

THE OLANTA TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday, September 3, 2026, 6:30 P.M.
Town of Olanta Community Center
215 Main St, Olanta, SC 29114

PRESENT:

Michael W. Welch, Mayor
Josh Jones
Levi Mims

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, a notice of the regular meeting of the Olanta Town Council was posted on the door of the Olanta Town Hall. A notice of the regular meeting was also provided to members of the public requesting copies.

CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Welch called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for their attendance. Mr. Josh Jones gave the invocation. Mayor Welch led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA–THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2026, TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Welch requested a motion for Council to approve the agenda as presented for September 3, 2026, regular town council meeting. Council Member Jones made a motion to approve the agenda. Council Member Mims seconded the motion. The agenda for the September 3, 2026, meeting was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA–THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 2026, TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Welch requested a motion for Council to approve the agenda as presented for August 6, 2026, regular town council meeting. Council Member Mims made a motion to approve the agenda. Council Member Jones seconded the motion. The agenda for the August 6, 2026, meeting was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA–THURSDAY, AUGUST 25, 2026, TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Mayor Welch requested a motion for Council to approve the agenda as presented for August 25, 2026, special town council meeting. Council Member Jones made a motion to approve the agenda. Council Member Mims seconded the motion. The agenda for the August 25, 2026, meeting was approved unanimously.

Special Recognition

Yard of the month: 303 Liberty St – Allean Wilson

Old Business

A. SCIP GRANT A-23-C154 WATER EXPANSION - UPDATE

Mayor Welch informed the council All SCIP grant funds have been disbursed. Approximately \$450,000 remains to be disbursed from county penny sales tax funding. The project, originally expected to be completed by the end of July, has been delayed while the contractor obtains components for two valves. Completion and closeout are expected after those components arrive.

B. SRF GRANT 210006-05 LEAD/COPPER/ASBESTOS LINE REPLACEMENT/WATER TANK REHAB

Mayor Welch informed council Bids were opened August 12 and accepted at the August 25 special meeting. Division I covers water-main replacement, including Hampton Street. The reported bid was \$1,166,067.20; Barwick Plumbing was reported as the contractor. Division II covers rehabilitation of the Avondale water tank. Utility Service Company was reported as the contractor at \$362,900. The reported combined total was \$1,528,967.20, leaving an estimated contingency of \$178,613.80. The Hampton Street work will replace approximately one mile of six-inch asbestos line with eight-inch PVC line, increasing capacity and helping water pressure.

C. RIA VIABILITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM MEETING ON AUGUST 25,2026

Mayor Welch informed council that the August 25 assessment meeting was reported as successful. The assessment team reviewed town finances and assets and requested supporting information. The team will return October 8 to present its rapid assessment. The October regular council meeting was rescheduled from October 1 to October 8 so the presentation can be included. Council discussed the challenge of forecasting water-system growth where installed taps have not yet become active customers.

NEW BUSINESS

A. SALE OF OLD LIBRARY (APPRAISAL)

Mayor Welch informed council that an appraisal related to the possible sale of the former library property remains pending. Council expects an update in October or November, depending on the timing of the RIA assessment presentation.

B. RESOLUTION 20260903-01 ACCEPTANCE OF LOAN ASSISTANCE FRM SRF

Mayor Welch read the resolution 20260903-01 considered a resolution accepting loan-assistance funds from the South Carolina Water Quality Revolving Fund Authority for the water-system rehabilitation project and authorizing the mayor to execute the loan-assistance agreement, attested by the town clerk. The resolution acknowledged compliance with applicable state and federal requirements and the conditions governing principal forgiveness. Mayor Welch requested a motion for Council to approve the resolution as read. Council Member Mims made a motion to approve the agenda. Council Member Jones seconded the motion. The resolution was approved unanimously.

C. ARC DEVICE FOR TOWN HALL, RAINES CENTER, AND POLICE VEHICLE

Mayor Welch informed council that he was interested in obtaining automated external defibrillators for Town Hall and for field use. Staff and designated users will need CPR and AED training, which may be coordinated through the fire department. Three equipment options were presented. Council reached consensus to proceed with the four-year-battery option and directed staff to obtain an invoice and place the order. The quoted amount was \$3,565.85.

D. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL

1. **Water & Sewer** – Council reviewed and agreed to mail a community notice with water bills. The notice will address winterizing water and sewer lines, keeping grass clippings out of streets, rooster nuisances, leash and pet-waste requirements, stray-animal response, and permit requirements for construction or remodeling. Council clarified that complaints concerned nuisance roosters rather than hens. Florence County animal services was reported to be at capacity and accepting animals posing an immediate threat as space permits.

2. **Grants and Economic Development** – A Duke Energy Main Street revitalization grant application has been submitted. If awarded, the funds are intended for rehabilitation of the former office building after operations are moved. Council also discussed using a roll-off container to clean out the building. A Keep Florence Beautiful grant application was submitted for 20 dogwood trees. Proposed planting locations included Park, Town Hall, and additional suitable areas in town
3. **Public Safety** – NONE
4. **Events Report**
 - A. Gator Festival – Festival planning is underway. Live bands are expected on October 29, 30, and 31. Council discussed vendor and activity placement and noted concerns about the carnival being farther from the main festival area.
 - B. Main Street: Thursday Night Live 2026 Events – The next Thursday Night Live event is scheduled for September 24 and is expected to feature the Pink Slips band.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A resident raised a water-pressure concern. Staff indicated that S and T would be asked to perform a pressure test at the residence.

The resident was advised to consider installing an accessible private shutoff valve when plumbing repairs are performed

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before Council, Mayor Welch asked for a motion to adjourn. Council Member Mims made a motion to adjourn, and Council Member Jones seconded the motion. There was no opposition to the vote, and the meeting was adjourned.