Ferry Rd, near the intersection of Bellamy Rd (PIN 383-00-00-0346), and rezone from the Horry County Commercial Forest Agriculture (CFA) district to the City of Conway Medium-Density Residential (R-2) district.** Hucks stated that this property is located on East Cox Ferry Road, adjacent to the Coastal Point West subdivision and the Wild Wing Planned Development. It is currently zoned Horry County Commercial Forest Agriculture. The property is currently vacant, but the property is within the city's water service area, which will require the property owner

to request annexation when development is proposed to occur. Currently proposed is a townhome development containing 75 units on approximately 11 acres. The requested zoning upon annexation is Medium-Density Residential (R-2), which is also consistent with the city's current future land use map. This portion of East Cox Ferry Road is mostly residential in nature. The Conway Plantation MHP, The Pines subdivision, Coastal Point and Coastal Point West developments, as well as the multifamily development, called the Bellamy, are all adjacent to the subject property.

Hucks said that Planning Commission held the required public hearing and recommended approval of the request at their December 12 meeting. Staff also recommends approval.

Motion: White made a motion, seconded by Goldfinch to approve first reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (G). **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- F. First Reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (H), to rezone approximately 0.70+/- (total) acres of property located at 1318 and 1320 Fourth Ave (PINs 368-04-01-0021 and -0022) from the Core Commercial (CC) and Medium-Density Residential (R-2) districts to the Core Commercial (CC) district.** Hucks stated that this request came about as a result of either the applicant or property owner inquiring about opening a beauty salon on one of the properties. The building at 1318 Fourth Ave has been vacant for a period of 6 months or longer, which now requires that the site come into compliance. Both properties have the same owner and both properties share a parking lot behind the buildings, with half of the parking lot on each parcel. One of the nonconformities that staff discovered upon review is that while the front portions of both properties are zoned Core Commercial, the back half of the properties containing the parking areas is zoned medium-density residential. Staff recommended that both properties be rezoned to remove the split-zoning status and rezone the entirety of both properties to Core Commercial.

Hucks said that Planning Commission held the required public hearing and recommended approval of the request at their December 12 meeting. Staff also recommends approval.

Motion: Blain made a motion, seconded by Hardwick to approve first reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (H). **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- G. First Reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (I), to amend Article 2 – Definitions and Article 4 – Use Tables, of the City of Conway Unified Development Ordinance, regarding revisions to various items within these Articles.** Hucks stated that the proposed amendments are part of an overall cleanup of the UDO that has been ongoing since 2023, and was discussed at Councils budget retreat that same year. The amendments include new definitions for terms commonly used throughout the UDO that were not previously defined and proposes to remove obsolete uses or add new uses that previously did not exist when the UDO was originally adopted in 2011. Staff presented the proposed amendments at the December council meeting. Since that time, staff included a few additional definitions for Article 2, including mortuary, crematory and funeral home, which were part Planning Commission's review.

Hucks said that Planning Commission held the required public hearing at their December meeting and recommended approval of the amendments, with minor revisions. Staff also recommends approval.

Motion: White made a motion, seconded by Jordan to approve first reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (I). **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- H. First Reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (J), to amend Article 10 – Subdivision and Land Development, of the City of Conway Unified Development Ordinance, regarding the requirements for Conservation Subdivisions.** Hucks stated that the conservation subdivision design is part of Article 10 of the UDO. This section of Article 10, along with open space requirements, were pulled from an overall cleanup of Article 10 that was recently adopted by Council, along with the open space requirements, due to the comprehensive nature of the amendments proposed. Details of the proposed amendment was discussed at the December council meeting. The amendments that are included in this ordinance seek to provide needed clarification and provide better guidance to the development community and staff when a conservation subdivision design is being considered.

Planning Commission held the required public hearing and recommended approval of the amendment at their December 12 meeting. Staff also recommends approval of the amendments.

Motion: Hardwick made a motion, seconded by Helms to approve first reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (J). **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- I. First Reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (K), to amend Article 6 – Design Standards, of the City of Conway Unified Development Ordinance, regarding the creation of an Airport Overlay (AO) district.** Hucks stated that as of 2012, state law requires the local governmental body or agency that receive requests for a planned development, plat approval or a building permit that is within an airport safety zone to provide the information to the division of airports for review. This was done last year with regard to the annexation of the property known as the Brookhaven Planned Development in accordance with South Carolina code; however, there were no specific comments provided back to staff about the annexation request. Furthermore, the South Carolina Aeronautics Commission requires that developers submit an Obstacle Evaluation / Airport Airspace Analysis Form to the FAA. Once the developer receives the results of the analysis of the FAA, the findings should be submitted to the Local Permitting Authority, in this case – the city, in conjunction with their plan or permit submittals. From there, the appropriate city department would be required to submit a case to SCAC for further evaluation.

Hucks stated that the goal of this overlay is to provide a layer on the city's GIS maps for current and future staff so that when annexation requests, rezoning requests, plan submittals or permit applications are received, staff is easily made aware when properties are located within the overlay and when they would be required to provide the appropriate notification. It does not include additional requirements for development of property if a property is identified as being within the overlay nor is it intended to provide decisions on

whether specific developments or permits can be approved. The amendment simply defines the overlay, provides a general map of the overlay's boundaries, outlines the proper review authority and provides information relating to the Airport Approach Zones identified within the South Carolina Aeronautics Commission's Compatible Land Use Evaluation Tool (CLUE) Analysis.

Hucks said that Planning Commission held the required public hearing and recommended approval of the amendment at their December 12 meeting. Staff has made some minor changes since Planning Commission's review, clarifying some of the language and reorganizing the layout of the amendment and those changes were provided in Council's packet. Staff also recommends approval of the amendment.

There was some discussion regarding distance/area covered and building height in the overlay.

Motion: Goldfinch made a motion, seconded by Butler to approve first reading of Ordinance #ZA2025-01-21 (K). **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

CONSIDERATION:

- A. Consideration of approval to rename a residential development, located on Hwy 65, Hwy 813 and Lite Road (from Rose Estates to Hainer Place, Ph. 2).** Hucks said that this subdivision is currently called "Rose Estates", which was approved by Council in 2022. Across the road from Rose Estates is the Hainer Place development, which is currently being developed. The Rose Estates development received approval by the Technical Review Committee and Planning Commission in 2023; however, no lots have been platted. The applicants are requesting to rename the development from Rose Estates to Hainer Place, as it is now proposed to be a future phase of the Hainer Place subdivision. Hucks stated that staff recommends approval of the request.

Motion: Blain made a motion, seconded by Jordan to approve the renaming of Rose Estates to Hainer Place. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

- B. Consideration of a recommendation on selection of qualified offeror to enter into a public/private partnership of the Conway Marina Building.** Hyman stated that in 2021, the City of Conway entered into a lease agreement with Matt Varnadore, DBA Waccamaw Outfitters, for the operation of the City's marina store, including sale of goods, boat rentals and tours, management of ramps and slips, and gas sales. The Lessee asked to end this agreement on December 31, 2024, to explore other opportunities. On October 24, 2024, the city advertised publicly to select a qualified offeror to enter a public/private partnership of the Conway Marina Building located at 4 Elm Street to provide a positive experience for all patrons using the facility. Proposals were required to be submitted to the city no later than November 22, 2024. Five offerors submitted proposals, and were ranked based on the following criteria: (a) Services, activities and events to be offered; (b) Hours of operation; (c) Staffing levels and experience and qualifications of proposed staff; (d) Proof of successful experience in projects of this nature; (e) A list of any variations from, or exceptions to, the conditions and specifications of this RFP and a description of the advantages to be gained or disadvantages to be incurred by the City because of these

exceptions. This could include gasolines sales and slip rental fees. If no exceptions, write “No Exceptions;” (f) Proposed rental payment to the city for lease; and (g) List of items proposed to be sold and/or services to be offered.

Hyman said that offerors submitting proposals were: Winyah Rivers Alliance, Four Winds of Conway, LLC, EST Ventures, LLC, Timothy A. Anderson, and Chad Hayes/Waccamaw Outfitters. Many submissions proposed continuing operations similarly to the previous lessee, with some expanded services. The two highest scoring submissions proposed more expansion of services.

Hyman said that the committee composed of City staff reviewed and scored the submittals and recommends EST Ventures, LLC. Key strengths included qualifications, staffing, hours of operation, offered the most money to the city, more experience, and more staff. Hyman said that should City Council approve the selection of EST Ventures, LLC, the City would enter negotiations for a contract for services immediately.

Motion: Blain made a motion, seconded by Hardwick to approve the selection of EST Ventures, LLC and authorize staff to enter a public/private partnership of the Conway Marina Building. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

CITY ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT:

Emrick informed Council of the following:

1. Emrick said that the data for visits is in for Christmas. A straight comparison of December 23 to December of 24 isn’t fair or accurate as there was one less weekend in this year’s Christmas season and will be again next year. So, comparing last year from the Tree Lighting to New Year’s Eve to this year from the Tree Lighting to NYE, the city was up nearly 5% in visits and the last three years, up nearly 30%. The city is still 70,000 total visits less than for October, a number that is astounding.
2. NYE was a first this year as well for Conway as Conway Downtown Alive pumped more fireworks into a 13-minute show than Emrick said he had ever seen before. The data showed that it was a hit as the city had over 6,000 people in downtown during the day on NYE, compared to the 2,900 that were here last year for the day.
3. Emrick said that staff is now working on two things downtown simultaneously. First, staff is taking down Christmas. It takes almost as long to take it down as it does to put it up, and storage is always a challenge. The other thing staff is working on is Valentine’s Day. As you may remember from last year, Conway is the place to be for the Valentine’s Day season and this year, staff is raising the bar a little higher. More details on that to come. The city will kick off the Valentine’s Day experience on February 6th with the ribbon cutting for the Riverwalk Expansion. Join us at 6 pm for that event and then take a longer romantic stroll along our Riverfront.
4. Emrick said that this week staff is beginning internal budget discussions to prepare for the upcoming Budget Retreat. A reminder, it is in Rock Hill this year on March 5-7. And it is the beginning of a two-year budget, so expect a very full day on Thursday and hopefully a half day on Friday so we can safely drive home Friday afternoon.

5. Enrick announced that he has been asked to present on the city's Halloween and other holiday festivities at the 2025 South Carolina Rural Summit in Columbia on March 3rd and 4th and been asked to present the same topic at the South Carolina Community Development Association Annual meeting in May.
6. Emrick gave a quick update on some of the projects that engineers are working on for the city:
 - a. Chestnut Bay is 30% complete and we have a meeting this week to move that forward. This is a big step in the right direction of a long scale engineering project. We hope to be ready for construction next calendar year on this one. This is a grant funded project.
 - b. The Kingston Ferry is also in engineering. They have staked out some of the intended pathway to determine the best pathways and areas that will be of interest along the path. This is a grant funded project
 - c. The McKeithen Outfall project is in design. There was a public meeting held in December, but it is running parallel to Chestnut Bay. This one is grant funded, but there will be some pieces we may need to fund separately for quality of design. This is a grant funded project.
 - d. The final phase of the Town Green will commence in early April to be timed between the Waccamaw Sportsman's Expo and Groovin' on the Green. This phase will add the splash pad and redo the remainder of the parking lot.
 - e. Crabtree Greenway expansion. This trail will run from Mill Pond Road to El Bethel Road, connecting the Rec Center, the High School and Whittemore Middle via a completely off road, pedestrian and bicycle friendly trail along a currently unseen beautiful asset. This is funded via a State PRT Grant.
 - f. Parks Master Plan is well underway, and we should have a partial draft by the Budget Retreat. There is a second public meeting forthcoming that we are working to schedule.
 - g. ERF #4 will be presented to CAB for review. This is grant funded and we hope to begin construction May or June.
7. Hometown Legislative Action Day is January 21st this year, which is unfortunate as that is also the date of our next meeting. If any of you plan to attend and miss the next Council meeting, please let me or Alicia know so we can make sure that we have a quorum for the meeting.
8. Conway lost a great man over the holiday break in Travis Overton. Travis was a galvanizing force, bringing the city and the University closer together than ever before.
9. There is no workshop and no scheduled executive session tonight.

COUNCIL INPUT:

Helms said that she had received calls regarding the sewage smell on Creel Street. Emrick said that it is a Grand Strand Water & Sewer problem, but that city staff is working with them. Helms stated that the fireworks were awesome, and she thanked staff for all their hard work on the holiday decorations and events.

White stated that the pothole on 9th Avenue and Highway 378 was getting worse. White asked for the parking garage update. Emrick said that the TIF needs to be implemented and for it to be successful the city needs the full participation of Horry County and the Horry County School District.

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Goldfinch asked if there was a mandate to lower flags. Emrick said that there is a program that sends out alerts, but it becomes challenging when the city has so many. Goldfinch stated that the fireworks was a great quality of life event, and he thanked all. Goldfinch then talked about how Travis Overton made Conway a better place.

Jordan also stated that the fireworks were awesome. Jordan thanked staff for a successful Christmas and requested that a memorial tree to put ornaments on for loved ones be looked at for next year.

Hardwick asked staff to look into donating \$1,500 to the Coastal Carolina Spadoni College fundraiser in May in honor of Travis Overton. Hardwick thanked Conway Downtown Alive for a fantastic New Years Eve event and making Conway a destination.

Blain complimented staff and thanked Conway Downtown Alive and the Chamber for all the successful events. Blain gave a special tribute to Travis Overton.

ADJOURNMENT: **Motion:** White made a motion, seconded by Hardwick to adjourn the meeting. **Vote:** Unanimous. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes approved by City Council this 21 day of January, 2025.


Alicia Shelley, City Clerk