

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
COUNCIL CHAMBER**

Regular Meeting  
January 10, 2023

The one hundred thirty-sixth meeting of the City Council of Charleston was held this date convening at 5:05 p.m. at City Hall and over video conference call (Zoom).

A notice of this meeting and an agenda were made available on the City's website January 5, 2023 and appeared in the Post and Courier on January 9, 2023.

**PRESENT (13)**

The Honorable John J. Tecklenburg, Mayor

Councilmember Gregg	District 1	Councilmember Waring	District 7
Councilmember Shealy	District 2	Councilmember Seekings	District 8
Councilmember Sakran	District 3	Councilmember Shahid	District 9
Councilmember Mitchell	District 4	Councilmember Bowden	District 10
Councilmember Brady	District 5	Councilmember Appel	District 11
Councilmember Gregorie	District 6	Councilmember Parker	District 12

Mayor Tecklenburg called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

The Clerk called the roll.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "If you all would like to join us, Councilmember Shealy will lead us in an [invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.](#)"

Councilmember Shealy opened the meeting with an invocation.

Councilmember Shealy then led City Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you kindly, Councilmember Shealy, a great prayer to start the new year. I wish my good wishes to everyone for a happy, successful, prosperous 2023. I think we're going to have a good year. I do want to inform everyone, I know most of you all have been here before, but in the most unlikely event that we would need to evacuate the building, we just have these two exit doors here from the Main Chamber and that one exit door over there. If that were to occur, I'd ask not to use the elevator, but use the two stairs going down, and then we've only got one stair going out the front door. So, that's the way out just, in case in the most unlikely event we were called to get out of the building.

So, we have a few presentations and recognitions tonight. First I'd like to ask Councilmember Shahid to join me up here to make a proclamation recognizing Law Enforcement Appreciation Day."

Councilmember Shahid said, "Mr. Mayor."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "And I don't know that Chief--"

Councilmember Shahid said, "He's parking his car, so he should be up here in a few minutes."

Councilmember Seekings said, "He's on the way up."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Chief Reynolds is on his way up, and we want to wait for him."

Councilmember Shahid said, "Yes, we definitely want to wait for him."

Mayor Tecklenburg continued, "So, I will proceed, with Council's forbearance, with number two which is the [recognition of our 2022 Mayor Pro Tem, Councilmember and Mayor Pro Tem, Karl Brady](#). Please come forward and join me. I have a little presentation for him commemorating his service over the last year. I know it's been said it might be the loneliest Mayor Pro Tem job in town, but there were some meetings, a number of meetings, that Councilmember/Mayor Pro Tem Brady represented myself and the City of Charleston. We want to thank you for your service, Mayor Pro Tem Brady. Thank you for a year well done."

There was applause in the Chamber.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Would you like to make some remarks?"

Councilmember Brady said, "Sure. I wasn't prepared to, but I do want to thank Mayor Tecklenburg for letting me be Mayor Tem this year. It's always good to get to go around the City and just kind of see the vibrancy because I think a lot of us are kind of in our own districts and kind of in the day-to-day grind with that. But, being able to go all over the City, see the vibrancy, I got really good at cutting ribbons, that was pretty neat with those giant scissors. It's actually harder than you think. I offered to train the incoming Mayor Pro Tem, Councilmember Sakran, on how to do that, but I did also want to thank Mayor Tecklenburg for entrusting me with the position when he had to be out sick and I had to run Council, as well, and thank the Clerk's office for helping me get through that and make sure we had an orderly meeting. Thank you to all of my colleagues for the honor, as well, and look forward to working with Councilmember Sakran."

There was applause in the Chamber.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "So, I see Chief Reynolds is here, but to finish this theme on out, I'd like to ask Councilmember Jason Sakran to join me up here. According to our current Code, the one position that needs Council's consent each year is the [appointment of the Mayor Pro Tem](#). I hereby recommend to you that we elect Councilmember Sakran to be Mayor Pro Tem of the City of Charleston this year. I think he proved to us all his selfless act when we went through our redistricting discussion and action this year, what a true servant, and selfless servant he is to our City, and without further ado, could I ask for Council a motion to approve Councilmember Sakran as our Mayor Pro Tem?"

Councilmember Waring said, "Move for approval."

Councilmember Gregorie said, "Second."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "We have a motion and a second. Any discussion?"

No one asked to speak.

On a motion of Councilmember Waring, seconded by Councilmember Gregorie, City Council voted unanimously to appoint Councilmember Jason Sakran as the 2023 Mayor Pro Tem.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Let the record show it was unanimous. Welcome, Mayor Pro Tem Sakran. Please come forward. We congratulate you, thank you, and please make any remarks you would like."

Councilmember Sakran said, "Thank you for the honor. I hope to follow in Councilmember Brady's footsteps. I'll be calling you often for tips. Mayor, try to keep your schedule packed as much as possible, and I look forward to the honor. So, thank you very much."

There was applause in the Chamber.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "So, now, I'd like to call on Chief Reynolds and Councilmember Shahid to join me up here. We have a [proclamation recognizing Law Enforcement Appreciation Day](#), and I'm also joined by our Deputy Chiefs Chito Walker and Dustin Thompson. Thank you all for being with us. If I may share the proclamation, call on the Chief, and then I'll call on Councilmember Shahid to make a few remarks."

Mayor Tecklenburg read the proclamation.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you."

There was a standing ovation in the Chamber.

Chief Luther Reynolds said, "Wow. I look around me, and I see the amazing people of the Lowcountry, generations of people. I stand here in this amazing Chamber, and I believe that we have a noble profession that is extremely important, what we do, how we do it, why we do it, how we treat people with dignity and respect. I think our profession has come a long ways, but I know that we have a ways to go, and we have a lot of work to do. That's a real mouthful, all of our partners that you just mentioned, but if we could put them all in this room, we would have. We talked about trying to get more people here just to recognize all of our partners because we can't do it without our partners. I just spoke with Chief Keel on my way in here this afternoon about some important issues in the Port, and just other things that are happening around the State. So, I stand here on behalf of all our partners, on behalf of the Charleston Police Department, the men and women who come here from all places. People like to be in Charleston, I'll tell you that. It makes recruiting easier, not easy but easier, to be in such a great jurisdiction with so many great people. This type of support is not common everywhere else, and I can tell you it helps us with our recruitment, with our retention, to attract the best. I'm grateful for you, I'm grateful for this City, I'm grateful for this proclamation, the support that we have from our Council, from our Mayor, from our community, from our troops, our command, and from all of you. Thank you so much."

There was applause in the Chamber.

Councilmember Shahid said, "Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and I just want to follow up. I literally stumbled upon yesterday it was Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, and I went back and looked at the history of this. As I was drafting this proclamation for submission, and I went

through all of the local law enforcement agencies, and I think the Chief has talked about this countless times, we cannot do this alone. It takes us here in Council, the Mayor's Office, and our partners from the Federal, State, and local level. Our number one responsibility to our community is to make sure our community is safe, and we do not thank these men and women who literally put their lives on the line every day for us. It's not just a property, it's our home and our safety, and our sense of community, and our sense of being safe. So, to take a few moments out of our busy day, yesterday students from Charleston Catholic School came to the Police Headquarters and handed out thank you notes to the Chief. I couldn't hear their voices, but they told the Chief why they were happy and why they wanted to thank them for the job well done. It's just an important part of our community. We see the shootings in schools every day now and, unfortunately, a six-year-old shot a teacher the other day, and so we know that our lives are always at risk, but we feel a level of safety and security. We all thank you all very much for the work that you all do. Thank you all for putting up with me on these last comments, but this is something we just need to do on a yearly basis. Thank you, Chief."

Chief Reynolds said, "Thank you."

There was applause in the Chamber.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Alright. So, then the last recognition, or matter under this section is the [City Council Committees](#) that have been distributed to you all, actually, a couple of times now over the last couple of weeks. We have on the agenda tonight, my colleagues', under First Readings, amendment to the rules as was brought up at our last City Council meeting. By virtue of our current rules, I am submitting this to you, my recommendations for these committees. I will pledge to you that if we pass any change to this set of rules, I'll bring this back to you to get your confirmation on my recommendations. Yes, sir. Alright. So, we can move right along, unless anybody's got discussion with the [approval of City Council minutes from December 6, 2022.](#)"

Councilmember Brady said, "Move for approval."

Councilmember Shealy said, "Second."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "We have a motion to approve. Any additions, deletions, or suggestions?"

No one asked to speak.

On a motion of Councilmember Brady, seconded by Councilmember Shealy, City Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2022 City Council meeting.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Next up already is our [Citizens Participation Period](#). Thank you, citizens, for coming and sharing with us. How many folks we got?"

The Clerk said, "We have 17 people signed up to speak."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Let's do 90 seconds each. Madam Clerk will call out your name. Please, when you come forward, state your name and address clearly, and we'll allow some time for each of you to share with us. Madam Clerk."

Councilmember Waring was excused from the Chamber at 5:22 p.m.

The Clerk said, "Alright. The time is a minute and a half. Anthony Bryant."

1. Anthony Bryant held up a returned envelope and said that was his physical address. He said the Department of Treasury refused his IG request on the C.A.R.E.S. Act and ARPA funding because there was no measurable measurement, and no measurable outcomes offering C.A.R.E.S. Act money to low to moderate income communities. His communication was refused on December 20<sup>th</sup>, decided by the Court of Appeals Judge Niemeyer ruled on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. He went into the library, and under 16-11-625 Trespassing, the same police officer came in and accosted an unhoused man, addicted and hungry. On December 28<sup>th</sup>, he was on his street of Courtland Avenue and an unhoused man was trespassing in his own neighborhood. He said under Harlow vs. Fitzgerald, 1982, it was qualified immunity. He said they didn't talk about qualified immunity when they gave their award to the Federal and State government, but they could just use force on Black folks for about a hundred years. He said that could have happened to him over the holidays. He said in House Bills 3049 and 3050, the Law Enforcement Integrity Act was not mentioned. That meant now they had to file a direct complaint to SLED, whereas before they had to get it from the police officer, the sheriff for their lawful jurisdiction, and the Attorney General's Office. He would now file his complaints directly.

Councilmember Seekings was excused from the Chamber at 5:24 p.m.

The Clerk said, "Time. Lin Kuhl Jay."

2. Lin Kuhl Jay said she lived on Commodore Road in Yonges Island. She was a member of KKBE downtown and actively involved in the Charleston Area Justice Ministry, along with thousands of other community members. She said Councilmember Gregg represented her congregation. They hoped that Council had noticed they were feeling festive, as they wanted to kick the new year off right and they hoped Council did, too. She said to help Council with that, they spent a lot of time reflecting over what they thought should be Council's New Year's resolutions. They hoped Council would seriously consider adopting them. She asked Council to make decisions that made it easier to sleep at night by correcting their mistakes they had made and continued to make over Gadsden Creek. She said they had a list of resolutions if Council needed some help.

Councilmember Seekings returned to the Chamber at 5:25 p.m.

The Clerk said, "Alice Wakefield."

3. Alice Wakefield said she lived at 137 Church Street and was actively involved in the Charleston Area Justice Ministry. She said another New Year's resolution was for Council to work out their relationship with their constituents. The community had shown up on the Gadsden Creek issue time and time again. When the issue first came up at Burke High School, the hall was packed with Council's constituents who were against the filling in of Gadsden Creek. She presented 300 more postcards urging Council to restore Gadsden Creek. She told Council to work out their relationship with their constituents by working on their courage to do the right thing.

Councilmember Waring returned to the Chamber at 5:26 p.m.

The Clerk said, "Zac Viscidi."

4. Zac Viscidi said 2011 was the last time the Pedicab Program was expanded, and it would have been impossible for him to summarize all of the changes to the City that had occurred over the last 12 years. In an attempt to conceptualize that, he gave Council the background. He said 13 new hotels had been built in the City. He wasn't talking about small AirBnbs, he was talking about large places, the Hyatt House, the Saint, the Loutrel, the Spectator, a Holiday Inn, a Hilton Club, the Bennett, and the Dewberry. He said those were large hotels that brought hundreds if not thousands of people every single day to the City. He asked how were they going to get around. He said if Councilmember Seekings had it his way, they would park their cars generating revenue for the City, and a local business could bring them in transit from one business to another. People could experience the City in a truly unique way. He implored Council in February to release the bid Council set forth, as they would have never started it had Council not taken that action. They started their own business based on Council's creation of a bid. He said support small business and run the bid that Council promised to hold one year ago.

The Clerk said, "Reece Kimsey."

5. Reece Kimsey said he was the applicant with Middleburg Communities regarding the Southwick Drive rezoning. He said the request was six units per acre which fit squarely within the City's Comprehensive Plan for that location for four to eight units per acre. At the last meeting, Council deferred their request and asked them to explore adding an affordable housing component to their project plan. As such, they came forward with an amended plan that committed land and allowable density to Sea Island Habitat for Humanity at no cost. They committed to providing Habitat with six units of allowable density and/or one acre of land within their plan. The area for Habitat was in the northwest section of the site and already included access via a road stub out from Stanwick Drive. They spoke with Habitat for Humanity, and they were supportive of the plan. The Sea Island Restore location was right around the corner at Southwick Drive, and they strongly supported and aligned with their mission of bringing people together to build homes, community, and hope. They were a local developer and long-term community partner that had invested in the prosperity of Johns Island and Charleston as a whole.

The Clerk said, "Alan McMahon."

6. Alan McMahon said he was a development manager with the Beach Company at 320 Broad Street, Suite 600, Charleston 29401. He was there to tack onto the Law Enforcement Appreciation sentiments of record earlier. He said there was a bad fire at their Stono Oaks Project on November 30<sup>th</sup>, and as bad as it was, they lost two buildings, but it could have been a lot worse if it wasn't for the first responders, if it wasn't for the City of Charleston Fire Department and the St. Johns Fire Department. There was one fireman injured from heat exhaustion, but thankfully he was okay, and they recognized his sacrifice and everybody putting themselves in harm's way. He thanked the City, the first responders, and law enforcement. He said Detective Jackson was there the night of the fire and was very helpful to them, as well Detective William Crocket since, and Chief Julazadeh was a great asset to the City. He thanked the City and the first responders.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you, sir."

The Clerk said, "Stacey Bailey."

7. Stacey Bailey said she lived at 39 Alberta Avenue on the Upper Peninsula. She thanked the City, the Police Department, the SCDOT, the elected officials in Charleston, and Charleston Moves for being so responsive and great partners in helping solve the safety concerns they had on the Upper Peninsula. They were experiencing high, heavy traffic volumes, especially in the morning and the afternoon in the areas around King and Rutledge walking to and from school, and the cars were moving really fast. She had personally had close calls with her young children. She said Councilmember Sakran had been a great asset to assure her that they were working on it and bringing some people together. She said they were trying to focus their attention on Rutledge and Simmons, Rutledge and Moultrie, King and Moultrie, and King and Grove, as those were the four intersections around the four schools, and home to hundreds of students and families in the area that walked and biked there on a daily basis. They were requesting bull belts or curb extensions at the four intersections, which should have included rectangular rapid flashing beacons. Those improvements were consistent with the City-wide Transportation Plan from 2018 that was already approved, so they weren't asking for anything out of the ordinary. They didn't need additional studies, as the time to act was now. Her kids were little, and they were going to grow up going to those schools, and she wanted to be able to walk, bike, and enjoy the streets whether the trees were butchered or not, so they could enjoy their neighborhood. She appreciated all that Council did for the town, and she hoped they would be able to come to some funding for those improvements.

The Clerk said, "Joseph Watson."

8. Joseph Watson said he had lived at 62 America Street for 64 years, and he had seen the changes within the Eastside. He also saw a need for the Eastside. He thanked Council for listening to him, because after their meeting last Wednesday, he was told by his Councilman 'no' 12 times, and that he didn't want to hear him. He said that wasn't public service. That was not how to reach out their heart and hand to help the needs of Charleston. He hoped Council now reached out and realized what they were going through. He said the lady was killed in the accident. He knew her because every morning when he walked the Peninsula she was outside, and they would have a conversation about her losing her leg and the inner strength that she needed to be able to get beyond that, just like the Chief, and the discussion he had with him since then, and telling him that he was going to pray for him, strengthening the person so they want to go on with life. He told Council to look at what was taken away from her. He said over six years ago, they brought it to the department with Mr. Somerville, and had a meeting about the Eastside and what they needed to see. Speed bumps, especially right there on the corner of South and East Bay, to put the lights up there because too many people crossing the street were coming to the Post Office were in danger, and between the lights on the corner of Chapel and Columbus, people raced through trying to catch the next light.

The Clerk said, "Time."

Mr. Watson said something needed to be done. He asked Council if they would apply themselves, or if he took the fall for what happened because they got him to realize the concerns of the community. He asked if Council would wait and not get a survey of what all was going on there and now move forward. There were other ways they could fund it, not just the ways they said in the newspaper. He thanked Council for listening to him.

The Clerk said, "Alex Ziegler."

9. Alex Ziegler said he wanted to add to what Ms. Bailey was saying about the safety improvements on the Upper Peninsula for pedestrians. He thought many of them agreed that Charleston was a walking city, and it was one of the reasons they loved it. He said their kids got to enjoy that when they got to walk to school, when they got to ride their scooters to school, and ride their bikes. He said they were interacting with the cars on the Upper Peninsula at a high level so the odds of a catastrophic event were relatively high every day when the kids were going to school and the people were going to work. He said anything they could do to decrease the odds for their children of having an injury, a catastrophic event, he thought they should do. He thought those were reasonable improvements to those four intersections, and he urged the City to continue on the quest to get those installed.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you, sir."

The Clerk said, "Peter Derry."

10. Peter Derry, 59 Simmons Street, said he was there to speak on the pedestrian safety concerns for the Upper Peninsula. He was the father of two young children that attended neighborhood schools and the husband of a public school elementary teacher at James Simmons Elementary. He said the increased traffic, speeding, and driving while texting had made the walk to and from their schools unsafe with way too many accidents and close calls for their children and parents on their walks to and from school. He implored Council to find the funding for improvements at the intersections of Rutledge and Simmons, Rutledge and Moultrie, King and Moultrie, and King and Grove. He said the City's Department of Traffic and Transportation had already approved the motion for the increased safety measures, and the time was now to put the safety measures into place before there were anymore children's lives put in jeopardy. He thanked Council and appreciated the City's efforts and law enforcement.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you, sir."

The Clerk said, "And we'll move to the list of speakers who signed up online and if you're joining by telephone, you can press \*6 to unmute yourself. Tony Daniell."

11. Tony Daniell said they had a fire on Burningtrees the night before and that EMS and fire trucks were impeded from getting down the highway to the end of the road. He said some of them made it, and they would see the picture on Channel 5 at the road Councilmember Appel said was an open road which said, 'Dead end.' They were in the parking lot at the school across the street an entire block away from where the incident happened and, ironically, they sent Council one of those silly letters saying they wanted to keep the roads closed. No legal basis, but just they wanted to



because that's what they wanted. The law said they couldn't close a road without a court order, which the City didn't have, and there were other components to the law that even if they got an order from Council, but currently, none of those things applied. His father a having stroke, EMS was impeded, a fire down the road where they had a staging area at the school a block and a half away because they couldn't get to the area. He said Sergeant Davidson rode through the school parking lot trying to find his way to Inverness which was supposed to be open. It was supposed to be open, but the City closed it. Sergeant Davidson asked why it wasn't opened again. Mr. Daniell said somebody had more pull than he did. He asked Council when someone was somebody going to finally explain to him why the roads hadn't been opened.

The Clerk said, "Time. Hank Martin."

12. Hank Martin said he lived at 6 Smith Street, and he was a member of First Scots Church actively involved in the Charleston Area Justice Ministry. He said Auld Lang Syne was translated as 'for times long past.' He hoped Council would find changing those lyrics appropriate for preserving Gadsden wetlands. He sang to the tune of 'Auld Lang Syne,' 'Should we destroy our tidal creek and farm communities' health, Should the City continue on a path creating space for wealth, for auld lang syne my dear, for auld lang syne, a Charleston for all races now, beyond auld lang syne, and here's a hand, my trusty friends, don't fill the creek, It's time to serve a cup of kindness yet, for auld lang syne, for auld lang syne, my dear, for auld lang syne, a Charleston for all races now.'

The Clerk said, "Time."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you, sir."

The Clerk said, "Mark Gould."

13. Mark Gould said he lived at the intersection of Ashley Avenue and the Crosstown. He was a member of the Church of the Holy Communion and actively involved with the Charleston Area Justice Ministry, which had 40 congregations in their organization. He said Councilmember Sakran was his Councilmember. He asked him to also resolve to leave the water in Gadsden Creek. They learned that week from the court case that the City and WestEdge had not been telling them the truth. The truth was, tidal flooding could more easily be solved without the filling in of the marsh. In WestEdge's own documented evidence from the court showed that stormwater flooding would be made worse by WestEdge. He said to leave the water where it was in the creek and restore the creek so that both the creek and the community could flourish.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you, sir."

The Clerk said, "Margaret Ling."

14. Margaret Ling said she lived at 4 Fields Place downtown and was a member of Circular Congregational Church, and actively involved with the Charleston Area Justice Ministry, which was diverse in every way possible. She said Councilmember Sakran was her Councilmember. She said one New Year's resolution to adopt,

instead of resolving to save money, since it was their community's money they were working with, they asked that Council spend it more wisely, and asked that Council stop padding pockets of developers and acting like the City did not already have a plan to restore Gadsden Creek. They learned in a court case that a plan to restore the creek already existed, and the City developed a plan to restore the creek years ago. She told Council to use the tax dollars wisely and ask staff, whose salaries they paid to come up with a plan. She thanked a Councilmember for mentioning the tree situation, as it was atrocious and unacceptable.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you, ma'am."

The Clerk said, "Chris Jennings."

No one asked to speak.

The Clerk said, "Imam Edward Washington."

15. Imam Washington said he lived at 64 Amherst Street in Charleston, and he was a member of Masjid Al-Jami Ar-Rasheed, and actively involved with the Charleston Area Justice Ministry, an organization filled with tenacious community members. He said Councilmember Robert Mitchell was his Councilmember and a 2023 New Year's resolution that they suggested Council adopt instead of resolving to get out of bed early in the morning, they asked that Council resolved to get out of bed with WestEdge. The City's relationship with WestEdge was immoral and reeked of cronyism. He said Charleston kept vowing to do better and to start there, and to do right and to do justice.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you, sir."

The Clerk said, "Rita Kazirskis."

16. Rita Kazirskis said she would like to make another request for the City of Charleston to stop issuing permits to the group who had been coming to the Battery nearly every weekend to wave their flag of Dylann Roof. She reminded Council that they broke a flagpole over the back of a young Black man on videotape. She said Charleston Ordinance #25-44, regarding standards, of issuance that they couldn't get an ordinance from the City if they beat people up. She said if it was okay for a white man waving the flag of Dylann Roof to beat a Black man in the park in Charleston and continue to get permits from the Police, then shame on Charleston. She asked that they please change the ordinance to say that. The ordinance also stated there were to be no vehicles, and only reasonable sized signs at permitted events. If that didn't apply to the local white supremacists who waved an oversized flag on a truck, then she asked them to please update that Code, too. She said for anyone listening who would like for the City of Charleston to quit turning a blind eye to accommodate the spread of white supremacy in the Holy City, to please call and leave a message for the Mayor and City Council at 843-579-6313, which was the public participation line. She encouraged everyone listening to go back and watch the July 29, 2021 Emergency Meeting the Mayor and Council held to pass a new First Amendment Ordinance, where they explained the urgency was to exclude open carry at Charleston permitted events. She said a year and a half later, the City still was not identifying

the specific area where open carry was prohibited, at least at the Battery where the white supremacists continued to gather and got a permit to assemble.

The Clerk said, "Time."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you, ma'am."

The Clerk said, "And, Mr. Idris, did we miss you earlier?"

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Mohammed, you got here a little bit late. Would you like to be heard?"

Mohammed Idris said, "Happy New Year."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Happy New Year to you, as well. Anyone else sign up that hadn't been heard?"

No one else asked to speak.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Alright. Thank you, all, for being with us this evening and for sharing, and bringing a little festive air to it. I'll have to admit to you, that's the first time Council has been serenaded. So, Happy New Year to all. Thank you."

The Clerk said, "And, Mr. Mayor, we did receive some comments online and by telephone. All of the comments received online and by telephone were sent to the Councilmembers in full. This is just a summary. We received 17 comments online and 5 comments by phone that commented against the display of the Confederate Flag at White Point Gardens and permits being issued to Flags of the South. Commenters stated there had been permit violations and that the flag was a symbol of hate, divisiveness, and oppression. We received one comment by telephone in defense of Flags of the South, and those were all of the comments we received."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you so much. Alright."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Mitchell.

Councilmember Mitchell said, "I would like to make a comment pertaining to what happened to the young lady on East Bay Street. When I heard about it, and I heard someone say there was going to be a press conference up there, I didn't know anything about it as no one ever contacted me. Even my good friend, the State representative was there, but I didn't know anything about it. But, I feel that if we are going to do something like that, that it's a tragedy in a district that we represent, I think we all should have gotten together from the State level to the County level, to the local level along with the Neighborhood President in that particular area, to show more teeth, because they've got to remember that even though that particular street is a State street, we still have to go to the State to try to get permission to get these things done. The City of Charleston just cannot go and do it. So, I want people to know that this is not the City of Charleston per se, it's the State that we have to go through. From that point, I called the Mayor and I put my suggestion in, and a letter had already been issued to the State, sent to the State, asking them to come and look at that particular area to see if we can do a marking there and putting a flashing light there to try to slow the traffic down because in that area, it's pretty dark at night, and traffic is really flowing on East Bay Street. If you ever drive down East Bay

Street, it's a big thoroughfare, but that is a State street. So, we have sent a letter to the State, but it's going to be up to the State to come back and do the investigation to see if it's warranted.

We can keep fighting. It's the same as King and Grove, King and Poinsett. I fought that for years, and the DOT kept tearing me down. I fought it for years right here on Council. We sent letters back to the State and had them to come down and look at it. They said it's not warranted, so they didn't do anything. So, we're still trying again now. I spoke to Mr. Robbie Somerville pertaining to it, and we are still trying to put a walkway there coming from the North Central Apartments, where you have senior citizens living there so they can cross the street, and by Poinsett and King Street, also because you have young people walking back and forth across the streets, so we are working on that now as we speak. This was not just done yesterday, this was done years ago, but we are back at it again trying again, and we still have to go through the State, and the State told me at the time it wasn't warranted. So, we are going back to the State again and trying to get them to come back and do it for safety reasons. This is all about safety for the people that live in the City of Charleston and safety for the young people that live in the City of Charleston. So, those letters have already been sent again, and having the State come back and do it again, and see if we can get them to do it and try to push those things forward. So, I just want to put that issue out there. These have been done since even the young lady was tragically killed on East Bay Street. That has already been done. I have a copy of the letter in my pocket as we speak that went to the State, and also with the King Street also, so we are working on that, and I know Councilmember Sakran was working on it, again. He is doing it again, the same thing I had done years and years ago, but we are still trying and still pushing that also because that is part of the district I represent, and we represent that same area. Thank you very much."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Okay. Thank you, Councilmember Mitchell."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Waring.

Councilmember Waring said, "Yes. I want to thank Councilmember Mitchell for following up on that. I'm showing my age, but in years past we used to have a School Crossing Guard with those kids right there at Rivers Elementary. So, the School District got away from that?"

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Councilmember Sakran I think can address that."

Councilmember Sakran said, "I've become a foremost expert on School Crossing Guards. The School Crossing Guards are actually managed by the Sheriff's Office. They are employed with the Sheriff's Office. The School District requests them, but since COVID, there has been issues with pay, recruitment, and it's my understanding based on our security folks with the School District, that and I'm not sure if this is even public, but I've heard rumors that the Sheriff's Office is discontinuing the program at some point. So, this is an issue for the School District that I think should take up, and you're right."

Councilmember Waring said, "Is there something as a City we can address, as opposed to a Councilmember by himself? I'm just telling you, my aunt used to be a school crossing guard at Highway 61 and Wallace Road, which is a major highway, and I can tell you, she is very good at what she does. She's passed on now, but that's something that we shouldn't allow to happen. When they wanted to take the School Resource Officers out of the schools, didn't we, as a City, get engaged in that? I think the School Crossing Guards and these citizens that came forth are right. Thank you."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Shahid.

Councilmember Shahid said, "I think that what you all are hitting on is a great idea, that maybe we can refer this to the Public Safety Committee and then see what the Police can do about it. Maybe we can work in connection with T&T Committee on that."

Councilmember Mitchell said, "Okay. I'll make a referral to Traffic and Transportation since I'm on the Public Safety Committee, and we will work with the Traffic and Transportation Department along with Public Safety."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Cool. In just a moment on the agenda, we're going to talk about Upper Peninsula or pedestrian safety, so we can talk about this a little more, but let me move through the agenda. First, the appointments, we have one [appointment to the Human Affairs and Racial Conciliation Commission of Reverend Adam Shoemaker.](#)"

Councilmember Seekings said, "Move for approval."

Councilmember Waring said, "Second."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Any discussion?"

No one asked to speak.

On a motion of Councilmember Seekings, seconded by Councilmember Waring, City Council voted unanimously to appoint Reverend Adam Shoemaker to the Human Affairs and Racial Conciliation Commission.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you. Now, for [Council Communications](#), in fact, next up requested by Councilmember Sakran is to discuss the [Upper Peninsula Pedestrian Safety and Traffic](#) concerns that we can discuss now. It was also brought up at our Committee on Traffic and Transportation, upon which we took action, and, as Councilmember Mitchell mentioned, those requests have already been sent off to SCDOT by Robbie Somerville, our Director of Traffic and Transportation, both for the improvements of these four intersections, but also for the crosswalk on East Bay Street. And, we did not request a study be done. We know what needs to be done, and we are requesting them to move forward with specific improvements as opposed to, so, it gets down to the funding to be able to pay for those things. If the South Carolina DOT will agree to pay for them, then they can proceed at their own will. We will have to wait and get a response back from them. Anyway, I just thought I would mention that before we get going."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Sakran.

Councilmember Sakran said, "Thank you, Mayor. I'm not going to talk long on this, but I just want to say thank you to the residents that came out tonight, and thank you to the residents who continue to advocate as it's important. Thanks to Chairman Brady and T&T in making sure that it's brought to the forefront, and thank you, Mayor, for making sure that we've got some formal next steps which are getting support from Senator Kimpson, Representative Gilliard, and a formal connection with the State Department of Transportation. Other than that, the request is very simple. It's those four intersections that we're really focused on. We've also given very specific recommendations, so staff has an idea of what that could cost potentially with some of those estimates. So, our challenge now as a community, the residents that are here, is trying to

advocate and find funding to get those solutions done, but we know that those solutions and recommendations are consistent with the 2018 Citywide Study, so we're not asking for anything out of the ordinary. These are imbedded within that study and they're consistent with that. I just want to say thanks for folks coming tonight, thanks Chairman Brady, and those are my comments on this issue."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Appel followed by Councilmember Shahid.

Councilmember Appel said, "Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and thank you, Councilmember Sakran for your efforts on this, and Councilmember Mitchell, for your efforts over the years on this. We all know the complications the City of Charleston faces when we're talking about transportation infrastructure. The DOT tends to own most of the infrastructure, the County has all of the money. We have all of the constituents voicing the concerns, and we are often times faced with the unfortunate position of having to explain to our constituents that the destiny is not really in the City of Charleston's hands. That's unfortunate. The State of South Carolina needs to have structural reforms to make it easier for large municipalities to have more autonomy, authority, and control of resources to act much more efficiently and effectively when it comes to these matters, but we're not solving that today unfortunately. But I do think the City of Charleston has a unique opportunity for once to have its own dedicated funding stream for Traffic Safety Improvement Projects. The City currently does not have a dedicated revenue stream for these purposes. The half-cent sales tax that we all pay goes to Charleston County for them to decide how they want to spend that money. The gas tax and those kind of taxes go up to the State for the legislature to spread the wealth around the State and things of that nature.

The City of Charleston under Act 236, you may have heard about it, we may have talked about it once or twice, the City of Charleston, if we wanted to, could draw a line around the Peninsula and say we're going to come up with a traffic safety fee. It's going to be a flat charge, \$10, \$15, \$20, \$30 on properties downtown, you could tack it onto a property tax bill, that goes into a fund that the City of Charleston maintains that we could put towards exactly this type of effort. It doesn't have to be Citywide. If we don't want it on James Island, it doesn't have to be on James Island. We can geographically tailor these fees and this specific program to where it makes sense and how it works. We can have a fee schedule where certain types of property owners pay a higher fee than other types of property owners. We have an enormous opportunity at our footsteps right now to get creative, to solve problems like this, all over the City, and for one, start having money we can actually use to fund these infrastructure projects and maintain them over the years. So, I really think that this is something we ought to look at. This new legislation presents a lot of unique opportunities for the City across a whole variety of different trouble areas that we've been dealing with for years. I think this is really an opportunity for us to look at that and start funding these projects and not have to go begging the County and the State to solve problems down here in Charleston which let's be frank, I mean, it hasn't worked all that great thus far, and it can certainly be improved. So, with that, I'll close my remarks and hope we can make some progress on that issue."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Shahid followed by Councilmember Gregorie.

Councilmember Shahid said, "Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Two points, one, Councilmember Sakran, have we also considered that strip on King Street between Sumter and Line Street

where that accident occurred where that young girl was killed crossing the street? Is that part of this plan, as well?"

Councilmember Sakran said, "No."

Councilmember Shahid said, "I know we went out there and met with officials with the State, and County, and members of the T&T Committee. Has there been any movement at all on improving that stretch? I can't remember whose district that's in. Councilmember Mitchell's District or both of you all's?"

Councilmember Sakran said, "Both."

Councilmember Shahid said, "Yes, that's right because the streets divide you all right down the middle, but there's been no movement on any of that, has there? I would just suggest that we include that as part of the overall plan, as well."

Councilmember Mitchell said, "Yes. I think they were saying that they would get back with us. That's about it, but nothing has transpired at all. They came out, I think they were out there, they came out and looked at it and did their assessment, and that's about it. That's where it stalled right there with the State."

Councilmember Shahid said, "I think Robbie's coming up to the microphone."

Robbie Somerville said, "Yes. I just wanted to add the last I heard about it they were doing a road safety audit from Line Street I believe up to Sumter Street, so they are looking at that area. I haven't received anything back from the DOT, but I know that they did go out and look at it."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thanks for updating us, but we will follow up with them on it."

Councilmember Shahid said, "The second point, Mayor, is to echo what Councilmember Appel was talking about, but I would not limit that proposal, Councilmember Appel, to the Peninsula. We've been working on an improvement around Old Towne Road and Sam Rittenberg, Donahue Street, Charlestowne Estates, Amberley for two or three years. The funding for that, which is our money, by the way, this is actually the City's money that the County controls through DOT's approval, we keep on getting that project pushed back. It was supposed to start in 2022, and nothing happened. It was supposed to start in 2023, and I haven't seen any movement with that, but if we don't have a mechanism of controlling these types of improvements, it's a safety issue. It's a downright flat safety issue.

Councilmember Waring has heard me too many times complain about the sidewalk issues that we get dumped on at Public Works Committee, but when it comes to these types of issues, the State ignores us. I mean, let's just be honest with it. The State ignores us on this, the County is beholden to the State, and we're left, as you said, telling our constituents sorry. Maybe we can get our State elected officials more engaged in this process, but if we can find a mechanism to address this, and we can control those types of improvements, that's all part of urban planning anyhow is roads, and highways, and streets, and we're stuck. We held up the improvements on Sumar Street because we were waiting for this project to be approved. We got it approved, and now we haven't seen the first truck out there turning up any type of improvements. So, whatever we could do to follow that up, Councilmember Appel, you've got my support on that."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Gregorie.

Councilmember Gregorie said, "We continue to talk about 236, and I think it's time for us to take some action on 236, and this might be a good way for us to go. It looks like it's a Public Safety issue, so to me Public Safety should start drafting some legislation to incorporate the provisions of 236, and let's test the water. Number two, the late Ms. McCray, was our Crossing Guard and it worked, it worked. So, I think, in addition to all that we're proposing, we need to go to what we know works. We need to go to the Chairman of the School Board. Safety should be their number one priority for our children. If it requires something from the Mayor and this body to say to the Chairman it's time to do something about public safety for our children, then, Mayor, I think we need to do that because we've been waiting for the State and the County on Grimball Road to get a traffic light. It took five years, folks, to get a traffic light for safety for our children and for our constituents. So, to me, I think it's time for us to start looking at and taking action, and I really think we need to confront the School Board with this safety issue, Mayor. I really do. If they're defunding guards who keep our children safe, then I think it's time for us to take it on as a City because those children are also our constituents, and I think that we need to protect them. So, I think, it's time for us to stop talking and take action, Mayor, and move forward for the safety of our children. The way we start is go to the Chairman of the School Board and let her know that there is a concern here that she needs to address."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Sakran.

Councilmember Sakran said, "Thank you, Mayor. Just for the record, I want to make sure that my comments are clear. It's my understanding that the School Crossing Guards are managed by the Sheriff's Department. The School District is involved because of the schools, but the Sheriff's Department manages that, so I just want to make sure for the record we're clear on that. Another thing is I'm encouraged by the conversations from my colleagues regarding this. I would ask, at the pleasure of my fellow Councilmembers, for our next T&T meeting to potentially add to that agenda for discussion because I haven't certainly had the opportunity to hear about this since being on Council about taking back some of our streets from the State and owning and managing that. I know some wrestle with that, but I'm just saying as a new Councilmember I am completely ignorant to the fees, the costs, and I'd love to hear more about it. So, if it's something that's a moot point in Council and doesn't go anywhere past T&T, I am fine with that. I just want to learn more about it and see if that's a possibility because I think what we're talking about is funding, and we're also talking about autonomy and being able to control some of our situations. So, with the pleasure of Chair and Vice-Chair, I'd love to add that to the next T&T."

Councilmember Gregorie was excused from the Chamber at 6:07 p.m.

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Waring.

Councilmember Waring said, "Councilmember Appel, you are right about 236. I'll support you whenever we get that done. I mean, I'm with you, but this was funded before COVID, and it was cut, so the funding is there. What they did was, whoever did it, whether the Sheriff's Office, they cut essential workers, and whoever made that decision, the transparency on that needs to come forward. I actually believe if the people who voted to do that were highlighted, I think they would see the wisdom in putting those essential workers back on the payroll. This is one of the lowest cost budget items they would have, and I'll tell you why. These aren't even full-time employees. These people come for a couple of hours in the morning and a couple of hours in



the afternoon, that's it. They're part-time. They don't even have benefits. They don't have retirement, they don't have medical, they don't have disability, they don't have sick leave and annual leave, and those are the people they cut. Now, right now we don't know who did that, but one thing about it we can find that out, can't we? Then, I think we can get a measure on County Council who approves the Sheriff's Office budget. There are too many pieces here that we can reassemble and hopefully get that decision by the Sheriff's Office, because I think you're right on that Councilmember Sakran. So, we can use 236 to fund some other things in the City, but those dollars have already been appropriated and somebody came along and said, 'We're going to cut it.' They were able to do that, and none of the parents knew about it, none of the Mayors knew about, and none of the Councilmembers knew about it. I think that one could be reversed. So, let's find out how that got reversed, and then let's see if we can get the funding put back."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Well, thank you. We will drill down on what's going on. Our SRO leadership at the Police Department has good relations with the Sheriff's Department, and we will figure out what's going on with that and come back to you. I agree, long-term the City of Charleston needs some funding source to be able to make every day roadway improvements that we can't fund through the General Fund, and maybe you're right, that's an opportunity. I will add the caveat for those who might be listening that for DOT streets, which are 80% of the streets in the City, are actually South Carolina Department of Transportation streets. Even if we had money to do it, we still need their permission likely for reasonable things they would give us that permission. But if it's their street, we still have to get the legal encroachment permit or whatever in order to put those improvements in even if we were paying for them, or they will come back to us and immediately say, 'Oh, well, you can have the street if you want to take it,' and so you know where that's going to go over time is more and more of the inventory of streets will become City streets, but, anyway, that's a long-term issue that you get into when you go down this road. Councilmember Seekings, did you want to add something to that?"

Councilmember Seekings said, "No, I mean, I think for Councilmember Sakran's purposes, and I'm sorry that I missed the last T&T meeting, before we have this conversation again let's just take a look and see. If you've seen the checkerboard particularly on the Peninsula of streets and who owns them and who doesn't, at least let's have that in our hands when we take this up again so we can let the people who live in those neighborhoods actually know who's got what. One of the ironies of all of it is even if we take the streets back, the DOT still has hooks on us as to what we can do on them under certain circumstances, so it's a complicated white hot mess. We've been through this before, and it's exhausting in some ways because it's so obvious, that we need to do something. We did this in 2018. We spent an enormous amount of time and money on having a Citywide Transportation Plan in hand, and we identified among other things these intersections. So, we need to do it, but we need to at least let you all know who live in those neighborhoods what our challenges are, and they're not just as simple as getting us together in the City and agreeing with you that we need to make our streets safer. We need to convince some other people to not only allow funding for it, but to allow us to actually do the work and anecdotally an example of that is around the corner from where I live at the corner of Bennett and Rutledge, you know where that is by the park, it's just a very little intersection, but Rutledge south of Calhoun is heavily traveled, too. We wanted to put a stop sign there. The one achievement I've had as a City Councilmember is after seven years we got a stop sign at the corner of Bennett and Rutledge. That will be on my epitaph, that will be on my gravestone, he got this stop sign."

There was laughter in the Chamber.

Councilmember Gregorie returned to the Chamber at 6:11 p.m.

Councilmember Seekings said, "But the way we did it is we had to take the road back, we had to go through a whole bunch of machinations to literally put up a stop sign. I mean, not to bring up some bad stuff, but you might recall the number of horrible incidents that happened at that intersection before we got it. So, we're with you, right, I mean, we all are around this table, but we need to get all of our ducks in a row. So, before the next T&T meeting, we'll get you, I've got the map, and I'll send it to you, and it shows you which roads, and it's amazing. Some streets a block between two north/south streets may be on East/West, but the next one isn't. There's no rhyme or reason to it. If you showed it to a kindergarten class, they would look and say this is ridiculous. So, we'll keep moving forward on this for sure and get some progress. I do think, by the way, Mr. Mayor, at the next level up at the County through CHATS, there's safety money available up there, and they do do some smaller projects so we need to sort of get that on the list because the policy committee has been pretty favorable at addressing and allocating monies to safety projects, and these are ones that I think we probably could talk to Mr. Mitchum about and get that in line."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Great. So, Councilmember Sakran, thank you for bringing this up. Good discussion you all."

Councilmember Waring said, "Mr. Mayor. I know I've been recognized twice, but I think there is one fact point I think we all will be very interested in. As you know, the Honorable Judge Arthur McFarland was present. He just left, but technology is wonderful, you know, Chief Judge for what, 30 years, 32 years, or whatever for the City of Charleston. The City used to run the School Crossing Program actually through CPD, so we've got another little area to dig into. Thank you."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Alright. Thank you. So, next up is our [Council Committee Reports](#). First is a similar topic, [Committee on Traffic and Transportation](#), Councilmember Brady."

Councilmember Brady said, "Yes. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. The Committee on Traffic and Transportation met Tuesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4:00 p.m. We discussed the topic that we were just discussing, the pedestrian safety on the Upper Peninsula and took action and did provide recommendations including that the Committee would send a letter in support for the tax money to be allocated towards these projects that we've discussed earlier. Next, we took up at Councilmember Shahid's request to talk about Sumar Street and the 18 wheeler overnight parking there. There was action taken to direct that to staff and have Livability begin communicating with the property owners because many of them are parking on private property, as well as to look at potentially changing some of our zoning ordinances to prohibit overnight parking of 18 wheelers especially near neighborhoods rather than the Commercial Corridors, as well, so that was that. We deferred the update on the Bike Share Program and will get that at the next meeting. Much to Councilmember Gregg's delight, we approved the traffic calming on Purcell Lane unanimously, and then we received an update on two projects very close to me and in my district, the Sanders Road sidewalk update. That will be going out to bid soon, so that was some great progress there, and the State DOT did sign off on the raised crosswalk that will connect the sidewalk from Sanders Road to the School District sidewalk at C.E. Williams Elementary, so we'll have I think it's very topical with what we've been talking about with pedestrian safety especially for students. That's something we've actively been working on, as well. Then, the Sanders Road at Bees Ferry traffic signal, if it took you five, it took me three years to get that done, and very excited that that will be going operational soon. It will flash for 72 hours once they get the wiring and everything complete, and then the light will become

operational. If you've ever tried to make the left from Sanders onto Bees Ferry, or if you're coming from Verdier Lane over at The Avenues Apartments, it's pretty much you're taking your life in your own hands to try and get across Bees Ferry, so that light will bring much needed relief and safety to that intersection, as well. I would move that my report be adopted and that we approve as a Council the traffic calming on Purcell Lane to Councilmember Gregg's delight."

Councilmember Mitchell said, "Second."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "We've got a motion and a second. Any further discussion?"

No one asked to speak.

On a motion of Councilmember Brady, seconded by Councilmember Mitchell, City Council voted unanimously to adopt the Committee on Traffic and Transportation Report, as presented:

- a. Pedestrian Safety Upper Peninsula
- b. Sumar Street, 18 Wheeler overnight parking
- c. Bike Share Program Update
- d. Approval of traffic calming on Purcell Lane, Daniel Island Neighborhood
- e. Sanders Road sidewalk update
- f. Sanders Road at Bees Ferry Road Traffic signal update

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Shahid.

Councilmember Shahid said, "Mayor, if I could just real quickly, I took some more pictures of Sumar Street and these rolls of cable on the Sumar Street property. I don't know who decided that was okay to do, and then across the street are those 18 wheelers. They're still parked there. This is the ongoing problem in trying to revitalize West Ashley allowing this to transpire. I just pass that out to you for information and appreciate the committee taking this up and looking forward to a resolution of this."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Alright. Thank you."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Gregorie.

Councilmember Gregorie said, "I mean, I've been following this. It's been all over the news. They can't be ticketed and towed?"

Councilmember Shahid said, "So, the Sumar Street property is property of the City of Charleston, and we've got signs up there and so it's trespassing, and the signs are huge to do that, but people, companies, do what I'm showing you in that very first picture that they dump a portable on demand storage facility on there, they put these rolls of cable and heavy machinery out there, and it just sits there. I call and complained, and there they are, and then they're across the street, was supposed to be checking on the private property because across the street was an old Captain D's, and unless they complain, unless the private property owner

complains, nothing happens. So, it is an ongoing issue of getting Livability out there to look at it and to get those things moved off of there. This is an ongoing problem.”

Mayor Tecklenburg said, “So, I have asked Mr. Kronsberg to install some chains at the main driveway, so hopefully that will deter. We do have the right to give a ticket, but we’re going to put some chains up, as well.”

Councilmember Gregorie said, “Thank you.”

Mayor Tecklenburg said, “Yes, sir.”

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Bowden.

Councilmember Bowden said, “I have a similar issue in my district on the West Ashley Circle. It hasn’t quite been built out yet, but, I mean, there was a trailer there for weeks just dropped off. No truck. It happens all of the time. They’re parked in the street often and so some of us who take that road as a way of bypassing some traffic on Bees Ferry sometimes have to be extremely vigilant that one of those things isn’t sticking in the road as we’re driving by. So, there certainly is an enforcement problem, and I would love if we could fix that. I mean, it’s a big City to be constantly trying to enforce these things, so maybe the problem is that we’re not fining enough or we don’t have graduated fines to really hit people if they’re repeat offenders. So, I think that’s a good point and something that I would like to see that maybe Traffic and Transportation take up in the future.”

Mayor Tecklenburg said, “And thank you, Councilmember Bowden, on his recommendation. Robbie asked me if we could post some signs on the West Ashley Circle for no overnight parking, similar to what we did at Low Battery, and so I think those signs are on order or they will be soon and we will be able to post them and write tickets and enforce a little better once we get those posted. So, thank you for that.”

Councilmember Bowden said, “Thank you.”

Mayor Tecklenburg said, “Yes, sir. Alright. So, next up is [Committee on Special Facilities](#), Councilmember Shealy.”

Councilmember Shealy said, “Thank you, Mr. Mayor. The Committee on Special Facilities met last Thursday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, and we had a thorough update from our new Special Facilities Director Romaine Heyward. She let us know that visitation was outstanding in 2022 for our Special Facilities. Every one of our facilities had a boost in attendance. The Dock Street Theatre had about 5,000 more people for a total of about 35,000, and those are just visitors touring the facility. That doesn’t include people coming to watch a show. As far as the Dock Street Theatre, in the early summer months, there will be an upgrade to the stage lighting and the sound system. Charleston Stage is doing very, very well right now and in 2023, they’re actually going to move in a month earlier to add some shows because they are doing so well. Spoleto had three or four performances per day in the Dock Street Theatre this year during their 17-day festival, and they plan to do that again in 2023. MOJA also had some events in the Dock Street Theatre. Attendance was low because it was around that time that Hurricane Ian was coming through, so they had some attendance problems there. There were several weddings that actually took place in the Dock Street Theatre and some actual weddings that were supposed to take place back during the pandemic. The people got married, but they came back and celebrated in the Dock Street Theatre, so we had a few of those. The Library Society uses

the Dock Street Theatre for two weeks each year, and they plan to continue to do that, and we're hoping to have a new Operations Director for the Dock Street Theatre by mid-February.

The Maritime Center had some pipes freeze a couple of weeks ago. Those repairs are being done, but we had a total of 363 registered boats in 2022 and Netflix's *Outer Banks* show and HBO's *Righteous Gemstones* used the Maritime Center for filming this past year and Lands' End Catalogue also used it for some of their marketing. So, we completed a License Agreement with Harbor Tours, several tall ships have used the Maritime Center in the past year, and it's still a top location for transient boaters because of the views of the harbor, of course, and of course, our low costs. I won't go into detail, but there was several maintenance items that she listed, and the Maritime Center is also set to aid the Aquarium with any renovations that they need help with.

So, the Old Exchange had 87,000 visitors which is an increase of about 4,000, and they had the annual reading of the Declaration of Independence on the front steps this past year. We discussed some maintenance items and some other issues there. The Old Slave Mart Museum had visitation of 89,000 which was an increase of over 5,000. We had a big boost in attendance over the Christmas holidays which was incredible, a lot of people coming and visiting our facilities. There is currently a study being done by the Police Department to see how we can make that facility maybe a little safer for our employees and visitors, as well. We discussed the possibility of, actually Mayor Tecklenburg brought this up, but it was a possibility of a joint combination ticket with the International African American Museum, as well. The Angel Oak had 421,000 visitors, and there has been a big boost to our gift shop there. Our gift shop sales have done very, very well over the last year. They've been doing some group lectures to give some education about the history of the tree, and they're continuing to work with the Preservation Trust on some projects such as parking improvements, signage, and of course, the expansion of the park and working together with the Preservation Trust also to see how we may be able to offset some of those costs. So, it was nothing really voted on, it was for information only, but that's the conclusion of my report, Mr. Mayor. Thank you."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Good report. Thank you, sir. Any questions for Councilmember Shealy?"

No one asked to speak.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Alright. Hearing none, we will move forward to our [License Committee](#) which we really already got a report from during Ways and Means."

Councilmember Mitchell said, "Move for approval."

Councilmember Gregorie said, "Second."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Anything to add? Comments?"

No one asked to speak.

On a motion of Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Gregorie, City Council voted unanimously to adopt the License Committee Report as presented:

- a. An ordinance to amend Appendix B "Business License Class Schedule (adopted Nov. 9, 2021)" to Chapter 7, Article II of the Code of the City of Charleston to

modify the exemption to lessors of residential buildings and dwellings.  
(DEFERRED)

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Next our [Committee on Ways and Means.](#)"

Councilmember Gregorie said, "Move for approval, as amended."

Councilmember Mitchell said, "Second."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "As amended. Alright. Any discussion?"

Councilmember Shealy said, "With recusals."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Same recusals apply."

Councilmember Parker said, "And my nay vote."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Alright."

On a motion of Councilmember Gregorie, seconded by Councilmember Mitchell, City Council voted to adopt the Committee on Ways and Means Report, as amended:

(Bids and Purchases

(Legal Department: Ordinance to amend Chapter 7, Article IV, Section 7-129 to include fee schedule. AS AMENDED [Ordinance] **(Councilmember Parker voted nay on this item.)**

(An ordinance to amend Appendix B "Business License Class Schedule (adopted Nov. 9, 2021)" to Chapter 7, Article II of the Code of the City of Charleston to modify the exemption to lessors of residential buildings and dwellings. **(DEFERRED)**

(Authorization for the Mayor to execute Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions encumbering Fort Pemberton in connection with acceptance of grant funds from National Park Service. The property is owned by the City of Charleston. (TMS# 343-05-00-107, 343-05-00-111, 343-05-00-114) [Ordinance]

(Authorization for the Mayor to execute a Quit Claim Deed conveying any interest the City may have in approximately 0.077 acres, representing a portion of the former Lot 136 in Maryville and being a portion of TMS# 418-00-00-006, to Bussy, LLC. (822 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Charleston, SC 29407) [Ordinance] **(Councilmembers Shealy and Waring recused themselves from voting on this item.)**

(Authorization for the Mayor to execute on behalf of the City a utility easement, approved as to form by the Office of Corporation Counsel, to Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc., encumbering a portion of the City's real property designated as Charleston County TMS# 460-14-00-001, 460-14-00-010, 460-14-00-012, 460-14-00-013, 460-14-00-015 and 460-14-00-016, shown on reference drawing D-84545, to permit installation of electric service upgrades near Charleston Marina. [Ordinance]

(Authorization for the Mayor to execute a Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the City of Charleston granting authority to SMH Charleston City Marina, LLC to appeal tax year 2022 valuations in its name. The property is owned by the City of Charleston. (TMS# 460-14-00-001)

(Approval of an Agreement to Buy and Sell Real Estate. The property is owned by John DeSteffano and Lynn S. DeSteffano IRA. (1819 Wallace Lane, Charleston, SC 29407) (TMS# 351-02-00-021) [Ordinance]

(Authorization for the Mayor to execute on behalf of the City a Permanent Right-of-Way and Utility Easement, which grants to the College of Charleston the authority to connect its property located at 176 Lockwood to the City-owned sewer on the adjacent parcel. The property is owned by the City of Charleston. (99 West Edge) (TMS# 460-00-00-013)

(Please consider the following annexations:

- 222 Island Drive (.9 acre) (TMS# 349-14-00-021), West Ashley, (District 11). The property is owned by Peter Green.
- 1888 Raoul Wallenberg Boulevard (.35 acre) (TMS# 353-13-00-031), West Ashley, (District 7). The property is owned by Debbie Floyd.
- 3111 Maybank Highway (26.53 acres) (TMS# 313-00-00-063 and 313-00-00-064), Johns Island, (District 3). The property is owned by the City of Charleston.

(Authorization for the Mayor to execute a Deed of Modification and Release of Prior Deed Restrictions enacted by Ordinance 2001-066 in 2001 against 334 Calhoun St. The property is owned by Charleston County. (TMS# 460-14-00-019) [Ordinance] Executive Session pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Sec. 30-4-70(a)(2) to receive legal advice regarding the item, if needed. Council may or may not take action following executive session.

(Executive session for discussion of negotiations incident to proposed sales of property pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. 30-4-70(a)(2).

First reading was given to the following bills:

*An ordinance to amend Chapter 7, Article IV-Housing, Division 4 (adopted by Ordinance 2022-159) of the Code of the City of Charleston.*

*An ordinance to authorize the Mayor to execute on behalf of the City of Charleston Restrictive Covenants encumbering Fort Pemberton in connection with its acceptance of grant funds from the National Park Service.*

*An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to execute, on behalf of the City of Charleston, as Grantor, a Quit Claim Deed conveying the City's interest in the southeastern portion of former lot 136 in Maryville.*

*An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to execute on behalf of the City a utility easement, approved as to form by the Office of Corporation Counsel, to Dominion Energy South Carolina, Inc., encumbering a portion of the City's real property designated as Charleston County TMS Nos. 460-14-00-001, 460-14-00-010, 460-14-00-012, 460-14-00-013, 460-14-00-015 and 460-14-00-016, shown on reference drawing D-84545, to permit installation of electric service upgrades near Charleston Marina.*

*An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to execute on behalf of the City of Charleston an Agreement to Buy and Sell Real Estate Purchase regarding that certain parcel bearing Charleston County Tax Map Parcel Number 351-02-00-021.*

*An ordinance authorizing the Mayor to execute on behalf of the City a Permanent Right-of-Way and Utility Easement which grants to the College of Charleston the authority to connect its property located at 176 Lockwood to the City-owned sewer on the adjacent parcel (99 West Edge).*

*An ordinance to provide for the annexation of property known as 222 Island Drive (.9 acre) (TMS# 349-14-00-021), West Ashley, Charleston County, to the City of Charleston, shown within the area annexed upon a map attached hereto and make it part of District 11. The property is owned by Peter Green.*

*An ordinance to provide for the annexation of property known as 1888 Raoul Wallenberg Boulevard (.35 acre) (TMS# 353-13-00-031), West Ashley, Charleston County, to the City of Charleston, shown within the area annexed upon a map attached hereto and make it part of District 7. The property is owned by Debbie Floyd.*

*An ordinance to provide for the annexation of property known as 3111 Maybank Highway (26.53 acre) (TMS# 313-00-00-063; and 3130000064), Johns Island, Charleston County, to the City of Charleston, shown within the area annexed upon a map attached hereto and make it part of District 3. The property is owned by the City of Charleston.*

The vote was not unanimous. Councilmember Parker voted nay on Item 4, and Councilmembers Shealy and Waring recused themselves from voting on 6.b. of the Ways and Means agenda and completed Conflict of Interest Forms which are on file in the Office of the Clerk of Council.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "So, next up is [bills for second reading](#). I think we have seven of those tonight for second reading."

Councilmember Seekings said, "So moved."

Councilmember Mitchell said, "Second."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Any comments or questions about Items 1 through 7, bills for second reading?"

No one asked to speak.

On a motion of Councilmember Seekings, seven (7) bills (Items L-1 through L-7) received second reading. They passed second reading on motion by Councilmember Mitchell and third reading on motion of Councilmember Seekings. On further motion of Councilmember Mitchell, the rules were suspended, and the bills were immediately ratified as:

**2023-001 -** AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CHARLESTON BY CHANGING THE ZONE MAP, WHICH IS A PART THEREOF, SO THAT 638 TUXBURY FARM ROAD (A PORTION) & TWO ADJACENT PARCELS ON TUXBURY FARM ROAD (CAINHOY) (APPROXIMATELY 10.32 ACRES) (TMS #263-00-04-046 (A PORTION), 042 AND 053) (COUNCIL DISTRICT 1) BE ZONED SINGLE- FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (SR-1) CLASSIFICATION. THE PROPERTY IS OWNED BY RAY AND ANGELA WAITS.

**2023-002 -** AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CHARLESTON BY CHANGING THE ZONE MAP, WHICH IS A PART THEREOF, SO THAT 715 YAUPON DRIVE & 2682 HIGHWAY 41 (CAINHOY) (APPROXIMATELY 5.71 ACRES) (TMS #263-00-04-007 AND 006) (COUNCIL DISTRICT 1), CHARLESTON BE ZONED DIVERSE RESIDENTIAL (DR-12)



CLASSIFICATION. THE PROPERTY IS OWNED BY RUMPHS AUTO SERVICE ETAL.

- 2023-003 -** AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CHARLESTON BY CHANGING THE ZONE MAP, WHICH IS A PART THEREOF, SO THAT 1737 JESSAMINE RD (WEST ASHLEY) (APPROXIMATELY 0.19 ACRE) (TMS #351-12-00-029) (COUNCIL DISTRICT 9), ANNEXED INTO THE CITY OF CHARLESTON NOVEMBER 8, 2022 (#2022-161), BE ZONED SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (SR-2) CLASSIFICATION. THE PROPERTY IS OWNED BY JOHN D. EDGAR.
- 2023-004 -** AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CHARLESTON BY CHANGING THE ZONE MAP, WHICH IS A PART THEREOF, SO THAT 12 RIVERDALE DR (WEST ASHLEY) (APPROXIMATELY 0.25 ACRE) (TMS #418-14-00-088) (COUNCIL DISTRICT 3), ANNEXED INTO THE CITY OF CHARLESTON NOVEMBER 22, 2022 (#2022-167), BE ZONED SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (SR-1) CLASSIFICATION. THE PROPERTY IS OWNED BY JOSEPH J. NEMETH III.
- 2023-005 -** AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CHARLESTON BY CHANGING THE ZONE MAP, WHICH IS A PART THEREOF, SO THAT 3306 BONANZA ROAD (WEST ASHLEY) (APPROXIMATELY 0.91 ACRE) (TMS #307-00-00-006) (COUNCIL DISTRICT 5), ANNEXED INTO THE CITY OF CHARLESTON NOVEMBER 22, 2022 (#2022-166), BE ZONED GENERAL OFFICE (GO) CLASSIFICATION. THE PROPERTY IS OWNED BY JAIME RAUL GOMEZ AND MARLENE D. HERNANDEZ.
- 2023-006 -** AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE AMOUNT OF STORMWATER UTILITY FEES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO HELP FUND THE STORMWATER UTILITY AND ITS PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023.
- 2023-007 -** AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE ON BEHALF OF THE CITY A PERMANENT RIGHT-OF-WAY AND UTILITY EASEMENT WHICH GRANTS THE BISHOP OF CHARLESTON, A CORPORATION SOLE, AN EASEMENT ON CERTAIN PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS 85 HASSELL STREET (TMS# 457-08-01-083) TO INSTALL AND CONSTRUCT AND MAINTAIN A FIRE SUPPRESSION WATER LINE AND STORM DRAIN LINE ON THE PROPERTY.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Now, [bills up for first reading](#). We've got, it looks like a zoning for Fenwick Hills Corp. Is there any presentation from staff? I think this matter came before us at a public hearing at our last meeting. Do I hear a motion from the floor?"

Councilmember Mitchell said, "Motion so we can get it started. So moved."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "The motion is to approve it?"

Councilmember Mitchell said, "Yes."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Yes, sir. Do we have a second?"

Councilmember Waring said, "I'll second that also."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Okay. Any discussion?"

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Brady.

Councilmember Brady said, "Yes. I know we have the applicant here tonight. One of the things we had talked about at the last meeting was on the SR-1 Conservation zoning allowing for the density provided that there was the affordability component, and I was hoping the applicant might be able to address why they didn't want to go with the SR-1 zoning, if that would be alright."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Absolutely. Yes, sir. Please state your name again."

Mr. Kimsey said, "Yes. Reece Kimsey with Middleburg Communities on behalf of the applicant. We went back and looked at the SR kind of bonus densities on affordable, you know, all-in-all for financial reasons, it doesn't make the deal pencil for us to move forward, but what we did work on for addressing that affordability was working with the Sea Island Habitat for Humanity and donating density for six units for them at no cost to them to work and, obviously, work with them as they're at the corner of Southwick. So, we have six units of density under the DR-6 zoning that we would have, and we would give that to them at no cost, and it's at the northwestern, I wish I had a way to show, it's on the site plan, but it's on the northwestern side and has a street stub-out too, and we will give them full easements for sewer, water access, and everything to that at no cost to the Sea Island Habitat for Humanity. I talked to them, and they're in full support of that, as well."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you for that accommodation. Yes, sir. Any other questions or comments?"

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Shahid.

Councilmember Shahid said, "If we can get something from Planning just to sort of give us an overview, what is the difference between what they can develop out there versus what this ordinance allows them to do?"

Robert Summerfield said, "So, the zone change that they're requesting will actually divide the property and include some area that will be reserved as Conservation area that's in predominantly the low-lying areas, but not exclusively, and then the other area will allow for the slightly higher density than the current SR-1 that's on the site. Currently, it's a uniform zoning across the site. This zone change will change that and allow, as I said, some of it will be the Conservation, some of it will be, and I apologize, I'm blanking on the new designation, but will allow for that slightly higher density. I think under the current zoning, the site would have a density potentially for 120. As Councilmember Brady has indicated, it does have the ability to do the Conservation zoning which would allow them to do additional affordable units at no additional density impact, but, obviously, there is a lot of constraints that go with using the Conservation zoning and a lot of upfront work that is required in order to be able to achieve that, which is the difference. Here they can get the zone change and do their engineering and all of that that they will need to do through Stormwater. Under the Conservation, they would need to have a lot of that work already done in advance bringing that package forward."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Alright. Anybody else have a question or want to be heard?"

No one else asked to speak.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Hearing none--"

Councilmember Waring said, "Mr. Mayor."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Waring.

Councilmember Waring said, "One thing, I wanted to compliment Councilmember Brady on working on that affordability because that was not an issue until he raised the issue."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "That's right."

Councilmember Waring said, "And I want to commend the developer for listening and working the numbers to the point and allying with Habitat for Humanity because we've seen a lot of developments that have come through here that didn't have that type of sensibility. So, thank you, Councilmember Brady, and thank you to the developer and even though people from Habitat for Humanity aren't here, I want to thank Sea Island Habitat for Humanity. I want to thank them, as well. Thank you."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "That's right. The Charleston Chapter, I might add, is a very good Chapter, but the Sea Island Chapter of Habitat is excellent, and they've had trouble finding property, so you all making some property available to them, particularly at no charge, is really a nice thing. So, thank you for doing that."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Mitchell.

Councilmember Mitchell said, "Yes. Mr. Mayor, I want to echo that also because when Habitat is building homes, that's really the most reasonable home you can find when Habitat is building it. When I used to be on the Board of Habitat, I can tell you a lot of people purchase Habitat homes that couldn't afford to purchase any home anywhere else. So, Habitat is doing a good job once they find land. Property is now more expensive, so it's not like it used to be, but it's still doing a good job and making affordable housing. Thank you."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Alright. Anyone else?"

No one else asked to speak.

Mayor Tecklenburg called for the vote.

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Appel.

Councilmember Appel said, "I was just going to quickly say I applaud Councilmember Brady for the same reason Councilmember Waring suggested and commend the developer for reaching out to Habitat for Humanity. I would just point out to my colleagues that we're just approving a zoning change. None of this stuff with Habitat for Humanity is baked into any of this. I would feel a lot more comfortable, and I don't distrust you all at all, I'm just saying I'd feel a lot more comfortable, prior to giving this second and third reading, we have an MOU, we have an agreement, maybe someone from Habitat for Humanity comes here, just to make sure all 'i's' are dotted and 't's' are crossed. Thanks."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Does that sound like a reasonable request? Did you all ink something up with Habitat?"

Mr. Kimsey said, "Yes."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Yes, sir. That would be great. Alright."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Brady.

Councilmember Brady said, "Yes. I just wanted, under the rules to explain my vote. I appreciate the developers, especially coming back with the agreement with Habitat, and look forward to reviewing the MOU, but my constituents have reached out to me concerned about the density there. So, I need to be their voice and unfortunately have to vote against that, but understand my colleagues moving forward and what that applies. So, thank you."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you, sir."

The Clerk said, "And, Mr. Mayor, so, when we took the vote, we had someone raise their hand to speak. Can we take that again because I'm not sure that everyone voted?"

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Okay. Did everybody get a chance to speak that needed to speak on that item?"

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Waring.

Councilmember Waring said, "I did have one other point. If I could ask Ms. Shaw Johnson to come to the microphone, please. Councilmember Appel has a point, I can't tell you how valid it is. There is a development at the end of Ashleyville, The Oaks, we made some accommodations for clustering under SR-1, and the developer said that they would create, was it four or six units?"

Geona Shaw Johnson said, "Five."

Councilmember Waring said, "Five affordable units. That development is fully built out and the developer over there hadn't built, how many?"

Ms. Shaw Johnson said, "Zero."

Councilmember Waring said, "Zero. That's right. It's Crescent. I mean, it's not a secret. Crescent Homes. They came right in this Chamber and agreed to something very similar that they were going to build affordable housing, as a matter of fact in that community, Maryville-Ashleyville."

Ms. Shaw Johnson said, "Absolutely."

Councilmember Waring said, "Now, I don't know how we circle back on that, but they have built what, is it 44 homes over there? And I mean not entry-level, they're beautiful."

Ms. Shaw Johnson said, "They're gorgeous."

Councilmember Waring said, "But, you talk about the quintessential bait and switch, that's what they did. So, you are spot on, Councilmember Appel, and I know you all will follow up and get

the writing done right, and once we see that and our ladies in Legal are satisfied with it, I don't have any trouble voting for it. But, again, thank you, Councilmember Brady."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you. Alright. So, let's re-take the vote on that. This is still for M-1."

On a motion of Councilmember Mitchell, seconded by Councilmember Waring, City Council voted to give first reading to the following bill:

*An ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Charleston by changing the Zone Map, which is a part thereof, so that property on Southwick Drive (Johns Island) (approximately 60.61 acres) (TMS #279-00-00-018) (Council District 5), be rezoned from Single Family Residential (SR-1) classification to Conservation (C) classification (approximately 22.35 acres) and Diverse Residential (DR-6) classification (approximately 38.26 acres). The property is owned by Fenwick Hills Corp.*

The motion passed 11 to 2.

The vote was not unanimous. Councilmembers Brady and Parker voted nay.

The Clerk said, "And just for the record the two nays were Councilmember Brady and Councilmember Parker."

Councilmember Brady was excused from the Chamber at 6:36 p.m.

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Right. Thank you much. Alright. Now, for [number two, we have an amendment to the Chapter 2 of the Code of the City of Charleston regarding our Standing Committees](#), and that's been presented to you all. Any discussion?"

Councilmember Waring said, "I move for approval."

Councilmember Gregorie said, "Second."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Okay. We have a motion to approve. Any discussion?"

Councilmember Brady returned to the Chamber at 6:37 p.m.

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Appel.

Councilmember Appel said, "First up, I'd like to give the proponents of the ordinance an opportunity to speak first if they'd like, but I'm happy to go now. I just wanted to, I'll go ahead. Okay. So, I think this is an important discussion. I appreciate this measure being brought forward. I oppose this ordinance, this concept, and I want to explain to my colleagues why. My opposition is aimed at two reasons. First, I think that we need to, as a Council, defend the Executive Branch of the City of Charleston as an institution, an Executive Branch that has served the City of Charleston well for generations across multiple Mayorships. Number two, I think that this ordinance moves us in a direction of making City Council more political, and I'm concerned by doing this we are going to become distracted by power struggles, factionalism, and infighting. I want to be clear, my remarks and my opposition, it's not about defending any particular slated committee assignments, it's not about defending the Mayor, the Mayor doesn't need me to defend him, this is more about a structural concern about how our government is set up.

The City of Charleston, just like every major city, needs a strong Executive Branch. The City of Charleston Councilmembers, we are part-time, essentially. We all have other jobs, things of that nature. The Mayor is the one who wakes up every day, comes into an office, and runs the City. In order for the City to be led forward into the future, it needs a Mayor and power to execute it's agenda, his or her agenda. Councilmember Gregorie is absolutely right that all power resides in Council. There's no question about that. That's the law, but our predecessors, the City Council years ago wisely delegated that power to appoint committees and a host of other powers to the Mayor, and that's why the City of Charleston has a Mayor/Council form of government. The phrase 'strong mayor' is actually not a legal term, it's sort of a common parlance, but we have Mayor/Council form of government where the Mayor of the City of Charleston runs the City on a day-to-day basis, and City Council retains important oversight of that authority, but not day-to-day management. The Mayor is elected every four years with substantial voter turnout, media coverage, money put into getting the message out, and the Mayor, once elected, should have the opportunity and the authority to execute his agenda.

It defies logic, I must say, to force the Mayor to have committees led by political opponents. It will frustrate the ability for the Mayor to run the City, it will delay progress, it will cause more infighting, and things of that nature. Thank God the City of Charleston Council seats are non-partisan. None of us are Democrats, none of us are Republicans. That's fantastic, but to suggest that we are a non-political body is not accurate in my view, and I don't think this proposal takes politics out of the equation. It simply moves politics from the Mayor's Office to the floor of Council, and I'm just concerned about what that will entail, especially after what we have seen up in Washington, D.C in the House of Representatives over the past couple of weeks or so. This would be an unprecedented radical departure from the way local governments are run in this region. Charleston County, their Chair appoints committee chairs and committees. The Town of Mt. Pleasant and the City of North Charleston, the Mayor appoints councils and committeeships in both of those jurisdictions, and the Town of Mt. Pleasant is a Council form of government, also known as a weak form of government. One of the few powers that Mayor Haynie has above and beyond his Councilmember colleagues is the ability to appoint committee chairs and committee assignments. So, even in a weak form, that's a power held by the Executive. So, if we were to do this and reverse course on decades and decades of process over here, it would be a radical structural departure from not just how we do business, but it would be a unique feature in the area.

Listen, I've got my opinions on certain Council committee chairs. I think some do a great job. I think some do less than a great job. I'm not going to put anybody personally on blast tonight. I don't think that was cool in December, but we don't need to go there. We don't need to get personal. It's not about my opinion or position. We all have the ability, no matter who is the chair of what, to bring an idea forward, get it on an agenda, do the work, move the ball forward, and whether or not we pass this ordinance or not won't change that whatsoever. So, I appreciate this discussion, I oppose this ordinance, let's approve the slate that's been put forward. I understand there's been some changes already that have solved at least one of the big issues I think that may have caused some of this heartburn in the beginning, and let's get to work. Let's focus on the important issues, traffic, the safety management fee we talked about earlier, Act 236, flooding, all of those other issues. Let's not spend this year trying to radically change the form of government in the City of Charleston, and with that, I appreciate everybody listening to me, and we will go from there. Thank you."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you, sir."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Waring.

Councilmember Waring said, "I respect my colleague's opinion, but to say politics is devoid from the current process--"

Councilmember Appel said, "It's not."

Councilmember Waring said, "It's not. You're right. It's not, and the reality is, and I support the strong mayor form of government, but the Mayor does not manage Council. He doesn't manage us. I said this before, all of the 1,700-plus employees who work for the City of Charleston, that strong Executive gets to manage that, and that's what people vote him in office for. He is not voted in office to manage City Council as he does employees. We should have say-so in the Standing Committees that we serve upon. You, on a number of occasions, have said that we are, and I will ask my colleagues for a little bit of time on this issue, I do not want to be gavel closed on this one, you, Council Appel, and you have been right in saying so, we are legislators, and we should legislate. The Executive Branch in no form of government manages the Legislative Branch. As a matter of fact, the example you brought at the previous meeting on this I agree with you, and I agree with you today. Let's look at what took place in Washington. Some of us don't agree with it. I find it tremendously interesting to watch. I stayed up until 1:00 o'clock in the morning looking at this, but I'll tell you what, it was transparent, and it was out front for all to see. But you know what, President Biden didn't call and say, 'Hey, you all stop that. I'm going to appoint the Speaker of the House. I'm going to appoint the Chairman of Ways and Means. I'm going to appoint the Chairperson of the Appropriations Committee or Armed Services Committee.' He has absolutely nothing to say about that. Your example about County Council, I think it's taken out of context. It's a good example. They are legislators, and how does that chairperson of County Council get there? It's the members of Council who vote for the chairperson, and you're right that chairperson, a legislator, appoints the chairperson of the committees. That's all we're talking about here. Even in all due respect to the Mayor's position, the proposal is he recommends with the advice and consent of Council. Now, one of the things that this ordinance lacks, and I was going to add this to it is, and we could tweak it because we need input from every Councilmember, those legislatures, in the case of national government, have steering committees, and it's the steering committees that set the various committees in the House, and the same thing in the General Assembly. Obviously, County Council-the manner in which we would appoint ourselves should not be done on the floor. For example, Councilmember Parker said at the last meeting, and I never thought about it this way, certain committees, from a regional standpoint in the City, aren't represented, from the standpoint of Daniel Island, Cainhoy, the Peninsula, James Island, and Johns Island, etc., and one of the ones she brought up, the light turned on when she said that. The Real Estate Committee has five people on it. The Mayor who lives in West Ashley, I live in West Ashley, Councilmember Appel, he lives in West Ashley, and Councilmember Shahid lives in West Ashley. From a demographic or a regional standpoint, we can do better.

Councilmember Mitchell was excused from the Chamber at 6:44 p.m.

If we had six members on the Committee, and the Chairperson could not vote for a tie, in most cases Robert's Rules of Order allows for that. In some cases, we have suspended that rule, but if we had six members on each Standing Committee, it will enable from the point that Councilmember Parker brought up to represent the area from a regional standpoint, I think better. But, the reality is, the Mayor should not use that power to remove experience because you disagree or agree with a member of Council. That is not a power that the Mayor, because he's a part of the Executive Branch, should have over legislators, and that's what you're advocating. I respect your opinion, I just disagree with it. We are not to be puppets when it comes to service to our constituents. Collectively, we serve the exact same people the Mayor does, and to say that his

agenda, we all run separately. Well, I don't run on a team, okay. When I run for re-election, I'm not on a team. I put myself before the people. Most of us do, and we ask to serve them, and when those people vote for us, they are actually thinking we truly are their voice being carried forward. Now, when that voice is muffled one way or the other because of an Executive decision, we shouldn't remain quiet about that. That's what this wonderful floor of democracy is about. We should not, when experience gets moved, and that experience has an idea that potentially could lead to a tax deduction for every citizen, we shouldn't look the other way and that should be the talk over the water cooler, we should do something about it, and that's what this does.

To say that we are going to have an uncivilized method of going about establishing committees, one thing we have amongst all of us here is we respect one another. We don't speak about one another in a profane way. There are times when some of us have had tragedies in our families, illness etc., and what do we do? We reach out as allies, we reach out as friends. That's not the decorum that we walk in this historic Chamber that the Chief of Police kind of alluded to, not kind of alluded to, that he alluded to. We respect this Chamber. When I walk from, I normally park south of Broad on Meeting, and every time I walk facing this Chamber, this building, I look at the flag on top, and I feel like I'm actually walking into history when I sit down in this chair. So, to say that when it comes to taking any Standing Committee, the idea that Councilmember Gregg came up with and said that about the differential and property taxes or millage rates between the people in Berkeley County, the citizens in Berkeley County, and the citizens of Charleston in the same municipality paying a different millage rate, Councilmember Gregg I didn't know that until you brought that up, but I'm a firm believer that's something that should have been talked about, and will be in the budget process going forward.

Councilmember Mitchell returned to the Chamber at 6:48 p.m.

So, when we are cut off from exchanging ideas, and thoughts, and facts with one another, I think the citizens lose. It's not a personal loss, our ability to represent those who sent us here to speak for them. We had a colleague in Columbia, a City Councilperson, who, they had a measure up there to switch from the weak Mayor to the strong mayor, and she called me and asked me what was my opinion on it. I told her I believe in the strong mayor form of government. She said well what happens, and this was a lady on Council for a while up there in Columbia, what happens if you and the Mayor have a disagreement and he takes reprisals? I said, 'What kind of reprisals?' 'Well, all of sudden parks don't get approved in your district, and ditches don't get cleaned in your districts.' I said, 'Why would you remain quiet about that? You ought to bring that to the floor of Council, if your Mayor does that to you and let everybody know because of whatever disagreement the Mayor is not cleaning ditches in your neighborhood. He's hurting your constituents. They're not putting any new parks or new equipment in your neighborhood? Why would you stay quiet about that?' So, it is the portion that, I think, some feel that this strong mayor form of government has to have some ruling factor over Councilmembers. That is incorrect. In the General Assembly, the Governor does not appoint the Speaker of the House, the Governor doesn't appoint the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, none of those committees. All of that is decided by the legislators. Back to your point earlier and your service on Council."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Councilmember, speaking of the rules, you're now at your ten minutes."

Councilmember Waring said, "I understand, but I did ask my colleagues for additional time. This is not any detraction from the Mayor. What it's going to do, as a result of Councilmembers' input, we're going to get to serve on committees we would like, we're going to get to hopefully serve on areas that we wish we could have got on, that for whatever reason one choice kept us off.



That would end with our collective thoughts. I respect the additional time, Mr. Mayor. I respect my colleagues for allowing me to speak on this a little bit clearly, but we are legislators, and we should have say-so. Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and my Council.”

Councilmember Gregorie said, “Just in response to Councilmember Appel, hopefully, we all have an agenda. We all were voted by our constituents on specific things they want us to address, so we all walk in with an agenda, no different than the Mayor, and we all have to do the same thing the Mayor has to do. You have to get seven votes to get it through. I don’t care what your agenda is. The bottom line is getting the seven votes. And, I must add that our Mayor has been pretty effective in that regard in terms of getting his agenda through, and most of us have been. But, I think that we need to be clear I am not here to carry out the Mayor’s agenda. I have one of my own that my constituents have put on me to do, and some take years to get it done. That’s the only comment I have here. We all have an agenda, hopefully we do, and not just the Mayor. I’m not here to carry out anybody’s agenda. I’m here to serve the people, and if the Mayor or anybody on this Council puts something forward that I agree with, I will vote accordingly, but if I don’t, regardless of their agenda, I’m voting no. So, let’s just be clear here, we all have agendas, and because he’s the Mayor he still has to get seven votes, all of us. So, let’s just be clear here, all power lies in Council. That’s why we have seven votes.”

Mayor Tecklenburg said, “Would anyone else like to be heard?”

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Parker.

Councilmember Parker said, “Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Just since we’re on it, I guess I just want to understand, you know, again, you rolled last year’s committees into this year, so that’s why I will support this ordinance because I don’t really understand the reasoning. I mean, we have some Councilmembers that are on nine committees, some are on four, some are on seven. I know, I understand, you said you try to spread it out. Councilmember Waring brought up my point regarding, you know, public, I mean, of course, I knew this coming on Council. This was like, you know, what do you have to do to get onto committees, do this, that, or the other. I think I’m the perfect example. Whether it’s the Mayor choosing or this Council, I’m probably not going to get to go where I want to go, and that’s fine, but I will, again, point out when we have four individuals living in West Ashley, and one on the Peninsula on Public Works, we are not spreading that out. Everyone is fighting for flooding help, all of those dollars. We have an engineer on Council who is not on Public Works and Utilities. I certainly see and understand why this ordinance is important. I do just wish I understood how we’re going to get there as a Council, how we’re going to decide those committees, but I certainly don’t, I can’t, I agree with you. I see the problem here with a Mayor appointing committees, and I think I can be the perfect example of that. So, thank you.”

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Sakran.

Councilmember Sakran said, “Thank you, Mayor. I wasn’t here for the last Council meeting, so I had the opportunity to watch it last night via YouTube, and it was kind of enlightening, because it seems like the issue just came out, I don’t want to say of nowhere, but it’s relatively contemporary, the past couple of weeks, maybe a month, right, Keith? Okay. So, I’m trying to put myself in the shoes of my fellow Councilmembers to understand the nuances of the argument. I do see both concerns regarding the autonomy the Mayor should have, given a strong mayor, but also looking at some of the committee assignments, some of them don’t make sense, and I’m just going to share because, full transparency, the Mayor had reached out to me two years ago and asked me to step off of a committee, and I did. It was not a transactional discussion. I didn’t ask you ‘what are you going to do for me?’ My fear is that if we start to do

what we are suggesting that those transactional conversations are going to increase, and it's going to create factions and alliances. We saw it with redistricting, and I'm seeing it now, and I will flat out say the reason that this got solved was, behind the scenes a couple of Councilmembers got together to solve that issue. That's good, there's conversations. I guess, when I look at the current ordinance as it's written, and again, I see both sides, I would encourage us to go back and figure out the 'how,' because there is no 'how.' What is 'advice and consent?' I don't know what that means. Quite frankly, that's where my concern is, is the ambiguity in the current policy. If we can get back to a place where there is some criteria, to Councilmember Parker's suggestions, is it geography? Is it work experience? Do we look at Councilmember Gregg's experience and say, 'He's got an engineering background, a science background, that's weighted and he should be on Public Works?' Whereas, we look at Councilmember Appel's experience, he definitely should be on Real Estate, but I'm not sure he should be on--so I guess what I'm saying is, we need to agree on the criteria, so when we come to Council to have this discussion, we're basing it on criteria, and it's not just arbitrary I will say, political alliance, or maybe I ticked you off one day, and it's going to be a personal grudge match against me, I don't want it to get to that. So, I think if we are going to move forward with this type of ordinance, we need to establish the criteria that we're all agreeing on, if the Mayor picks that slate, we have that conversation in Council, so it's more clear. Right now, it's very vague, and I would ask and encourage us to either send it back to Rules Committee, or give it to Council to think about making it a little more clear. So, that's where my head is on this particular ordinance."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Gregg.

Councilmember Gregg said, "Thank you, Mr. Mayor. You all mentioned my engineering background. One of the big rules in engineering is 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it,' and to me this feels like something that isn't broken. I have been on this Council for less than a year now. The Mayor appointed me to a number of different committees, and he's been in this job for much longer than I have, so I trusted his judgment to put me on committees where I could learn from more senior members of Council. I think as you're starting a new job, and honestly this is a new job, you get a chance to learn and get more experience so you can get better at it. As we get better at this job, I would trust that we're going to have more responsibilities on different committees. So, I would just say that I think the system has worked well so far, at least for me as the most junior member of Council, and I think that we will--I'm concerned that if we bring this to the whole body, you mentioned making sausage on the floor, we're going to have a lot of sausage making on the floor, Councilmember Waring. So, that's my biggest concern about it. I think it's worked well so far, and I'm inclined to vote against this."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Shahid.

Councilmember Shahid said, "Mayor, before I make my comments, I want to know your position on this."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Well, I'll be glad to share with you, Councilmember, and my colleagues, and I did at our last meeting, as well, share how I felt about it."

First of all, I shared that it's a real balancing act to come up with this list. There are not enough slots for everybody to have everything that they would love to do, and some of the Code of all of this was written before I came, walked in the door, the number of positions on a given committee. We can change those things. Like we added a position, I think, to the Public Works Committee to increase membership on that committee. Beyond that, I mean, it's the same

number per committee as far as I remember as when I got elected seven years ago. I don't know when Council decided there would be five members on this and four members on that, but, anyway, if you go by the parameters of the Code that was in place, it's a real balancing act to do this, and I sincerely tried as new members come along to gauge their interests and their background. Yes, we have an engineer that didn't get on the Public Works Committee, but it doesn't flood on Daniel Island. They have got it figured out. They have some other issues over there to deal with, so many factors go into that. I just wanted to share that, so I will vote no on the matter.

I shared last time, and I'll repeat it. We all work for the citizens of Charleston, and part of my job as Mayor is to enforce the Code and the ordinances that we, as a body, pass, and so I fully respect this Council, whatever you all decide, or we decide. I'm a member of Council, as well. I'm going to do my damndest to put that in place and make that happen. That's what I'll do. But, respectfully, and I don't know that I could have said it better than Councilmember Appel, because sometimes, when you think about 50 years, and 100 years from now, that longer view of how things work, and how they should work, I do believe that the basic system we have in place is a good one. Don't get me wrong, I'm all for tweaking committees, we can form a new committee, we can change the numbers on a committee. That's all part of the process of responding to the needs of our City. But, if you look at the long term of the City as a whole, as an administration of trying to be in sync to accomplish the goals before us and the strong mayor form of government, I think having the Mayor being able to make these appointments is a good one. If Council decides differently, man I'm all for doing whatever you all decide. I respect and honor that. I'm going to respectfully vote no on this matter."

Councilmember Shahid said, "If I can then comment, and Councilmember Waring and Councilmember Gregorie, thank you all for bringing this to our attention, and having this discussion about this. There is one thing a little bit different about our form of government that Councilmember Waring was making some comparisons to. The person sitting as the Presiding Officer of this Legislative Chamber is the Mayor. He is the Speaker of the House, and it's just an odd situation. It's a little bit different in that there are other local governments that have a president of Council, and our government's not set up that way. He is a member of Council, and he is the Presiding Officer of Council. He's the Speaker of the House, essentially, is what his role is. When you go back and look at some of the old statutes and ordinances of the City of Charleston, the Mayor was not only the Mayor and a member of Council, he was also the judge. I mean, that was it. He is in charge of the Judiciary, as a Judiciary of one. He presided over criminal cases. That changed over time, and the Human Affairs and Racial Conciliation Commission made it very clear about having that separation of power on the Judiciary, and we need to make some more improvements on that.

I think that the discussion about this is bringing out some really important issues that Councilmember Parker brought out, Councilmember Waring and Councilmember Gregorie have brought out, about the assignments of all of this. I don't want this to sound like a personal attack on anybody, and if I do, then I apologize from the very beginning, but there have been issues on how the appointments have been made on this committee. That's just a problem, and over time, it appears that sometimes it looks like it's retaliatory, and I think that's the remedy that we're trying to address. I know that the form of government in Mt. Pleasant and the form of government in Columbia is a little bit of a mess, and I don't mean that in a derogatory form, but I know that Daniel Island got annexed into the City of Charleston because the developers and the owners of that property liked the form of government that we have over here because they knew that the development of Daniel Island was so critically important that having, maybe it was all

about Joe Riley at the time, but it made sure that it was going to be developed in a proper manner, and it has, and Daniel Island is a wonderful example of how it developed properly.

The infighting that we see that you brought up in Columbia, Councilmember Waring, and I know some of the other members of City Council on there, past members of City Council, I've had discussions with them, are somewhat chaotic in a certain form, as well. It is critically important, I think, that we have and maintain this idea of a strong mayor form of government, and you're right, Councilmember Waring, the Mayor has control over the employees. We don't, and that sort of sets the Mayor's agenda, at the very least, as to what goes on, but what I don't want to see happening is that we go down, and the lawyers use this term 'the slippery slope.' You put something into motion, and all of a sudden it starts to snowball into something else. The problem, Councilmember Gregg, is that there is some aspect of this being broken, and that's why Councilmembers Waring and Gregorie have brought this up, because there have been instances in which we need to address this thing and fix it. I voted that this go and have an ordinance brought to our attention in January to see where this was going to lead, and I've had some conversations with our Legal Counsel about how this is going to pan out. But, I've been thinking about this, and I have been somewhat hesitant about voting for this, approving this amendment, because the issues that have been brought up are very critical issues that have been stated more eloquently than I can repeat them as to how the committee composition is made, who is on the committee, how it's being represented, and this idea that sometimes politics can get involved in it, and it's very clear the politics can get involved in some of the appointments.

All that being said, we've got to support, at the end of day, the institution of this government. I walk into this Chamber like you do, Councilmember Waring, realizing the historical context that we sit in, but behind you is the roll of the people who have led this City over 350 years, and we've done pretty good. It's been doing pretty good in the past 350 years. So, at the end of the day, I think I'm going to go ahead and oppose this amendment only because I think it's critically important as my role as a Councilmember to protect the institution of the government as it exists right now, recognizing very clearly the problems that have been brought up on how this has been handled in the past, and there are still some of the issues that we need to be addressing on fixing this, as well. Thank you."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Bowden.

Councilmember Bowden said, "I sort of subscribe to what Councilmember Gregg said. I don't think this process is broken, and that's ultimately the reason that I'm going to change what I said at the last meeting, that I would support this change. Maybe if there was a different mayor, and there were more problems with this process, I'd be more inclined to check the mayor's power, but that just hasn't been the case here. I think that there is also, I'm uncomfortable with some of the words that have been thrown around in this debate, so, regionalism has been introduced into this. I know that I'm elected by people who live in outer West Ashley. I trust myself to factor in the concerns of people who live on Johns Island, who live on James Island, who live on Daniel Island. We have meetings all of the time that Councilmember Parker attends for Public Works and has the opportunity to speak, and we hear out her concerns. I don't see that changing anytime soon. I think the Chair of each and every committee would allow an interested member to come and speak to that committee and have those concerns heard. So, ultimately, what changed my mind about this is watching, you know, maybe the difference we

have, I watched that process in the House of Representatives and if I talk about it too much, I'm going to say words that get me fined."

There was laughter in the Chamber.

Councilmember Bowden said, "But, ultimately, that was resolved through a backroom deal, and that backroom deal may result in the United States House of Representatives not meeting our financial obligations to the Country. I'm not saying we're anywhere close to that. I don't actually think the House of Representatives or our branches of government are a great analogy for City government for exactly the reason that Councilmember Shahid raised, that the Mayor's a member of City Council, essentially. He votes with the legislature, which is a significant difference, but I just think that this process has worked out well. I think it actually adds to the collegiality that you talked about. I think we're all sort of equals, and we have the opportunity to engage with the Mayor about the process. I personally have been pretty happy with my committee assignments despite my profession not applying particularly well to Public Works, but, this is working for me, it's working for my constituents. I am just a little bit worried about the issues we create by making changes now, and so I'm going to vote against this."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Thank you, sir. Would anyone else like to be heard?"

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Gregorie.

Councilmember Gregorie said, "I have a question on the ordinance, because what really prompted this Rules Committee had to do with submission of legislation, and how that should be submitted for review."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Having to do with what? I'm sorry."

Councilmember Gregorie said, "The way we got here started with how legislation should be presented to Council, if I'm not mistaken, but I don't see anything in here that talks about that."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "We worked that out."

Councilmember Gregorie said, "Oh, you did?"

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Yes, sir."

Councilmember Gregorie said, "It's not going to be in the ordinance or anything? It's just going to be procedural?"

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "We had a little change regarding that, and I thought, at this point, we had basically resolved it."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Brady.

Councilmember Brady said, "I think the Clerk is getting ready to make the same point that I am."

The Clerk said, "So, the Rules of Council, they're going to be coming forward at the January 24<sup>th</sup> meeting, so Legal has made that change. That's going to be coming forward at our next meeting, and that will be up for consideration then."

Councilmember Gregorie said, "So, why did we separate it out, though? All of it's the Rules of Council, including what we're discussing now, right?"

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Right. We can change any word of it that you all agree upon."

Councilmember Gregorie said, "I'm just trying to understand, that's all. Because it's my, you know, what prompted all of this had to do with how we bring--"

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "And the Rules Committee has a recommendation, I guess, coming forward, Councilmember."

Councilmember Gregorie said, "That's okay."

Julia Copeland said, "I believe this came separately because, and forgive me, I wasn't at that particular meeting, so correct me if I'm wrong, it was asked that it come back to Council rather than going back through the Rules Committee."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Even though they kind of came up together, they were separate issues. I mean, they're related, but it wasn't in the same breadth."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Seekings.

Councilmember Seekings said, "Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I'm going to be brief. I mean, I think much like many of the things we do here, including what we did tonight by electing Councilmember Sakran as the Mayor Pro Tem on advice and consent, is a good idea. And, having some input into what committees we serve on serves our interests to make sure that we put forward our best foot as a City collectively, City Council, is a good idea. I can tell you just from experience of this week, if you fear that we're going to descend into anarchy on the floor and have a big brawl over it, Councilmember Brady and I had a lovely conversation this week about many things in the City including, committee assignments, and we worked through an issue. I mean, my Chairmanship of T&T, and we worked through it, back through the Mayor's Office, he's put a slate forward, and with his assignments, we then have advice and consent on that. I mean, that's all this amendment does is give us a backdoor say on all of this. I think, actually, we're going to miss an opportunity for us to communicate better if we don't do this. During the time between the end of the year and the beginning of the year, talk about committees, get through it, and I suspect that it will not be a brawl, that it will actually end up being a benefit to all of us to talk to each other, so I'm going to vote for it. I don't think it's a radical change of governance style or governance at all. It's just a manner of which, the Mayor listens to us, he knows what our interests are, he knows what our differences are, and he knows some of the things that get in our craw a little bit. Alright? That's not been any secret. And, we can work through that. But, I think, having a backstop, and having us give some input into our and all of ours' collective wisdom on the committees we sit on is a good thing. I don't think it's a negative. I don't think it's a radical change of governance. I think it's just a piece of input, and I suspect if we do this, we'll see how the vote goes, that you will collectively think it was a good thing that we all could have a conversation with each other through the Mayor's Office, give some input, and his job is not only to lead, it's to listen. I suspect that through this process, it will go to his office, and the list will be more representative of our interests. I think seniority has

something to do with this, experience has something to do with this, geography clearly has something to do with this. I mean, some committees are more heavily weighted to some areas of the City than others, that's just a fact, and it will all work out. So, I heard Councilmember Gregg say 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it.' I agree with that, but I think here we're not fixing anything, we're giving each of us an opportunity of input into a system that can be better. So, I'm going to vote for it. I would encourage all of you to think of it in that vein, that this is a chance for us to communicate, to be the best that we can be, to put forward the best leadership we can in places through the advice of the Mayor and the consent of the Council. That's not a radical governing concept. It's the concept of which our entire Country is basically founded. I did, by the way, stay up to 1:00 o'clock the other night. Actually, I watched to 1:00 o'clock. I probably stayed up until about 6:00 a.m., because if you could sleep after that, you've got the magic, okay."

There was laughter in the Chamber.

Councilmember Seekings said, "But, you know, there was some good stuff and some bad stuff about it, and with what we're doing here. But in the end, the input part of it, I think, is important to me, and I hope it will be important to you all, and I do believe that this is an opportunity for us to say that we can work together to be the best that we can be, and I would encourage a 'yes' vote."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Well, if I may add, I think, honestly, your example is a case in point of 'it's not broke, why fix it.' In fact, when I sent out this list to all of you, I asked if you had any suggestions, or recommended changes, to please reach out to me, and the one person that did was a letter I got from Councilmember Seekings and, yes, I was listening. I took your letter, I spoke with the other party that would be impacted by your request, and as he mentioned, well, they worked it out, they let me know back, and we changed it. So, you know, it's working."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Waring followed by Councilmember Parker.

Councilmember Waring said, "Thank you. I'm going to vote against this, and I'll tell you why, it's not finished. When I spoke to Council about it, one of the main points that Councilmember Sakran came up with was very valid, the where to and how. It's not finished. The piece about the mere fact that Councilmember Parker can feel legitimately that some of the areas she is going to potentially ask for, I don't want to put words in your mouth, I'm trying to remember what you said, that she's not going to get. There's something wrong with that, Councilmember Gregg. If we are on all of these various Standing Committees, again, that we comprise, and we feel like we want to try to get on one, I think we can make that case to, or we should be able to make the case to you, but that we should be able to make that case to our colleagues on Council. Why would any one of us on Council feel like, 'Man, I'd like to be on Community Development, and if I ask for that, I'm not going to get on there.' I didn't know that atmosphere existed, but if any one of us feels that way, if one of us feels that way, we should all be concerned about that. It is not finished from the standpoint of, I do feel that we can have six members on a committee, Mr. Mayor, obviously, you would be part of the six, and the idea about having an odd number is trying to get passage so you have three to two, one way or the other. Now, with six you're subject to have a tie vote, but I don't believe the chairperson, should have six, should be able to vote to create a tie.

Now, Councilmember Brady knows that part of Robert's Rules of Order and in some cases some bodies suspend that group. I think on, certainly, Standing Committees the chairperson should not be able to create a tie. They certainly can vote up or down, but to create

the tie. That would solve that issue, and it would keep us from having a quorum of Council on every Standing Committee, so we won't have the number seven. Potentially, you all may have some better ideas, back to the wheres, whys, and hows of it, you could have a steering committee of Council where our desires are submitted and communicated to the Mayor, but who is supposed to chair that? I think it would be the chairman of Ways and Means, because that's a Standing Committee that meets every two weeks. My point is, there is a methodology, and Councilmember Seekings is spot on when he says it improves the situation. Somehow you all are looking at it as cutting somebody's knees from underneath him. That's not the case. The system needs to be improved and you're right, Councilmember Shahid. You said at one time the Mayor used to sit as a judge, that was changed for the better, by the way."

Councilmember Shahid said, "Can you imagine?"

There was laughter in the Chamber.

Councilmember Waring said, "You're right. Can you imagine that now?"

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Councilmember, with all due respect, Councilmember Gregg has requested to leave in just a few minutes. Could we wrap up and take a vote on this, please?"

Councilmember Waring said, "I'm going to vote to defer."

Councilmember Seekings said, "Second."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "And very briefly, Councilmember Parker did you want to weigh in one more time?"

Councilmember Parker said, "Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I mean, I guess not. We're done, but I do think, I mean, Councilmember Seekings, you made, obviously, that's a great point. I mean, I do, I think it can do nothing but improve the conversation, and I truly think that sitting here saying, yes, this room should be non-partisan. I have witnessed first-hand this is not a non-partisan room at times. So, to think that coming in with certain values and viewpoints that may be different than the Mayor's, absolutely, that affects committees, and where you go, and what you're working on. The second thing, I understand what you are saying about creating alliances and doing, what did you call it, transactions, it's going to become transactional. Again, I think if we focus on geography, that's why I pinpointed that, but transactional I don't think there is necessarily anything wrong with that, that's where the communication aspect comes in. You might have things in your, you know, I think affordable housing is a perfect example. James Island, let's be honest, is that a top priority for James Island?"

Councilmember Gregorie said, "Yes, it is."

Councilmember Parker said, "But do we have the money? Okay. I'm just saying there are things that certain districts struggle with. Councilmember Gregg doesn't deal with flooding, okay, he doesn't deal with flooding. Great. He doesn't care about Public Works. I have multi-jurisdictional components on James Island that I struggle with daily as far as flooding. I'm just putting that out there. So, those are the type of things that I do think it's okay to, in some ways, be transactional with these committees, and that's where the conversation around this table comes in. It's not necessarily political, you know, one person isn't deciding. It's what works for



you, what works for you, so things like that. So, I do think it just brings up a good discussion point. Thank you.”

Mayor Tecklenburg said, “Alright. I’d like to call a roll call vote on this matter. Madam Clerk.”

Councilmember Seekings said, “We have a motion to defer.”

Mayor Tecklenburg said, “Oh, we have a motion to defer? Oh okay, we have a motion to defer. Did we get a second on that?”

The Clerk said, “Yes.”

Mayor Tecklenburg said, “Okay. Who wants to defer?”

Councilmember Appel said, “Let’s do a roll call.”

The Clerk said, “So, a roll call vote on the deferral? Alright.”

The Clerk said, “Councilmember Gregg.”

Councilmember Gregg said, “Aye.”

The Clerk said, “Councilmember Shealy.”

Councilmember Shealy said, “This is for deferral?”

The Clerk said, “Yes, sir.”

Mayor Tecklenburg said, “The motion to defer takes precedence.”

Councilmember Shealy said, “Aye.”

The Clerk said, “Councilmember Sakran.”

Councilmember Sakran said, “Nay.”

The Clerk said, “Councilmember Mitchell.”

Councilmember Mitchell said, “Aye.”

The Clerk said, “Councilmember Brady.”

Councilmember Brady said, “Nay.”

The Clerk said, “Councilmember Gregorie.”

Councilmember Gregorie said, “Aye.”

The Clerk said, “Councilmember Waring.”

Councilmember Waring said, "Aye."

The Clerk said, "Councilmember Seekings."

Councilmember Seekings said, "Aye."

The Clerk said, "Councilmember Shahid."

Councilmember Shahid said, "Aye."

The Clerk said, "Councilmember Bowden."

Councilmember Bowden said, "Nay."

The Clerk said, "Councilmember Appel."

Councilmember Appel said, "Nay."

The Clerk said, "Councilmember Parker."

Councilmember Parker said, "Aye."

The Clerk said, "Alright. Mayor Tecklenburg."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Nay."

On a motion of Councilmember Waring, seconded by Councilmember Seekings, City Council voted to defer Item M-2 on the agenda:

An ordinance to amend Chapter 2 of the Code of the City of Charleston (*Standing Committees – appointment by the Mayor* ordinance) by revising the ordinance. **(DEFERRED)**

The motion passed 8 to 5.

The vote was not unanimous. Councilmembers Sakran, Brady, Bowden, Appel, and Mayor Tecklenburg voted nay.

The Clerk said, "Alright. The motion passes."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "The item is deferred. Our next meeting is going to be on January 24<sup>th</sup> starting at 5:00 p.m. We will take a break at 6:00 p.m. for the State of the City Address, and then there will be a City Council Workshop on the 26<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. Any other business to come before us tonight?"

Councilmember Seekings said, "I have a very quick question of our Presiding Officer."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Seekings.

Councilmember Seekings said, "Now, that's we've deferred this under our Rules, you have assigned committees, are those now in effect?"

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "They were in effect earlier this evening, actually."

Councilmember Seekings said, "Okay. I just wanted to make sure we're all clear on that."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Yes, that's right, and I've said, if we pass a motion that would alter that, then we would honor that."

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Sakran.

Councilmember Sakran said, "Thank you, Mayor. I just want to make sure for the record I voted to not defer it because we didn't have a discussion on where it's, who's taking it up? It's going to be deferred and going where?"

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "I would respectfully say it's got to go back to the Rules Committee, in my opinion."

Councilmember Waring said, "Well, who's on the Rules Committee?"

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Alright. Any other business to come before us?"

Mayor Tecklenburg recognized Councilmember Waring.

Councilmember Waring said, "Everybody's on the Rules Committee?"

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "Yes."

Councilmember Waring said, "Alright."

Mayor Tecklenburg said, "We stand adjourned. Thank you, all. Happy New Year."

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Jennifer B. Cook  
Clerk of Council