

**Minutes**  
**City Council Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 9, 2025**

The regular meeting of the Mullins City Council was held Tuesday, September 9, 2025, at 6:00 PM. The following were notified of the time, date, and place of the meeting: Mayor Miko Pickett and Members of City Council, the City Staff, and the press. Present at the meeting were the following: Mayor Miko Pickett, Mayor Pro-Tem Carolyn Wilson, Council Members: Albert Woodberry, Kindra Brewton-Pompey, Terry Davis, Luke Gasque, Eddie Kitchen, City Administrator Holly Jackson, Bobbie Thompson, John Brown, Amanda Byrd, Kim Byrd, Museum Curator Ronda Bain, Jim Bain, Carolyn Gause, Mary White, Ronette Gilchrist, Kaye Richburg, Earl Floyd, Ogleretta White, Domonique Pickett, Cynthia Ford, Joann Barbour, Kathy Going, Police Chief Phil Mostowski, and many others.

**1. Call Meeting To Order & Welcome:** Mayor Miko Pickett called the meeting to order and welcomed all present.

Council Member Luke Gasque gave the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mary White gave the invocation.

Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn Wilson made a motion to add a legal item to Executive Session. Council Member Eddie Kitchen seconded the motion.

**2. Disclosure that local media has been informed of meeting pursuant to South Carolina Freedom of Information Act:** Mayor Miko Pickett the local media had been contacted regarding the time, date, and place of the City Council meeting for September 9, 2025.

**3. Consent Agenda:**

- (a) Approval of Minutes – Finance Committee Meeting – August 11, 2025
- (b) Approval of Minutes – City Council Meeting – August 12, 2025
- (c) Approval of Minutes – Street/Sanitation Committee Meeting – August 18, 2025
- (d) Approval of Minutes – Special City Council Meeting – August 20, 2025
- (e) Approval of Minutes – Finance Committee Meeting – August 26, 2025
- (f) Approval of Minutes – Planning Commission Meeting – August 26, 2025
- (g) Approval of Monthly Bills – July 2025
- (h) Approval of Monthly Bills – August 2025

Mayor Pickett asked to table Item h. Council Member Eddie Kitchen stated Item b needed to be changed to include his name as being in attendance. Clerk duly noted

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the change. Council Member \_\_\_\_\_ made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda with the exception of item h. Item h will be tabled. Council Member \_\_\_\_\_ seconded the motion.

**4. Old Business:**

- (a) Proposed Legal Audit – Finance Chairman Luke Gasque

Council Member Luke Gasque made a motion to allow a legal audit of the Old Brick Square (OBS). Council Member Eddie Kitchen seconded the motion. Mayor Miko Pickett and Council Member Terry Davis nayed the vote for the audit. Kenneth Cobb & Company will be conducting the audit.

**5. New Business:**

- (a) Building Inspector Curtis Richardson – Recommendation for Increase of Fees

Mayor Miko Pickett made a motion to accept the increase of fees. Council Member Terry Davis seconded the motion. Council Member Luke Gasque asked for a comparison from other cities. It was the consensus of Council to table until the next regular meeting.

- (b) PDRTA Board Assignment – Carolyn Gause

Council Member Terry Davis made a motion to accept the appointment of Carolyn Gause for another three (3) years to the PDRTA board. Council Member Luke Gasque seconded the motion.

**6. Administrative Report:** City Administrator Holly Jackson

- (a) Trash/Debris – Discussion

There was discussion about debris, landfill, overtime, bulky items, contractors, and cardboard.

- (b) Ronda Bain & Edla Vaughn – 9/11 Event

Museum Curator Ronda Bain and business owner, Edla Vaughn stated there would be a 9/11 event located at OBS. This event celebrates first responders.

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(c) Curtis Richardson – Condemnation of Properties

Building Official Curtis Richardson gave a presentation about the condemned properties in Mullins. A copy of the power point is attached. Mayor Miko Pickett asked for a community workshop.

**7. Mayors Report: Mayor Miko Pickett**

(a) Kim Byrd – Beautification Committee Update

Mayor Miko Pickett recognized Kim Byrd with the Beautification Committee. Ms. Byrd thanked Council for supporting the Marketplace. The Beautification Committee will open the Marketplace on Friday, September 25<sup>th</sup> from 4-8 PM as a kickoff to the Golden Leaf Festival. The Three Peace Band will be performing.

The “Tea Party” will be re-scheduled for April of 2026.

Ms. Byrd thanked Pam Anderson for the cemetery cleanup. The cemetery committee will cover the next cleanup. There has been some clarification on the “Colored Section” of the cemetery. This is how it is listed at the tax accessor’s office. The Juneteenth Committee will be applying for money to restore and honor those buried there.

(b) Mullins Art Council Committee Update – Jan Nixon – TBD

Ms. Jan Nixon explained what the Art Council Committee is and how it supports the arts and culture. There is an art contest at the school and the theme is “My dream City of Mullins”. These drawings will be displayed at City Hall.

(c) Mullins Planning Board Chair – Mary White

Ms. Mary White stated the Planning Committee had their first meeting and would continue to meet monthly.

(d) Mullins Downtown Development Committee – TBD

Ms. Ogleretta White announced “Shuck & Sip” (Oyster Roast) will be held on October 16<sup>th</sup> in Lions Park. Discussion was had over facades and marketing.

Mayor Miko Pickett stated the meeting for the Strategic Plan will be held on September 24<sup>th</sup> at City Hall.

The Ministerial Alliance would like to start a clothing closet for the working force that are in need of clothing.

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Mayor Miko Pickett stated Senator Kent Williams will be presenting the City a check for \$15,000 to build a fence at OBS.

The Mayor's Alliance will be developing a "No Kid Hungry" program.

**8. Comments:**

(a) Pee Dee Coalition – Danyelle Rogers – Domestic Violence Awareness

Ms. Danyell Rogers stated October is DV Awareness Month. The theme is "Love Yourself After Trauma". The program will be held in Mullins on October 23<sup>rd</sup> and is sponsored by Arby's and Coco-Cola.

**9. Adjournment:**

Council Member Terry Davis made a motion to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tem Carolyn Wilson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

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Mayor Miko Pickett

ATTEST:

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Felicia Sawyer-Norton

# **Basic Characteristics of an Unsafe Structure:**

## **1. Structural Instability**

- Cracked or leaning walls, beams, or columns
- Sagging or collapsing floors or roof systems

## **2. Risk of Collapse**

- Any part of the structure is likely to fall and injure people or damage property

## **3. Compromised Foundation**

- Visible foundation cracks, settling, or shifting
- Water intrusion weakening the base

## **4. Severe Deterioration**

- Extensive rot, corrosion, or termite damage to structural elements

## **5. Inadequate Support Systems**

- Missing or damaged load-bearing elements
- Unpermitted structural modifications

## **6. Fire Hazards**

- Faulty electrical wiring or exposed circuits
- Lack of fire-resistant materials in critical areas

## **7. Unsafe Means of Egress**

- Blocked, narrow, or broken exits
- Stairways, doors, or windows that are not functional in emergencies

## **8. Weather or Disaster Damage**

- Wind, flood, earthquake, or fire damage compromising structural integrity

## **9. Unstable Attachments or Fixtures**

- Loose balconies, overhangs, chimneys, or signage

## **10. Violation of Building Codes**

- Any structural condition that violates local building safety regulations

(2) "Blighted area" means any improved or vacant area where if improved, industrial, commercial, and residential buildings or improvements, because of a combination of five or more of the following factors: age; dilapidation; obsolescence; deterioration; illegal use of individual structures; presence of structures below minimum code standards; excessive vacancies; overcrowding of structures and community facilities; lack of ventilation, light, or sanitary facilities; inadequate utilities; excessive land coverage; deleterious land use or layout; depreciation of physical maintenance; lack of community planning, are detrimental to the public safety, health, morals, or welfare or, if vacant, the sound growth is impaired by (a) a combination of two or more of the following factors: obsolete platting of the vacant land; diversity of ownership of such land; tax and special assessment delinquencies on such land; deterioration of structures or site improvements in neighboring areas adjacent to the vacant land; or (b) the area immediately prior to becoming vacant qualified as a blighted area.

# **CONDEMNATION FOR BLIGHT**

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**IN SOUTH CAROLINA**





# BASIC LAW

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In South Carolina, a municipality can condemn a property for blight under specific conditions, which were narrowed by a 2006 constitutional amendment. The state's eminent domain laws prevent the government from taking property for economic development alone. Instead, a property must be a provable danger to public health and safety to be considered "blighted" and subject to condemnation.

This process follows a municipality's use of its police power to abate a public nuisance, rather than using eminent domain to transfer the property for private redevelopment.



# THE CONDEMNATION PROCESS FOR BLIGHT

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1. Code enforcement and notice: The process is typically initiated by citizen complaints or city inspections that lead to code violations on a property. The local government will issue a notice to the property owner, outlining the corrections needed to resolve the issues and the deadline for repairs.
2. Referral to court: If the property owner fails to remedy the violations, the city can seek a court order to take over or condemn the property. Municipalities, such as the City of Spartanburg, have used this process to remove blight from neighborhoods.
3. Required evidence: For the court to approve the condemnation, the municipality must prove that:
  - The property's condition is an imminent danger to public health and safety.

## THE CONDEMNATION PROCESS FOR BLIGHT CONT.

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- The taking is a proper exercise of the city's power and necessary to address the public use.
4. Common reasons for condemnation: Specific problems that can lead to a property being condemned include:
- No power, water, or heat
  - Fire damage
  - Unsafe or unsanitary structures
5. Legal challenge: Property owners have the right to challenge the condemnation by filing a separate Challenge Action in the Court of Common Pleas in the county where the property is located.



## LIMITS ON CONDEMNATION FOR BLIGHT

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- In 2006, South Carolina voters passed a constitutional amendment that provides significant protections against the misuse of eminent domain. This measure specifically prevents municipalities from condemning private property for economic development purposes alone.
- For an individual property to be considered blighted for condemnation purposes, it must be proven to be a direct danger to public health and safety, not simply in a state of disrepair.

# WHAT ARE THE MAJOR HEALTH, SAFETY AND DANGERS OF A DILAPIDATED HOME

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Dilapidated homes pose severe health and safety risks due to a combination of structural decay, hazardous materials, and environmental factors. These dangers affect not only the occupants and visitors but also neighbors and emergency responders.





# STRUCTURAL DANGERS

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- **Collapse:** Neglected homes often have compromised structural integrity, with walls, roofs, floors, and staircases that can collapse without warning.
- **Rot and decay:** Water damage from leaking roofs and pipes can cause wood to rot, weakening the building's frame, floors, and porches.
- **Trip and fall hazards:** Holes in floors, unstable stairs, and scattered debris pose a constant risk of injury.
- **Electrical hazards:** Damaged or exposed wiring in abandoned or decaying structures can lead to electrical shocks or fires.



# HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

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- **Asbestos:** Older homes often contain asbestos in insulation, floor tiles, and roofing. When disturbed, its fibers can become airborne and, if inhaled, cause serious lung diseases like mesothelioma and asbestosis.
- **Lead-based paint:** Found in many homes built before 1978, peeling or chipping lead paint creates toxic dust that can be inhaled or ingested. This is especially dangerous for children and can cause developmental and cognitive problems.
- **Mold:** Water leaks and high humidity in poorly maintained homes create an ideal environment for mold growth. Exposure to mold can trigger allergic reactions and asthma attacks, with black mold being particularly harmful.
- **Radon:** This colorless, odorless gas can seep into buildings from the soil. Trapped inside dilapidated and poorly ventilated structures, high concentrations of radon are a known cause of lung cancer.





# INFESTATIONS AND BIOHAZARDS

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- **Pest infestations:** Dilapidated houses are breeding grounds for pests like rats, mice, cockroaches, and stinging insects. These pests can spread to adjacent properties.
- **Diseases:** Rodents and other pests carry diseases like Hantavirus, Leptospirosis, and Salmonella, which can be transmitted through their droppings, urine, and nesting materials.
- **Biohazards from squatters:** Properties occupied by squatters may contain biohazardous materials such as used needles, drug paraphernalia, or human waste, which poses a serious health risk.
- **Hazardous waste:** Commercial or industrial abandoned buildings may contain hazardous chemicals, toxic waste, or other substances that contaminate the property and surrounding environment.

## OTHER SAFETY CONCERNS

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- **Crime:** Abandoned homes can become hubs for illegal activities, including drug use, theft, and arson, which endanger the surrounding neighborhood.
- **Fire hazard:** Deteriorated electrical wiring, arson, and flammable materials can turn a dilapidated house into a severe fire risk that threatens nearby homes.
- **Risk to children:** Curious children are at particular risk of serious injury or death from exploring abandoned buildings and falling through unstable roofs or floors



# Types of public use for blight is south carolina

In South Carolina, blighted properties are redeveloped for public use through various projects, including public spaces, residential housing, and economic development. The state's blight remediation efforts are supported by constitutional provisions and programs like the Abandoned Buildings Revitalization Act.

# Infrastructure and community facilities

Redevelopment often includes building or updating public infrastructure that serves the community.

Transportation: Constructing roads, highways, bridges, and public transportation lines.

Public utilities: Installing or upgrading water treatment plants, sewer lines, and power lines.

Community centers and facilities: Building new schools, hospitals, or recreation centers that benefit the public.



# Economic development

While South Carolina has protections against using eminent domain solely for private economic development, blighted properties can be redeveloped to stimulate the economy.

Commercial redevelopment: Converting abandoned commercial buildings into new businesses and revenue-generating assets.

Mixed-use developments: Creating spaces with a combination of commercial and residential uses to revitalize downtowns and other key areas.

# Simplified Flow

Step	Action
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| 1.  | Identify blighted property                                 |
| 2.  | Confirm eligibility for condemnation                       |
| 3.  | Draft redevelopment/condemnation plan                      |
| 4.  | Notify owner(s) with formal notice                         |
| 5.  | Hold public hearings                                       |
| 6.  | Obtain governing body approval                             |
| 7.  | Conduct independent appraisals                             |
| 8.  | Negotiate fair compensation                                |
| 9.  | File legal condemnation if needed                          |
| 10. | Court proceedings with evidence and inspection             |
| 11. | Award just compensation (with possible additional damages) |
| 12. | Pay interest and reimburse expenses if applicable          |
| 13. | Execute redevelopment plan                                 |