



COLUMBIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The Columbia City Council conducted a Work Session on Tuesday, March 4, 2025 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 1:12 p.m. and the following City Council members were present: The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr., The Honorable Will Brennan, Mayor Pro-Tem, The Honorable Aditi Bussells, The Honorable Tina N. Herbert, The Honorable Peter M. Brown, and The Honorable Tyler D. Bailey. Also present were Ms. Teresa Wilson, City Manager and Ms. Erika D. Moore Hammond, City Clerk. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr. offered the invocation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Upon a motion made by Dr. Bussells and seconded by Mr. Brennan, Council voted unanimously to adopt the agenda as presented.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

1. 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan: Priorities and Target Neighborhoods - Mr. Erich Chatham, Lead Consultant for Civitas, LLC – *Received as information. No action was taken.*

Mr. Erich Chatham, Lead Consultant for Civitas, LLC provided a brief update on the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan as a follow-up to a previous presentation. There were 125 responses to the community survey and the top three priority needs were affordable housing, public services, and economic development. He reviewed the priorities and recommended goals for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Program, and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) funding. He noted that HUD does not require local jurisdictions to allocate funds by geography. He recommended against specifically identifying target neighborhoods. He presented proposed target areas based on prior discussions and the current budget for each fund. Specific funding recommendations and the draft plan will be presented later.



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There was discussion about stakeholder responses; use of funds to address slum and blight; mental health services through MIRCI; and the future of federal funding.

PRESENTATIONS

2. Black Expo Update - Mr. Darrin Thomas, President of Thomas Media Group, LLC – *Received as information. No action was taken.*

Mr. Darrin Thomas, President of Thomas Media Group, LLC shared details about the upcoming 25th annual Black Expo to be held on May 17, 2025. He highlighted Columbia's ranking in diabetic amputations and the event's focus on diabetes prevention, education, and healthier lifestyles. In partnership with Prisma Health and MUSC, the Black Expo will feature collaborations with Johnson & Johnson Pharmaceuticals and Novo Nordisk. The South Carolina Commission of Agriculture will provide 2,000 bags of local produce; a chef will offer healthy food samples; and The COMET will provide transportation passes.

There was discussion about the city's Blue Zone assessment; collaborating with InstaCart, Prisma Health and MUSC; and creating health data benchmarks for attendees.

3. Five-Year Plan and Operational Update - Mr. Andy Marquart, CEO of EdVenture – *Received as information. No action was taken.*

Mr. Andy Marquart, CEO of EdVenture Children's Museum provided updates on the museum's Five-Year Plan and operations. Key initiatives include the introduction of second-generation exhibits with a focus on 21st century experiences, expanding the target age range to 12, and tapping into the aviation market through a flight and maker space. The museum is also prioritizing workforce development, safety improvements, and partnerships with the State Museum. He highlighted efforts to expand outreach post-COVID and adapt programs to the needs of schools. A new \$4 million exhibit featuring dinosaurs made from recycled materials is set to open soon.

There was discussion about the use of empty gallery space; programming challenges with the patio space; coordination with Parks and Recreation for site cleanup; the need for growth to accommodate visitors; coordinated marketing with Experience Columbia; visitor surveys; targeted messaging; tandem tickets; connectivity with the Riverfront; and sustainability.



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EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon a motion made by Mayor Rickenmann and seconded by Mr. McDowell, Council voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session at 2:24 p.m. for the discussion of Items **4** and **5**. Mr. Brown was not present for the vote.

4. Receipt of legal advice relating to matters covered by attorney-client privilege pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2)
 - *Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS)*
 - *Resolution 2025-010*
5. Discussion of matters relating to proposed location or expansion of services to encourage location or expansion of industries or other businesses pursuant to S.C. Code §30-4-70(a)(2)
 - *Project Catalyst*

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, CMC
City Clerk