



Columbia Health Social and Environmental Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes Tuesday, February 24, 2026

Call to Order

The Columbia Health Social and Environmental Affairs Committee conducted a meeting on Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at City Hall (Mayor's Conference Room), 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201. The Honorable Sam P. Johnson, Chair called the meeting to order at 1:07 p.m. The Honorable Edward H. McDowell, Jr was present. The Honorable Tyler D. Bailey was absent.

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of October 28, 2025 Health, Social, and Environmental Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes

Upon a motion made by Mr. McDowell and seconded by Mr. Johnson, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the October 28, 2025 Health, Social, and Environmental Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes.

Presentations

2. City Beautification Update – Mr. Robert Anderson, Director / Public Works and Mr. Brian Neiger, Superintendent / Forestry & Beautification

Mr. Clint Shealy, P.E., Assistant City Manager of Columbia Water welcomed Mr. Eric Jensen, Richland County Assistant Administrator and Ms. Sandra Haynes, Director of Animal Services for Richland County.

Mr. Brian Neiger, Superintendent / Forestry & Beautification provided an update on the City's beautification efforts. He highlighted corridor mowing; downtown self-watering planters; fence and median upgrades; enhanced sidewalk maintenance; new equipment to improve median cleaning efficiency; and the new "Welcome to Columbia" signage. He also discussed the "Beat the Heat, Plant a Tree" partnership with Columbia Green, which has distributed approximately 2,000 trees over two years.

Mr. Robert Anderson, Director / Public Works shared that the City has implemented an Adopt-a-Street program, which focuses on major thoroughfares with organized cleanups held several times a year. He also noted that the City is in the early stages of additional beautification efforts, including evaluating flood-prone lots for potential pollinator gardens and enhanced plantings. He stated that the City will continue partnering with community groups to support these initiatives.

There was discussion about group crossover with regard to beautification efforts; designated areas for gateway projects; use of the street sweeper; a grant program to standardize signs at neighborhood entrances; the employment of youth for beautification efforts; a road safety audit performed by the Department of Transportation; and a map of neighborhoods that have or have not submitted tree planting requests.

3. Animal Services Update – Ms. Victoria Clary, Superintendent / Animal Services

Ms. Victoria Clary, Superintendent / Animal Services presented proposed updates to the City's animal services ordinances, including reorganizing sections, adding definitions, and aligning regulations with Richland County. Key changes include replacing the outdated kennel model with a breeder permit requiring inspections and humane standards, and strengthening the tethering ordinance. She noted that most revisions focus on necessary animal welfare improvements. She shared the need for facility upgrades.

There was discussion about addressing current ordinance language; penalty enforcement; timeline for implementing proposed changes; building demolition; tethering in bad weather; ear cropping; differential licensing exemption for service/show dogs; levels of enforcement; and flawed building functionality.

There was consensus of the committee to review the proposed changes and continue this discussion at the next meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Erika D. Moore Hammond, CMC, CPM
City Clerk