



MINUTES

City of Liberty- Regular Session

November 10th, 2025 – 6:30 pm

Rosewood Center- 419 E Main St., Liberty, SC 29657

All Mayor and Councilmembers were present.

- **Call to Order:** 6:30 PM
 - Mayor Woods
- **Invocation:** Given by Councilmember Padgett
- **Pledge of Allegiance**
- **Proclamation:**
 - World Pancreatic Cancer Day – November 20th, 2025
- **Public Session:**
 - (Speakers are allowed 3 minutes)
 - Scott Brown – Discussion on disagreements within the Recreation Department and how a volunteer's role was handled through the chain of command.
- **Approval of Minutes:**
 - October 13th, 2025 – Regular Session (Deferred; not ready)
 - October 30th, 2025 – Special Called Session (Deferred; not ready)
- **New Business:** First Readings / Resolutions
- **Old Business:** Second Readings
- **City / Financial Report:**
 - Deputy Administrator, Bailee Locke – See attachment

- **City Council Comments:**

- Robbie Shoenleben (Ward 1) – No comments
- Lavant Padgett (Ward 2) – Discussed ongoing projects he hopes Gerald will continue: Urgent Care, another grocery store, an automatic car wash, and the acoustics at the Rosewood Center. Congratulated Liberty Car Wash and No Vacancy Bar for providing Thanksgiving dinner to the community.
- Jeff Massie (Ward 4) – Congratulated Andrea Wagner on winning Mayor, Mikail Cantley for Ward 1, Gerald Wilson for Ward 2, Bo Cooley for Ward 3, and Jon Humphrey At-Large.
- Zachary Arms (At-Large) – See attachment
- Rhonda Whitaker (At-Large) – Appreciated working with this Council and looks forward to collaborating with the new Council and Mayor.

- **Mayor's Announcements:** See attachment

- **Adjournment:** 7:18 PM

- Motion: Councilmember Arms
- Second: Councilmember Whitaker
- No discussion
- Vote: 6-0

Date approved: 12/8/25



City of Liberty, Mayor

I would like to take a couple of minutes this evening and offer my thanks to the people of Liberty for trusting me these past 2 years. I would also like to offer some points of reflection that I have discovered along the way.

Back in July 2023 I was elected to this seat to finish Chuck Powell's term. One of the few promises I made during the campaign was to carry Chuck's love of Liberty forward and to use it in every decision I have made. I hope that I have made Mr. Powell proud. I hope that my actions on this council have honored the legacy that he has left behind.

I want to thank those citizens who have been engaged in the business of the City since I have been on council. I also want to thank my fellow councilmembers and the remarkable staff we have here in Liberty. I recognize that beyond the noise and the arguments we see constantly, there is no anger nor hatred among us, but Passion. Passion for the City of Liberty. Passion for what this town could be. Passion for the town that future generations deserve.

Being a councilmember in 2025 is difficult. The small town feel that we all yearn for is quickly being replaced by an era of social media posts and political polarization. Instead of the days of Mayberry, we are now in the days of outrage and reaction. The business of the City no longer is done face to face but screen to screen. If we are not careful, we will permanently replace small town main streets with social media sites. This will create a reality in which smalltown charm simply cannot survive. Neighbors will no longer be friends and strangers will be enemies.

To the people of Liberty. Never forget that your actions in person and online are a reflection of us as a whole. That those elected to serve you are not greedy politicians from Washington but are those who walk by you at Ingles. Who cheer on the Red Devils in the bleachers next to you. Who worships on Sunday in a pew next to you.

the people who have wronged you but rather learn from those lessons in your journey as a representative. Remember that productive criticism is not slander but a chance for self reflection and self improvement. Never look at an issue through the lenses of me. Look at it through the lenses of us. Always fight against the apathy and never feed it. Hold townhalls, office hours, and any other opportunity you can to hear and work with your constituents. Bring ideas to the table and always reflect on what you are doing and what you have done to help Liberty. If you get to a council meeting and you have nothing to report, ask yourself why? What happened this past month and what can I do next month to move Liberty forward? Be transparent and proactive. Political noise often rises in places where no consistent voice can be heard. Proactive governments will always outwork reactive ones.

To the incoming Council, never forget your ultimate job. Your job is not just to worry about budgets and ordinances. Your ultimate job is to shepherd the vision of Liberty. To create a strategic plan using your comprehensive plan. A plan that will guide staff in everyday affairs. A plan that will see our downtown become a beacon of community. A plan that will champion a tangible, shared vision which Liberty has desperately needed for decades. Never forget that this is your true task at hand and that if Liberty is to survive it will be because of a united vision.

When I announced my intention to run for this seat, I shared my belief that Liberty is the next great small town. I still believe this. I believe that Liberty can not just survive these next few years, but thrive. This can only happen if every person who cares about Liberty can become involved in their own unique way and remember that disagreement isn't hatred but rather a way of life. I look forward to living in and continuing to serve this next great small town as we begin the new chapter of Liberty's history. To the incoming council I wish nothing but the best for you. To my fellow citizens, I hope you will join me out of these chambers as we work to better the town that I love, the town that Chuck Powell loved, the town

November 2025 City/Financial Report

City Hall:

- This month, Katie continued training new hire Ciera in business licenses, hospitality taxes, and events.
- Ciera Wilson earned her Local Economic Development certificate through Coursera.
- Hospitality taxes can now be paid online, and all applicable businesses have been notified. Preparations are underway for the 2026–2027 business license renewal season, with letters going out the first week of January. The new license year runs May 1, 2026 – April 30, 2027, with penalties beginning May 1 for unpaid or incomplete renewals.
- Katie attended the Municipal Association of South Carolina Joint Academy, participating in sessions on audit preparation, succession planning, the benefits and challenges of using AI in government, and cross-training. She also connected with other business license professionals to discuss ways to improve community service.
- The updated business license software is ready for the renewal season. Katie welcomes suggestions for additional materials or resources to add to the city's website.
- On October 30, 2025, all City of Liberty departments distributed candy to students at Liberty Primary School. We were incredibly thankful for this invitation and enjoyed seeing the students' excitement firsthand.
- Congratulations to Ciera Wilson on her first planned city event- The Trick or Treat on Commerce Street and Fall Festival — She did an excellent job coordinating with Potter's Clay to make this event a success. Special thanks also go to all city departments — without their teamwork, this event would not have been possible.
- Open enrollment for PEBA Insurance has just concluded.

Grants:

EPA:

- Due to the government shutdown, very little progress was able to be made. Now that the government has reopened, we are hoping to continue moving forward. We overdrew one invoice from the EPA to pay Terricon, and we are sending a reimbursement check at this time to ensure our grant records remain accurate.

Public Works:

- The Shed is now fully operational with technology, including Wi-Fi and a workstation with a printer for locates, work orders, emails, etc. Clear Water will also be utilizing this system.
- All locates have been officially handed over to the Clearwater team, who have been performing well. For those unfamiliar, Clearwater now handles after-hours and on-call

calls. After-hours non-emergency calls are routed to Clearwater by dispatch, while during business hours, the Water Department will assist directly.

Permits:

- Several small building permits were issued this month, and inspections were conducted for existing permits, including Cornell Dubilier.
- New permit applications have been received for Cornell Dubilier's addition and a new commercial business coming in.

Recreation:

1. Mills Ave siding – complete.
2. Little League Baseball lighting (Iselin Field and water tower) scheduled to begin Jan. 2026; lights have been ordered.
3. Baseball sign approved with minor changes; will proceed after adjustments.
4. Painting of Football Field House approved.
5. Restrooms at Rosewood Center have been painted; floor work to follow.
6. Winter Basketball registration concluded with 150 participants.
7. Two new/renewed sponsorships secured.
8. Maintenance of all parks and recreation grounds/facilities; Freedom Park slide requires repair.
9. City stadium rental: 1 (Travel Football).
10. Rosewood Center rentals: 4 (including bi-monthly Animal Vet parking lot rentals).
11. Mills Ave rentals: 0
12. City Gym rentals: 0
13. Baseball field rental: 1
14. Freedom Park gazebo rental: 1
15. Gazebo at Serlin Park completed.
16. Mile loop and cemetery are being maintained.
17. National Fitness Campaign: the proposed fitness court location is beside the City Gym. Further meetings will discuss cost and funding options.
18. YLA handicap-accessible swing: YLA representatives will visit Mills Ave and Freedom Park to determine the best location.
19. Upcoming sports events:

- Nov. 11: Football All-Star Game at City Stadium
- Nov. 15: Volleyball All-Star Tournament
- Dec. 13: Statewide All-Star Football Championship at LHS Stadium

Police:

- Warnings Issued: 201
- Citations Issued: 219
- Total Arrested: 15

Community & Events:

Liberty Middle School Parade

- On October 15, 2025, Liberty officers participated in a parade celebrating Liberty Middle School's first Excellent rating on the state report card.

Trunk or Treat at Liberty Primary School

- On October 30, 2025, Liberty PD members distributed candy to students as part of community engagement activities.

Trick or Treat on Commerce Street & Fall Festival

- On October 31, 2025, Liberty officers provided traffic control and barricade setup to ensure a safe event. Officers also distributed candy, police bags, and glow bracelets to attendees.
- The Liberty Police Department extends sincere gratitude to Thomas Capogna, Store Manager at Liberty Ingles, for his generous candy donation.
- The Halloween event was a safe and successful evening, thanks to the combined efforts of officers, city staff, community partners, and supporters.

Hiring & Training:

- Officer Rogers successfully completed Firearms Instructor School and is now certified to conduct firearms training for department personnel.

Planning:

- The Planning Commission met in October to discuss residential uses in the core commercial areas. The Planning Commission has been working with the city attorney to create language to be included in the new zoning ordinance. The new zoning ordinance is complete and just needs to have a work session with council before adoption.

Finances:

- At this time, we are still waiting for October's finance report from Greene Finney. Our City accountant's laptop is having IT issues. We have handed it over to Rocky's team at CC&M. They are working with our software company at this time to fix it. As soon as I get the report, I will forward it to the council immediately. Greene Finney, staff, and Love Bailey will start working on the audit next week. Our payroll and works' comp audit will be in February as usual.