



# COUNCIL COURIER

## COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

### Investing in Early Childhood: First Things First Presentation

Town Council received an informative presentation from Annette Lopez of First Things First, highlighting the lasting value of early childhood education. The presentation emphasized how high-quality childcare supports strong families, prepares future students for success, and strengthens the local economy. Council and community members also learned about current challenges in childcare access in Florence and how improving these resources can help working parents and employers alike. The presentation is part of the Town's ongoing efforts to enhance livability and long-term outcomes for families with young children.



### Investing in Tomorrow: Capital Improvement Plan Moves Ahead

Florence Town Council approved the updated 2025–2026 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), directing investment toward transportation, water and wastewater infrastructure, and quality of life improvements. Transportation efforts include the widening of Hunt Highway and Attaway Road, along with intersection upgrades at Highway 79 and Hunt Highway. Major utility projects include the rejuvenation of the South Wastewater Plant, decommissioning of the North Plant, and a comprehensive water line review and reconstruction initiative. The plan also enhances community amenities with new restroom facilities at Main Street Park, expanded youth programming including a teen center, and development of a new five-year Strategic Plan.

### Enhanced Safety for Town Facilities

The Town Council approved a contract with Intelligrated Communications Inc. to update and finalize security and fire alarm systems at key Town-owned buildings. These upgrades, totaling just over \$153,000, ensure that monitoring and alert systems meet the latest fire code standards and facility needs. Not every building requires a fire alarm system, but each was individually assessed to determine the right level of protection. The enhancements reflect Florence's proactive approach to public facility safety and modernization.

## COUNCIL RECAP

### FY 2025-2026 Tentative Budget Adopted

Council approved the FY 2025–2026 Tentative Budget, a fiscally responsible plan that balances economic uncertainty with continued investment in infrastructure and essential services. Totalling \$98.5 million across all funds, the budget reflects a conservative approach designed to maintain funding while advancing critical priorities identified by Council. Increases have been carefully evaluated to ensure they support long-term success and community quality of life. A public hearing is scheduled for June 3 to allow residents to share feedback before final adoption.

### Fire Stations to Receive Industry-Leading Alerting Upgrade

To improve emergency response times, the Florence Town Council approved the purchase of a Gateway device that integrates Fire Station alerting systems with the new alarm room Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. This update ensures that stations receive fast, reliable electronic dispatch alerts, improving coordination and keeping Florence residents safer. The upgrade will modernize systems at both Station 1 and Station 2, aligning them with the latest industry standards.