



**REGULAR MEETING OF FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2026 – 1:00 P.M.
CITY CENTER – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
324 WEST EVANS STREET
FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Lethonia Barnes, Mayor Pro Tempore George Jebaily, Councilman Chaquez T. McCall, Councilman Bryan A. Braddock, Councilman J. Lawrence Smith, II and Councilman Zach McKay

MEMBERS ABSENT

Councilwoman LaShonda NeSmith-Jackson

ALSO PRESENT

Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager; Mr. Ronald Scott, City Attorney; Mrs. Casey Moore, Municipal Clerk; Ms. Patrice Rankin, Assistant City Clerk; Mr. Clint Moore, Assistant City Manager of Development; Chief Shannon Tanner, Florence Fire Department; Interim Police Chief Stephen Starling, Florence Police Department; Mr. Michael Hemingway, Director of Utility Planning and Economic Development; Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning; Mrs. Amanda Pope, Director of Marketing/Communications and Municipal; Mr. Adam Swindler, Director of Public Works; Mrs. Jennifer Krawiec, Director of Human Resources; Mrs. Victoria Nash, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Sports Tourism; Mr. Glenn Bodenheimer, Interim Finance Director and Mr. Joshua Whittington, Director of Utilities

MEDIA PRESENT

Deirdre Weaver-Currin with the Post and Courier and Jenna Guzman with WMBF News were present for the meeting.

Notices of this regular meeting of City Council were provided to the media and individuals requesting a copy of the agenda informing them of the date, location, and time of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Barnes called the February 9, 2026 Regular meeting of Florence City Council to order at 1:01pm.

INVOCATION

Mayor Barnes gave the invocation for the meeting. The pledge of allegiance to the American Flag followed the invocation



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to move Resolution No. 2026-07 to Executive Session to seek legal advice. Councilman McKay said he thinks it would be best if this Resolution was discussed in open session. Pro tem Jebaily said discussion could take place once Council receives legal advice regarding the Resolution.

Councilman McCall made a motion to adopt the agenda for the February 9, 2026 Regular meeting and Pro tem Jebaily seconded the motion.

Council voted 4-1 to adopt the agenda, with Councilman McKay voting against the motion.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman McCall made a motion to adopt the minutes of the January 12, 2026 Regular Meeting and Councilman Braddock seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously (5-0) adopted.

SERVICE RECOGNITIONS

Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager, recognized Amanda Pope for 30 years of service with the City of Florence.

APPEARANCES BEFORE COUNCIL

Carol Dion, President, Blue Star Mothers of Coastal Carolina

Mrs. Carol Dion, President of Blue Star Mothers of Coastal Carolina appeared before Council to speak on Wreaths Across America at the Florence National Cemetery. Mrs. Dion shared that Blue Star Mothers of Coastal Carolina serves as the area sponsorship group and was ranked the top wreath sponsorship group in South Carolina and ninth nationally last year. She explained that the group previously faced challenges disposing of cardboard on Wreaths Day and removing wreaths on Retirement Day, requiring funds intended for wreath purchases to be used for dumpsters. After being connected to Adam Swindler, Public Works Director, the Public Works Department assisted with this year's removal, which she described as the easiest and cleanest in 15 years. Mrs. Dion expressed her appreciation by presenting Mr. Swindler and the Public Works staff with a certificate of appreciation and a Challenge Coin in recognition of their support.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

Bill No. 2026-01 – First Reading

An Ordinance to annex and zone RU the property located at 2916 West Palmetto Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 00100-01-031.

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to pass Bill No. 2026-01 on first reading and Councilman McKay seconded the motion.

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning, explained that the property, located just past Celebration Boulevard, is a large parcel where the developer is proposing to construct townhomes. The recommended zoning designation is Residential Urban (RU), which allows for higher-density residential uses such as



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

townhomes and multifamily housing. City staff believes this designation is consistent with the character of the surrounding area, which includes commercial uses as well as nearby higher-density development. Planning Commission voted unanimously (7-0) to recommend both the annexation and the proposed zoning designation. There is currently a single-family home on the property that will be demolished as part of the development. Mr. Dudley also noted that Planning Commission approved the sketch plan concurrently with the zoning request.

Pro tem Jebaily asked for clarification on whether the property is adjacent to Celebration Boulevard. Mr. Dudley confirmed that it is located directly behind the commercial properties along Celebration Boulevard

Council voted unanimously (5-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2026-01 was passed on first reading.

Bill No. 2026-02 – First Reading

An Ordinance to amend the Planned Development District for New Ebenezer Baptist Church at 312 South Ravenel Street, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90103-03-001.

Councilman McCall made a motion to pass Bill No. 2026-02 on first reading and Pro tem Jebaily seconded the motion.

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning, said this ordinance affects the New Ebenezer Baptist Church campus, which is currently zoned Planned Development (PDD). The PDD allows the church to create its own zoning rules through a Council-adopted ordinance. The original ordinance, adopted in 2008, was site-specific. It was later amended in the early 2010s to include the Strive Hard Educational, Recreational and Enrichment Center (SHEREC). The church now seeks to add a new sign for the property. The current ordinance only addresses the existing church sign. Mr. Dudley noted that the proposed sign would be approximately 10 feet tall, include a digital component for changeable messaging along Palmetto Street, and is consistent with the character of the Palmetto Street corridor and typical campus signage. City staff is proposing to incorporate the Activity Center zoning standards into the Planned Development District. This would provide guidelines for future signage or changes. Activity Center zoning allows signs up to 80 square feet and 24 feet in height; the proposed sign is well below these limits and aligns with the corridor's character.

Council voted unanimously (5-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2026-02 was passed on first reading.

Bill No. 2026-03 – First Reading

An Ordinance to amend the City of Florence *Unified Development Ordinance* regarding itinerant vendor sales, mobile services, and temporary use permits.

Councilman McKay made a motion to pass Bill No. 2026-03 on first reading and Pro tem Jebaily seconded the motion.

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning, said this ordinance is a “clean-up” of the current code regarding itinerant vendor sales and mobile services. The current ordinance includes definitions and guidelines for itinerant vendors but does not clearly permit them in the use table, requiring Planning Commission approval for public-facing operations, a process not typically followed but required by the Code of Ordinances.

Mr. Dudley explained that itinerant vendor sales include any person, business, or establishment setting up temporarily (no more than 10 days in a 30-day period), such as outdoor sales booths, truckload sales,



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

vehicle-based sales, or outdoor displays. Mobile services refer to onsite provision of commercial or community services, such as dog grooming, vehicle cleaning, or pressure washing. The amendment adds these uses to the Commercial Use table: itinerant vendor sales would be allowed in all districts with conditional requirements, while mobile services would be permitted in all districts. Administrative approvals are recommended to streamline permitting, eliminating the 45–60 day Planning Commission process. Planning Commission voted unanimously (7–0) to recommend the proposed text amendment.

Councilman Braddock asked if a decal or some type of identification could be given to the vendors to show they have been permitted. Mr. Dudley said city staff could look into providing a decal or alternate identification to vendors. The vendor would be issued a paper or electronic copy of a permit that they could keep on hand and produce if needed. Mr. Dudley did note a decal would make it a lot easier for enforcement measures.

Council voted unanimously (5-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2026-03 was passed on first reading.

Bill No. 2026-04 – First Reading

An Ordinance to amend the City of Florence *Unified Development Ordinance* regarding in-home childcare facilities.

Councilman Braddock made a motion to pass Bill No. 2026-04 on first reading and Councilman McCall seconded the motion.

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning, explained that the proposed amendment represents another “cleanup” of the City’s current code related to in-home childcare facilities. Traditionally, in-home childcare facilities have been defined as those serving six or more children, with larger facilities required to meet special conditions and obtain approval from the Board of Zoning Appeals. However, staff discovered that some facilities were being permitted under the City’s small in-home childcare provisions, but when they sought state approval, the state fire code limited occupancy to no more than five children, creating a conflict.

Mr. Dudley said that the amendment would align the City’s code with state fire regulations by defining small in-home childcare facilities as serving up to five children, while large in-home childcare facilities would include six to twelve children. Larger facilities would still require Board of Zoning Appeals approval because of the potential for greater neighborhood impacts at that scale. He also noted that larger facilities must meet more stringent residential fire code standards, which could include the installation of sprinkler systems and other safety measures. Overall, the intent is to bring the City’s regulations into alignment with applicable state codes.

Councilman McCall asked whether Section C was a new addition, and Mr. Dudley confirmed that it was. He clarified that while the City previously had conditions for large in-home childcare facilities, the term itself had not been clearly defined in the code.

Councilman Braddock asked whether the regulations would apply to all homes or only certain types, such as single-family residences. Mr. Dudley responded that small in-home childcare has historically been permitted in any home regardless of zoning, including under the previous zoning code. Large in-home childcare has also been permitted, but special exception requirements were added with the adoption of the Unified Development Ordinance in 2018.

Councilman Braddock asked whether the use could be limited to certain districts, such as commercial reuse areas, and expressed concern that square footage and other standards were not clearly defined. He



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

also asked whether six to twelve children could potentially be accommodated in a townhouse. Mr. Dudley responded that it could be possible, but the Department of Public Health would be responsible for inspecting the home to ensure compliance with state regulations, as the City does not conduct that level of inspection. Councilman Braddock then asked whether the Department of Public Health regulates the number of children per square footage. Mr. Dudley reviewed the state regulations and clarified that large in-home childcare facilities are limited to single-family detached dwellings. Additional requirements include compliance with all Department of Public Health standards, separation from other childcare facilities by at least 1,000 feet, limited signage, employees residing in the dwelling, and ensuring the use does not create traffic or noise burdens on neighboring properties. Adequate temporary parking and drop-off areas must also be provided, and the property owner must approve the use.

Councilman Braddock referenced a prior situation that raised safety concerns and asked whether the definitions and regulations could be further clarified. Mr. Dudley responded that staff could review the conditions to determine whether additional specificity is needed. He also noted that since the current code provisions were adopted, only two cases have come before the Board of Zoning Appeals, and both were denied due to safety and noise concerns.

Councilman McCall sought clarification that the amendment's primary purpose was to comply with state regulations by changing the threshold from six children to five and by formally defining small and large categories. Mr. Dudley reiterated that both small and large in-home childcare facilities are already allowed under the City's code; the amendment simply provides clearer definitions. Councilman McCall expressed concern that increasing government regulations contributes to rising childcare costs, stating that while some regulation is necessary, additional requirements can create financial burdens.

Councilman Braddock agreed with Councilman McCall and shared similar concerns about the amendment. Mr. Clint Moore, Assistant City Manager of Development, explained that the state permits facilities serving up to twelve children but distinguishes between small and large operations at the six-child threshold. Once a facility reaches six children, additional staffing, fire suppression systems, and other requirements are triggered. Mr. Moore emphasized that clearly distinguishing between small and large categories is important because state law allows municipalities to regulate or restrict those uses if deemed appropriate.

Mayor Barnes made a motion to discuss Bill No. 2026-04 in Executive Session to receive legal advice and Councilman McCall seconded the motion.

Council voted (5-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2026-04 will be discussed in Executive Session.

Bill No. 2026-05 – First Reading

An Ordinance authorizing the conveyance of property located at 804 Waverly Avenue, identified as Florence County Tax Map Number 90061-11-015, to facilitate the construction of a home which will be marketed for sale at prices based on fair market value as part of the neighborhood redevelopment efforts within the City of Florence.

Councilman McCall made a motion to pass Bill No. 2026-05 on first reading and Pro tem Jebaily seconded the motion.

Mr. Jerry Dudley, Director of Planning, said this property is located in the Community Development Block Grant district. A developer agreement will be coming before Council potentially next month regarding this property at second reading.



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

Council voted unanimously (5-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2026-05 was passed on first reading.

Bill No. 2026-06 – First Reading

An Ordinance to amend the budget for Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026.

Councilman McCall made a motion to pass Bill No. 2026-06 on first reading and Pro tem Jebaily seconded the motion.

Mr. Glenn Bodenheimer, Interim Finance Director, said the objective for this ordinance is to amend the General Fund budget for Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026 in order to appropriate funding for early purchases. This is an annual ordinance that is done after the audit is completed. Mr. Bodenheimer also noted this ordinance was discussed at the budget work session in January. These purchases are one-time, non-recurring expenditures and they are capital in nature, meaning they're multiple years of usage. These purchases will be funded using excess unassigned fund balance remaining from Fiscal Year 2024-25. This is important because it's using savings that the city has rather than future tax revenues or recurring revenue streams Mr. Bodenheimer highlighted some of the projects and purchases in the ordinance including facility improvements at the City Center Farmers Market, replacement of patrol vehicles, the purchase of fire safety equipment such as breathing apparatuses to stay in compliance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards, the purchase of a new tree truck for Beautification and Facilities, and the purchase of a mobile jumbotron screen for Carolina Bank Field, a requirement for the Coastal Plain League.

Pro tem Jebaily asked for clarification if these purchases were presented at the Budget Work Session in January. Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager, confirmed and noted it was also presented to the Finance, Audit and Budget Committee, and the Committee voted to recommend the approval of this ordinance.

Council voted unanimously (5-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2026-06 was passed on first reading.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 2026-05

A Resolution to proclaim February 22-28, 2026 as Montessori Education Week in the City of Florence.

Councilman McCall made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2026-05 and Councilman McKay seconded the motion.

Mayor Barnes presented the Resolution to Ms. Elizabeth Kahn, Director of the Montessori School of Florence. Ms. Kahn thanked Council for the recognition.

Council voted unanimously (5-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2026-05 was passed.

Resolution No. 2026-06

A Resolution to recognize March as Women's History Month in the City of Florence.

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2026-06 and Councilman Braddock seconded the motion.



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

Mayor Barnes presented the Resolution to Women in Philanthropy. Women in Philanthropy thanked Council for the recognition.

Council voted unanimously (5-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2026-06 was passed.

Resolution No. 2026-07

A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to return funding associated with sanitation pickup to the City of Lake City, South Carolina.

Council voted 4-1 to move this item to Executive Session. This item will be discussed in Executive Session.

Resolution No. 2026-08

A Resolution and Conditional Grant and Development Agreement to provide an incentive for the development of new housing within East Florence as part of the ongoing Neighborhood Redevelopment Project.

Mayor Barnes said this item may be discussed in Executive Session. Without objection, this item will be discussed in Executive Session.

Resolution No. 2026-09

A Resolution and Conditional Grant and Development Agreement to provide an incentive for the development of new housing within East Florence as part of the ongoing Neighborhood Redevelopment Project.

Mayor Barnes said this item may be discussed in Executive Session. Without objection, this item will be discussed in Executive Session.

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Appointments to Boards and Commissions

Mayor Barnes said this item may be discussed in Executive Session. Without objection, this item will be discussed in Executive Session.

Mauldin and Jenkins, CPAs and Advisors

Mr. Glenn Bodenheimer, Interim Finance Director, introduced Mr. Grant Davis of Mauldin & Jenkins CPAs and Advisors. Mr. Davis presented the city's annual comprehensive financial report for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 to Council. He explained that two documents were issued: the annual comprehensive financial report with the auditor's opinions and the auditor's discussion and analysis. Three reports were issued within the annual comprehensive financial report. The first report is the independent auditor's report, which confirmed the City received an unmodified (clean) opinion. The management discussion analysis provides discussion and analysis as to why revenues increased, why assets increased, et cetera.

The second report is on internal controls, compliance with laws and regulations and adherence to grant agreements. This report does not provide an opinion, but it offers negative assurance. The auditing firm conducts the audit according to government auditing standards, and if any instances of non-compliance or internal control issues arise, they are required to report those findings. There were no instances of



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

noncompliance found. Mr. Davis did note one internal control deficiency, which is reported in the document itself, but the city still received a clean report in this area.

The third and final report is the federal single audit report, triggered when a city spends over \$750,000 in federal funds in a given fiscal year. The firm audited expenditures related to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Program. The result was another clean opinion on compliance with federal expenditure guidelines.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Scotty Davis, City Manager, reported that Florence County Legislative Day is scheduled for February 10 at the Columbia Museum of Art. He also noted that the South Carolina Ethics Report is due March 29th by noon. Mr. Davis shared that the City recently received a Tree Canopy Mapping grant from the Green Infrastructure Center, which will allow staff to map the city's urban forest and enhance its Geographic Information System (GIS). He commended Mr. Swindler and the Public Works Department for their work in securing and implementing the grant.

Mr. Davis also highlighted last week's winter weather event, reporting five fires in the area and very few vehicle accidents. However, several commercial sprinkler systems failed due to the cold, causing issues at multiple properties. Using the City's ability to monitor water usage, city staff identified approximately 700 customers with continuous water flow, indicating broken service lines. City staff were able to notify affected users and shut off water to prevent further damage. While there was a slight decrease in water pressure during the event, only one City-owned line broke, an 8-inch main located in a wooded area at the Country Club of South Carolina, which staff successfully located using a drone. No trees were reported down, and overall, the City experienced minimal impacts from the storm.

Pro tem Jebaily commended city staff for their work during the winter weather event.

MAYORAL REPORT

Mayor Barnes said the issue was discussed during the January Budget Work Session to keep the community informed about the City's infrastructure and ongoing projects. She referenced the water event that occurred in 2024, noting that problems with the City's water system date back decades, as far as the 1990s. She commended City staff for their hard work and dedication in addressing water quality issues and advancing the City's progress. Mayor Barnes emphasized that while the issues will not be resolved overnight, the City has made significant improvements from where it once stood.

Mayor Barnes also shared that the City is in the process of acquiring the property located at the corner of Oakland Avenue and Lucas Street. She noted that progress should be visible soon and expressed her excitement about the opportunity to beautify this gateway into the city.

Mr. Davis noted that the property will be cleaned up, but it will be utilized for additional fuel tanks.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Business Development Committee, Chaired by Pro tem Jebaily

Pro Tem Jebaily reported that the committee received an update on Project Urban Square. He also discussed several city infrastructure projects, expressing his excitement about the progress being made. He concluded by thanking city staff and Council for their continued support and dedication.



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

[Councilman Smith arrived at 2:11pm.]

Community Development Committee, Chaired by Mayor Barnes

Appointments to Building Florence Together

Mayor Barnes made a motion to appoint Kakela Robinson to the Building Florence Together Board of Directors and Councilman McCall seconded the motion. Kakela Robinson was appointed to the Building Florence Together Board of Directors for a term to begin immediately and expire in November 2026.

Finance, Audit and Budget Committee, Chaired by Councilman McCall

Councilman McCall reported that the committee received a presentation from Mauldin & Jenkins, CPAs and Advisors regarding the city's annual financial audit. The committee also reviewed the early purchase ordinance and received an update on the city's towing ordinance. Finally, the committee discussed opioid funding and recommended that Council establish a committee to review future allocations. This ordinance will be brought before Council at next month's meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Barnes said Council will be entering into Executive Session for a discussion regarding a development project as referenced in Resolution No. 2026-08, for a discussion regarding a development project as referenced in Resolution No. 2026-09, for a discussion regarding appointments to city Boards and Commissions, for a discussion of a proposed economic development project located in the downtown redevelopment district, for a discussion and receipt of legal advice regarding proposed contractual arrangements involving the creation of an intergovernmental public body, for a discussion regarding a matter involving the employment of an employee, to receive legal advice for Bill No. 2026-04, and to receive legal advice pursuant to Resolution No. 2026-07.

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to enter into Executive Session and Councilman Smith seconded the motion. Council voted unanimously (6-0) to enter into Executive Session at 2:21pm.

Councilman Braddock made a motion to resume open session and Councilman Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried. Council resumed open session at 4:24pm and took action on the following items:

Bill No. 2026-04 – First Reading

An Ordinance to amend the City of Florence *Unified Development Ordinance* regarding in-home childcare facilities.

Pro tem Jebaily made a motion to defer Bill No. 2026-04 and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (6-0) in favor of the motion. Bill No. 2026-04 was deferred.

Resolution No. 2026-07

A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to return funding associated with sanitation pickup to the City of Lake City, South Carolina.

Due to a lack of motion, Resolution No. 2026-07 was not passed.



Resolution No. 2026-08

A Resolution and Conditional Grant and Development Agreement to provide an incentive for the development of new housing within East Florence as part of the ongoing Neighborhood Redevelopment Project.

Councilman McCall made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2026-08 and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (6-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2026-08 was passed.

Resolution No. 2026-09

A Resolution and Conditional Grant and Development Agreement to provide an incentive for the development of new housing within East Florence as part of the ongoing Neighborhood Redevelopment Project.

Councilman McCall made a motion to pass Resolution No. 2026-09 and Councilman Smith seconded the motion.

Council voted unanimously (6-0) in favor of the motion. Resolution No. 2026-09 was passed.

Appointments to Boards and Commissions

Mr. Davis presented the packet of appointments to Boards and Commissions to Council.

Design Review Board

Councilman McCall deferred his nomination to the Board.

Construction and Maintenance Board of Adjustments and Appeals

Mayor Barnes deferred remaining nominations to the Board.

Resilience and Sustainability Advisory Committee

Councilman Smith deferred his nomination to the Board.

Public Safety Citizen's Review Board

Councilman Braddock deferred his nomination to the Board.

Board of Zoning Appeals

Mayor Barnes made a motion to appoint Oforiwa Gregg to the Board of Zoning Appeals. Oforiwa Gregg was appointed to the Board of Zoning Appeals for a term to begin immediately and expire on June 30, 2026.



**FLORENCE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 9, 2026**

Veterans Park Committee

Councilman Smith made a motion to appoint Martin Quick to the Veterans Park Committee. Martin Quick was appointed to the Veterans Park Committee for a term to begin immediately and expire on June 30, 2030.

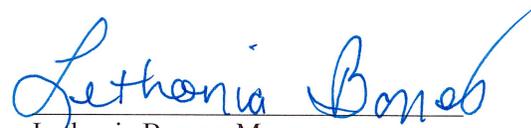
ADJOURN

Without objection, the February 9, 2026 Regular meeting of City Council was adjourned at 4:28pm.

Dated this 9th day of March 2026.



Casey C. Moore, Municipal Clerk



Lethonia Barnes, Mayor