

**City Council Meeting**

**September 8, 2025**

Easley City Council met for its regular meeting on September 8, 2025, at 7:00pm in the court room of the LEC. All the members were present. The press was notified of the meeting by email. The agenda was posted on the city’s website and in the lobby of City Hall. Jennifer Bradley, City Clerk, served as the recording secretary.

Mayor Talbert called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

The invocation was given by Deputy Fire Chief Shannon Dales and was immediately followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes were approved as written.

**Report from Council:**

**Ward 6:** Attended the 150th Anniversary of Robinson Funeral Home yesterday. His cousin spoke of the existence of Easley due to the railroad. Successful railroad has brought with it railroad traffic. Easley’s train has two tracks which allow trains to pass each other. Trains stopping on the tracks have become an issue recently. Have spoken many times to a representative from the rail service about the stopping causing traffic issues downtown.There is little to be done about trains blocking roadways besides reporting it.

**Ward 5:** Also spoke with Norfolk Southern with largely the same feedback given to Mr. Robinson.Attended a meeting with Favor Upstate who presented their wonderful program. A year and a half ago a moratorium was enacted to create a UDO. Supports a motion to table the UDO but hopes for support of amendments if not.

**Ward 4:** Reminded everyone of a 9/11 event that will be held at Easley High School on Thursday at 9am. Thanked the Robinson Funeral Home family for their support of veterans and enjoyed attending the 150th Anniversary of the service to our community.

**Ward 3:** A citizen reached out about the fire department’s participation in soliciting hole sponsorships for a fire chief’s golf tournament. Was told that the mayor was upset and accused the fire department of being too political and found that troubling. The tournament supports the entire county. Stated letters were sent out that were political in nature. Requested an apology to the fire department by the mayor. Also concerned about the balance of power in the city government specifically an email sent to the mayor about a directive that has gone without response. Blocking communications between council members and departments doesn’t align with city ordinance.

**Ward 2:** Thanked Councilwoman Rainey for the reminder about the hole sponsorship because she still needs to pay the fire department. Is thankful that the traffic unit and direct patrol units that Chief Liner spoke of will begin work in the city.

**Ward 1:** Everyone in Ward 1 seems generally happy. Many families have history with the City of Easley and have helped to build it into what it is today.Easley needs to continue thriving to be the leader in the County.

**Mayor’s Message:** Did not speak at any time on hole sponsorships. Reminded everyone that they can reach out to her on the phone, in person, or by email at LTalbert@cityofeasley.com for factual information. 9/11 memorial service will be held at 8:45am with more details coming from Christman Short. A new video will be coming out soon with the Police Chief highlighting the new traffic unit with Easley Police.

**Updates on City Activity:**

City Administrator Tom Couch clarified that he was the one that reached out to the fire department about the golf tournament because he felt that the city shouldn’t appear to support any candidate in an election by city staff.

Corey Holycross is the City Planner recently hired and comes to Easley from the City of Bradenton, FL. Fire Chief Brad Owen introduced Deputy Chief Shannon Dales to his new position. He has served Easley Fire Department for 25 years and we are excited to have him in his new position. Parks & Recreation Director Christman Short stated that the 9/11 event would begin at Easley High School at 8:45am to partner with students to help them understand and remember the importance of the day in history.

**Community Announcements:**

Easley Museum representative Bob Fedder said the annual fundraiser will be in October and an artist will have a glass painting to raise money for the museum.

**Citizens wishing to address City Council:**

Chris Clark asked for clarification on Resolution 2024-05 and Resolution 2025-16. Would like to know if we could get an answer to the first resolution before another vote is taken 13 months later a similar project. We would like to know who oversees the progress. A letter was sent out by one ward to make their constitutes aware of redistricting, but it was not shared with all citizens of the city. Open communication is fully supported but needs to be reviewed to ensure transparency and inclusivity.

Lisa Bourean was surprised by how the work session meeting went regarding respect. The UDO must go into effect. It has been 18 months but let’s work on what is proposed and make amendments as needed. Shine Kitchen is still looking for donations of food goods or monetary donations.

Ginny McJunkin congratulated Shannon Dales on his promotion to Deputy Fire Chief. Great decision in choosing him for that position. Understands there is a time limit and that the first vote might need to take place tonight, but work can still be done on working on it to consider infrastructure and growth. Annexation requests will start rushing in soon and need to be considered for all parties. Was utterly disappointed in the council during the work session specifically to the disrespect shown to Councilman Justin Alexander.

Alma Ferguson would like more information on the roundabout at Canaan Land. Citizens are concerned about 205 Hillcrest Drive and the condition of it.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Ordinance Second Reading:**

1. Ordinance 2025-07 to rezone approximately 0.844 acres of real property located at 715 N. A Street from Neighborhood Commercial to Residential 7.5 zoning. Councilman Tom O’Shields made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilwoman Donna Rainey. There was no discussion. Motion carried with a vote of 5-2. Mayor Talbert, Councilmembers O’Shields, Rainey, Alexander, and Robinson were in favor with Councilmembers Davidson and Jones opposed.
2. Ordinance 2025-08 to adopt a revised business license ordinance in accordance with the Business License Standardization Act. Councilwoman Denise Davidson made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Tom O’Shields. There was no discussion. Motion carried unanimously with a vote of 7-0.
3. Ordinance 2025-09 authorizing the conveyance of an easement across the Doodle Trail. Councilwoman Denise Davidson made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Tom O’Shields. There was no discussion. Motion carried unanimously with a vote of 7-0.

**NEW BUSINESS: First Reading:**

1. Ordinance 2025-11 to repeal the City of Easley Zoning Ordinance and the Land Development Regulations and replace them with the City of Easley Unified Development Ordinance. Councilwoman Denise Davidson made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Tom O’Shields. Councilwoman Donna Rainey made a motion to table, seconded by Councilman Justin Alexander. Motion to table the UDO failed with a 2-5 vote. Councilmembers Rainey and Alexander in favor with Mayor Talbert and Councilmembers O’Shields, Davidson, Jones, and Robinson opposed. Councilman Justin Alexander made a motion to amend page 199 to strike values in red and replace them with values in blue, seconded by Councilwoman Donna Rainey. Copies of the amendment were given to all members. Motion to amend page 199 failed with a 2-5 vote. Councilmembers Rainey and Alexander in favor with Mayor Talbert and Councilmembers O’Shields, Davidson, Jones, and Robinson opposed. Councilman Justin Alexander made a motion to amend page 82 to strike 6.4.3.H.2., seconded by Councilwoman Donna Rainey. Motion to amend page 82 failed with a 2-5 vote. Councilmembers Rainey and Alexander in favor with Mayor Talbert and Councilmembers O’Shields, Davidson, Jones, and Robinson opposed. Councilwoman Denise Davidson said density was changed in August 2023 and that the developments being built were approved under the 2015 zoning ordinance was had more dense allowances for housing. No new developments have been approved since the change in 2023. Councilwoman Donna Rainey said the comment by Councilwoman Davidson was incorrect, that Pearson Commons was approved in November 2023. Councilman Justin Alexander said he would be voting against the UDO because it is incomplete with changes still ongoing. Mayor Lisa Talbert explained that the document is ever-evolving document and can be amended as time goes on. Councilwoman Donna Rainey said that the final draft is not the final draft and is not ready to be voted on so she will also be voting in opposition. Councilman Jim Robinson said that the moratorium was requested by some citizens and some of council and a revised UDO and that it is time to wrap the process up and move on, it can be amended as time goes on. Motion carried with a vote of 5-2. Mayor Talbert, Councilmembers O’Shields, Davidson, Jones, and Robinson were in favor with Councilmembers Rainey and Alexander opposed.
2. Ordinance 2025-12 to amend the FY25/26 Operating Budget to authorize the purchase of IT equipment for the police department. Councilwoman Denise Davidson made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Tom O’Shields. Councilwoman Rainey said that she feels it is important but feels it should be looked at more because there will be recurring charges for some of it but that the budget should be investigated further to see if there are funds available already without increasing the budget. Councilman Tom O’Shields said that sometimes criticism is unnecessary and that this is important for public safety and wasn’t decided rashly. Councilman Justin Alexander stated that no one feels like public safety isn’t of the highest priority, only that it is done in the best way and he will be voting in favor. Motion carried unanimously with a vote of 7-0.

**NEW RESOLUTIONS:**

1. Resolution 2025-14 authorizing the negotiation, execution, and delivery of a lease between the City of Easley and VGM Financial services. Councilman David Jones made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Tom O’Shields. There was no discussion. Motion carried unanimously with a vote of 7-0.
2. Resolution 2025-15 authorizing the negotiation, execution, and delivery of a lease between the City of Easley and VGM Financial services. Councilman David Jones made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Justin Alexander. There was no discussion. Motion carried unanimously with a vote of 7-0.
3. Resolution 2025-16 calling on the State of South Carolina, Pickens County, and Anderson County to review and provide a remedy for the congestion occurring along the Brushy Creek Road corridor into Anderson County. Councilwoman Denise Davidson made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilman Tom O’Shields. Councilwoman Donna Rainey asked what the purpose of the resolution is. Mario DiPietro said making a statement to the entities that this area is a problem and that the area needs to be focused on. Motion carried unanimously with a vote of 7-0.

With no further business, there was a motion to adjourn the meeting by Councilwoman Denise Davidson, seconded by Councilman David Jones.

The meeting concluded at 8:01pm.

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 Mayor Lisa Talbert

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Jennifer Bradley

City Clerk