



**COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA
TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2025**

The Council Legislative Committee will conduct a meeting on Tuesday, August 19, 2025 at 1:00 p.m. at City Hall (Mayor's Conference Room), 1737 Main Street, Second Floor, Columbia, SC 29201. The meeting can be viewed online at www.columbiasc.gov. Please contact the City Clerk's Office at (803)545-3045 or cityclerk@columbiasc.gov if you have questions regarding the meeting.

The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, Chair
The Honorable William Brennan, District III ▪ The Honorable Aditi Bussells, At-Large

Prior to entering the meeting, please silence all electronic communication devices. All presenters are asked to speak directly into the microphone for recording purposes.

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of August 13, 2024 and September 17, 2024 Council Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

2. Federal Legislative Report - Mr. Ralph Garboushian, CapitalEdge
 - i. FY 24/25 Federal Legislative Year in Review*
 - ii. Grant/Funding Updates*
 - iii. Looking Ahead*

3. State Legislative Report - Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm; Mr. Damon Jeter, Jet Corp Consulting Group, LLC; and Ms. Caroline Delleney, Due South Advocacy, LLC
 - i. FY 24/25 State Legislative Year in Review*
 - ii. Funding Update*
 - iii. Looking Ahead*

OTHER DISCUSSION



**COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA
TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2025**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

4. Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements pursuant to S. C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2)

· *Legislative Affairs*

ADJOURNMENT



MEETING DATE: August 19, 2025

DEPARTMENT: City Clerk

FROM: *Erika Hammond, City Clerk*

SUBJECT: August 13, 2024 and September 17, 2024 Council
Legislative Committee Meeting Minutes

**FUNDING SOURCE &
ORIGINAL BUDGET:**

ATTACHMENTS:

- CLC_MN_08132024 (DOCX)
- CLC_MN_09172024 (DOCX)



COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, AUGUST 13, 2024

CALL TO ORDER

The Council Legislative Committee conducted a meeting on Tuesday, August 13, 2024 at City Hall (Mayor's Conference Room) 1737 Main Street, Second Floor, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, Mayor called the meeting to order at 3:14 p.m.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Daniel J. Rickenmann	Chair	Present
Will Brennan	Member	Present
Aditi Bussells	Member	Present

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

1. Federal Intergovernmental Update - Ms. Debra DeHaney-Howard, CapitalEdge – *Received as information*
 - i. *Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Earmarks Update*
 - ii. *Legislative and Agency Updates*

Ms. Debra DeHaney-Howard, CapitalEdge, LLC shared updates on various funding initiatives and projects. Senator Graham secured \$10 million in the FY 2024 Appropriations Bill for the Assembly Street project and included an additional \$3.5 million in the pending FY 2025 bill. Staff is currently working on the necessary paperwork for these funds, with outcomes for the FY 2025 earmark expected post-November elections. The FY 2024 Appropriations Bill also included \$575,000 for the Riverview Terrace water main replacement project. The City received four competitive federal grants: \$80,000 - Safe Streets and Roads for All Planning Grant; \$29,000 - Urban and Community Forest Grant; \$8.7 million - Climate Pollution Reduction Grants; and \$5 million - Columbia Metropolitan Airport. Through the efforts of the Mayor and City Council, further federal funding was secured including \$32.6 million from Building Resistant Infrastructure and Communities Grant award, \$9 million for backup generators, and \$35.7 for repairs to the Columbia Canal.

There was discussion and emphasis on funding for housing; renovation and weatherization; senior assistance; homelessness; Continuum of Care; and HUD follow-up.

There was consensus of the committee to follow up with Congressional representatives to advocate for strategic planning in addressing homelessness and explore earmark opportunities for future projects.



**COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
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2. Local Intergovernmental Update - Mr. Laddie Howard, The Howard Association – *Received as information*
- i. Penny Tax Update
 - ii. Municipal/County Update

Mr. Laddie Howard, The Howard Association reported that the Penny Tax has been approved by City Council. Currently, Richland County is in the public relations phase, focusing on community engagement. Additionally, efforts are underway to develop a priority list that will align the needs and objectives of both Richland County and Lexington County.

There was discussion about the penny tax committee needing representation; funding for roads; and prioritizing connections with community partners and neighboring municipalities.

3. State Intergovernmental Update - Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm; Mr. Damon Jeter, Jet Corp Consulting Group, LLC; and Ms. Caroline Delleney, Due South Advocacy, LLC – *Received as information*
- i. Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Earmark Results
 - ii. Legislative Update

Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm shared the state budget items for Fiscal Year 2024/2025 that were secured for the City of Columbia:

- Neighborhood Revitalization and Weatherization- \$1,000,000
- Marketplace at Congaree Pointe - \$4,400,890
- Five Points Parking Garage - \$2,500,000
- Five Points Project - \$2,500,000
- Quiet Zone – Infrastructure and Technology at Rail Crossings - \$1,500,000
- Fairwold Housing Assistance Program - \$500,000
- Belvedere & Greenview Neighborhood Revitalization - \$1,000,000
- Riverfront Park Trail Enhancements - \$350,000
- Assembly Street Railroad Grade Separation Project - \$5,000,000
- Bridge to the Greenway - \$2,500,000
- Beltline Community Improvements - \$1,500,000

Dr. Bussells requested that items directly tied to the previously submitted priorities be highlighted in the future.



**COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
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Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm continued to report that the \$13.8 million to the local government fund within the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget was increased by 5% this year. The City of Columbia will receive \$3.5 million from this fund. It was noted that the return-to-work provisions for COVID response jobs were not included in this year's House or Senate budgets. This reflects a shift in focus by the Governor's Office toward moving on from the pandemic. Additionally, the recent tax exemptions for affordable housing and rising insurance costs for restaurants were highlighted as priorities for future discussions with lawmakers.

There was discussion about the retirement cap; effective communication with legislators and community partners; impact on talent retention; speed/red light cameras; working alongside DOT for funding needs; and public safety concerns.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, CMC
City Clerk



**COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

The Council Legislative Committee conducted a meeting on Tuesday, September 17, 2024 at City Hall (Mayor's Conference Room), 1737 Main Street, Second Floor, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. The Honorable Daniel J. Rickenmann, Mayor called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Daniel J. Rickenmann	Chair	Present
Will Brennan	Member	Present
Aditi Bussells	Member	Present

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

1. Automated Traffic Safety Technologies – Ms. Jessica Shand, The Southern Group – *Endorsed for City Council Consideration*

Ms. Jessica Shand, The Southern Group presented on behalf of Citizens for Safe Streets, a non-profit advocating for Automated Road Safety Technology (ARST) to reduce traffic deaths in South Carolina. The state leads in deaths per 100 million vehicle miles. The technology now captures only the offender's license plate, not their face.

There was discussion about privacy concerns; tickets enforcement in other states; legislative pushback; need for action in school zones; potential champion to push bill forward; bill language; and goals for the legislative session.

Mayor Rickenmann recommended presenting it to City Council as an opt-in option, with a funding proposal and sharing a resolution with other municipalities.

Councilor Brennan suggested partnering with school districts for a pilot program.

There was consensus of the Committee to add Agenda **Item 1** to Executive Session for the October 1, 2024 City Council meeting.

2. State Legislative Watchlist for 2025 Session - Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm; Mr. Damon Jeter, Jet Corp Consulting Group, LLC; and Ms. Caroline Delleney, Due South Advocacy, LLC – *Received as information.*



**COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2024**

Ms. Pamela Benjamin, CPM, Assistant City Manager for Administrative Services said we are being proactive about some of the anticipated bills and state legislation on the watch list. This is a list of staff recommendations and things from previous legislative sessions.

Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm provided an overview of the topics and bills that are currently being monitored for the 2025 session.

Ms. Teresa Knox, City Attorney explained that under the current state law a dog bite automatically results in liability, which applies primarily to pet owners but now extends to shelters as well. There are no defenses available to the city in these cases.

Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm explained that liquor liability insurance was highly debated in the last legislative session, with significant challenges faced by restaurants and entertainment venues in affording liability insurance. Currently, this matter is under review by a study committee.

There was discussion about cities being united against effects on the hospitality industry and small businesses; brown-bagging and disinformation; rising costs; license reform and outdated liquor laws; businesses choosing other states; and restaurant closings.

Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm explained that vaping regulation has remained on the list as a concern and asked for feedback. It was passed in the Senate but did not move in the House.

Mayor Rickenmann raised concerns about the growing issue of illegal vaping products. There is currently no effective regulation or enforcement in place. He expressed particular concern about underage users.

There was discussion about the product registration; legality of vaping products and additional federal authority in the bill.

Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm explained **H. 374**, which involved municipal election changes and trying to move elections to a different date. It passed the House and the Senate amended and passed the bill, however the House never utilized the Senate's amendments to the bill.

There was discussion about reasons to change election dates.



**COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
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Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm provided an explanation regarding **S. 1017**, a bill addressing property tax exemptions for nonprofit housing corporations. He emphasized the importance of passing this legislation to correct an oversight in a 2020 bill. The legislation aims to benefit nonprofit-owned developments that provide affordable housing, making these projects more economically sustainable.

Mayor Rickenmann highlighted that some apartment complexes which were sold to nonprofits are no longer being utilized for affordable housing as originally intended. They are using the status to avoid being taxed instead of paying the full bill of sale.

Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm discussed **H. 4118** – Community Development Tax Credits. This bill aims to extend a tax credit that expired on June 30, 2023 to June 30, 2029. It was passed by the House in 2023 but did not move forward in the Senate in 2024. The tax credits are used by community development organizations to attract donations that support their funding efforts. The bill is expected to be reintroduced in the future.

There was discussion about why it stalled in the Senate.

Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm shared the anticipated topics for 2025:

- **S. 251 Worker’s Comp for First Responder PTSD**
- **Short Term Rentals**
- **Tort Claims Act Changes**
- **Return to Work Proviso**

Ms. Pamela Benjamin, CPM, Assistant City Manager for Administrative Services explained that the proviso for law enforcement was removed along with provisos for other essential employees. The proviso is important because of its impact on us as a city. We had individuals working under the proviso before it was removed.

Dr. Tiniece Javis, Director of Human Resources noted that 13 individuals used the proviso, which helps with recruitment, retention, and maintaining experienced professionals. However, it poses a challenge for PEBA due to financial losses when retirees continue working.

There was discussion about departments that utilized the proviso; recommendations for talent retention and the retiree system; and applicable scenarios.



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Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager explained that lobbyists advocated for the proviso in response to COVID. Last year, we realized that removing COVID provisions also impacted employees' ability to return without restrictions, prompting us to focus on removing this specific component separately.

Mr. Kyle Michel, Kyle Michel Law Firm shared the State Owned Road Maintenance Standards.

There was discussion about leverage, partnerships, and beautification efforts.

There was consensus of the Committee to meet more often during the Legislative session.

3. Review of Fines for Littering - The Honorable Aditi Bussells – *Received as information*

Councilor Bussells argued that a \$50 fine is too low to hold people accountable for illegal dumping and that increasing the fine would highlight its seriousness and encourage behavioral change.

There was a discussion about the various types of littering; the challenges faced by the city; evictions ; the approach taken by other municipalities; and the issuance of citations.

There was consensus of the Committee on the need for improved communication between lobbyists, staff, and committee members regarding bills and other legislation, and agreed to meet more consistently during the legislative session to ensure better coordination and timely updates.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, CMC
City Clerk



MEETING DATE: August 19, 2025

DEPARTMENT: City Clerk

FROM: *Erika Hammond, City Clerk*

SUBJECT: Federal Legislative Report - Mr. Ralph Garboushian, CapitalEdge

FUNDING SOURCE & ORIGINAL BUDGET:

PURPOSE:

- i. FY 24/25 Federal Legislative Year in Review*
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- *Legislative Affairs*