

Charleston County  
Resilience and Sustainability Advisory Committee (RSAC)  
Meeting Minutes  
May 13, 2025

**RSAC ATTENDEES**

Rev. Dr. Kylon Jerome Middleton (Charleston County Council Chairman) (Virtual), Stewart Weinberg (RSAC Chair), Scott Harris (College of Charleston) (RSAC Vice Chair), Diamond Curry (Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce), Scott Curtis (Citadel), Sally Brooks (Zoning and Planning), Nina Miller (BCD COG).

**PUBLIC ATTENDEES**

Catherine Min (South Carolina Office of Resilience), Kennedy Bennett (Coastal Conservation League), Lexi Dowd (Charleston Climate Coalition), Belvin Olasov (Charleston Climate Coalition), Allison Welch (College of Charleston), David Johnson (Virtual), Anna Kimelblatt (Virtual)

**COUNTY STAFF**

Molly Caggiano, Alexandra Petruch, Walter Smalls, Philip Sabatino, Sheetal Verma<sup>+</sup>

**ABSENT**

Adrian Cain (Homebuilders Association)  
Scott Runyon (Dominion Energy)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Stewart Weinberg called the Charleston County RSAC meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.  
Moment of Silence for Dale Morris  
FOIA compliance and media acknowledgement announced.

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS' REMARKS**

- Introductions of special attendees for the meeting.
- Approved meeting minutes at 9:40 a.m. from March 04, 2025.
  - Motion to approve introduced by Stewart Weinberg. Motion was approved unanimously.

**TOPICS DISCUSSED**

Presentations:

***Molly Caggiano***

- Brief overview of previous RSAC meeting provided.
- Resilience Updates:
  - Currently there have been notable cuts to FEMA funding that isn't having an impact on any current resilience projects but could affect budgets in the future.
  - The South Carolina Office of Resilience (SCOR) is assisting in locating other sources of

revenue to prevent any lag in the future so that mitigation and recovery initiatives can move forward.

- SCOR is also aiding in the identification of community partners to facilitate establishing a Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster (VOAD) group, which focuses on nonprofit participation in emergency response efforts. At the County level, the resilience collaborative is being pursued through the recruitment of community partners who can accelerate the work.

#### ***Alexandra Petruch***

- State: SCOR and DES are currently pursuing Clean Air Strategies for South Carolina through management of the Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) by the Palmetto Air Quality Collaborative (PAQC).
  - Next deliverables are slated for December 2025.
- Regional: BCDCOG has contracted SSG to devise a climate action plan. They have garnered technical assistance from specialists in the field with their next meeting scheduled for June 03, 2025.
- County: There has been extensive promotion of the CAP through media and in person. The goal is to work with others in the County and other municipalities.
- Amendments are being prepared for revisions in the plastic bag ordinance to close any loops and produce uniformity within the County
- Sustainability is partnering with Greenbelt in promoting carbon sequestration through the preservation and introduction of green spaces.
- The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) federal freeze has been repealed for the County Residential Weatherization and Energy Audit project, and the project has resumed.
- Current Inventory:
  - Introduction of the Sustainability Airtable, which tracks all of the undertaken strategy projects with their different structures, components, and statuses.
  - They have been able to work collaboratively with other departments in the County to document projects that they have underway that meet the established CAP strategic goals.
  - The Airtable will allow oversight where resources should be shifted or applied.
  - Currently there are 87 active projects internally and externally that support the CAP, with 28 of the 53 strategies being implemented. This has the plan on pace to achieving its goal of 29 strategies for the year 2025, with the remaining to be completed in 2026 and 2027. There will, however, be ongoing components to ensure the maintenance of the goals accomplished.
  - There is a function within Airtable that allows community input regarding contributions to the CAP upon supply of a link from the Resilience and Sustainability staff. This will be employed by the team in the future so that all organizations can be acknowledged, and progress and growth can be visually available.
  - This platform and the greenhouse gas inventory will provide progressive views of obtaining net zero.



***Philip Sabatino***

Efficiency Overview

- Parking Garages, Detention Center, Library Support Center, PSB, James Island Magistrate, ESB, and LEC have all received energy saving renovations that range from LED lighting and HVAC replacements to solar panels and charging stations that have led to substantial reductions in costs.
- The charging stations are available to the public, employees, and fleet vehicles.
- Council has incorporated a request for funding options for energy efficiency via the strategic plan that Facilities is currently acting upon with the assistance of a contracted consultant.
  - o An RFP was completed, and a selection will be made from 5 applicants.
  - o The contract will be awarded to the most qualified Energy Savings Company (ESCO), and an Investment Grade Audit Agreement (IGAA) will be negotiated.
  - o Ultimately the ESCO and consultant will assist in managing and monitoring an Energy Savings Performance Contract that will finance Facilities' projects externally and allow loans to be paid over 20-50 years with funds from energy savings.
  - o In the Facilities Management budget, there are funds allocated for conservation and preservations, and they will be more justifiably applied once there is an Energy Savings Performance Contract in place.

***Alexandra Petruch***

- The Climate Action Plan details the need for an annual work plan. A draft has been developed, but input from RSAC is being sought.
  - o Each RSAC member is invited to share 1-2 projects that is believed to be fundamental at this stage in the CAP.
  - o 2027 is the next GHG inventory; the consultant will assess progress to determine if the County is on track.

Feedback/Updates:

- The plastic bag ordinance prohibits the use of thin, single use plastic bags. The ordinance has been passed by the City of Charleston, Mount Pleasant, and Folly Beach. The new resolution would also encompass the discontinuation of the thicker plastic bags. (Stewart Weinberg)
- Rev. Dr. Middleton is currently working with the Coastal Conservation League to provide guidance for the unincorporated areas of the County to foster greater consistency in these measures. A draft is under review with the Charleston County Legal Department. (Rev. Dr. Kylon Middleton)
- As explained by DCA Smalls, the revisions to the ordinance will include the unincorporated areas and will be brought to RSAC for comments and then to Council for approval. (DCA Walter Smalls)
- The Airtable inventory could be fundamental to the updates that are given to Council to demonstrate what is already happening collaboratively and encourage buy-in internally and externally. (Rev. Dr. Kylon Middleton)
- The Chamber would like clarification of their role in assigned strategies and the County's vision for them in their partnership. (Diamond Curry)
- In this preliminary phase, RSAC members and their respective organizations are advised to adopt a role of advocacy to gauge the reception from other members of the community. Once the response is understood, an approach and plan of action can be formulated. (Alexandra Petruch)

- It may be beneficial to host a hallmark event, similar to the EV event last year, that allows businesses and other organizations to become more familiar with the efficiency and savings that are generated by the different sustainability initiatives, i.e. solar panels, retrofitting, and weatherization resulting in cost savings that could be impactful to their finances. (Stewart Weinberg)

## GENERAL COMMENT

### Open Discussion for Work Plan:

- Mass transit that is more resilient and potential electrification may be areas of importance. (Diamond Curry)
- Carpooling lanes may be an area of interest. Also, the rapid bus system is currently underway and should be available within the next two years. However, there needs to be an effort to encourage citizens to utilize the bus systems. (Stewart Weinberg).
- LCTRT is still on schedule to be available in 2027. (Nina Miller)
- Spreading awareness is key. Also, building more housing and businesses along the transit routes would make it more attractive. (Diamond Curry)
- Discouraging personal vehicles as primary transportation over CARTA is also important. (Nina Miller)
- We need to have infrastructure and the people to make rapid transit happen. A partnership may be necessary to pilot a program. (Molly Caggiano).
- Developing a conference to raise awareness of the work that's being done could be imperative in increasing understanding within the community. (DCA Walter Smalls).
- There's an appreciation for the efforts being exerted in providing workshops in weatherization. It would be beneficial to reach out to Trident Tech and all the other colleges in the area to have them participate. (Scott Curtis).
- The workshops and community engagement could also facilitate reaching professionals in the field as we aim to transition to more green energy. Appealing to those who work in HVAC, plumbing, etc. and plan to stay in the area could provide some of the workforce insights needed for implementation. (Scott Harris).
- Integrating the Reality Check 2.0 used by BCD COG with what's being done with Resilience and Sustainability may be helpful especially in discussions of finding common ground between conservation and growth efforts. Nina may be able to introduce Molly and Alexandra to Ryan on this project. (Diamond Curry)
- Although there has been reluctance due to fear of costs, residents should really participate in energy audits. They are actually free. (Stewart Weinberg)
- Spreading awareness for Dominion, Berkeley, etc. is an excellent idea. There are actions being taken to promote weatherization and community projects. (Alexandra Petrich)
- It may be helpful to work with real estate teams as people are selling and buying homes; this may provide key moments to promote energy audits. (Allison Welch).

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Call for public comment by Chair at 10:39am



**RECOMMENDATIONS MADE/ACTION ITEMS:**

- RSAC members are encouraged to access the Airtable inventory to gain an understanding of the range of projects in progress that inherently support CAP strategies.
- Continued identification of community partners and projects that further sustainability initiatives was requested of RSAC members.

**NEXT MEETING**

June 10, 2025

**CHAIR'S REMARKS**

The Chair expressed gratitude for all that work that is being done and the direction in which progress is being made. It will truly be beneficial for all those who live in Charleston County now and who will live here in the future.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair, Stewart Weinberg, adjourned the meeting at 10:47 a.m. with unanimous approval.

Sheetal Verma<sup>+</sup>

Ratified by the Charleston County  
Resilience and Sustainability Advisory Committee this  
10<sup>th</sup> day of June 2025.

  
Chair

Attest:

  
Administrative Officer - Resilience

  
Administrative Officer - Sustainability