

**MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING  
HORRY COUNTY SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY, INC.  
March 24, 2026**

The Horry County Solid Waste Authority, Inc. held a Board Meeting on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at 3:00 P.M., at the Authority's Administrative Office, 1886 Highway 90, Conway, South Carolina. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, notices setting forth the date, time, and place of the meeting were mailed to the news media.

Present were the following Board Members: Robert J. Kemp, Chairman; Pam J. Creech, Vice Chairman; W. Norfleet Jones, Secretary; Amos C. Berry, Sr., Treasurer; and Board Members Bo Ives, and Dr. Albert G. Hayward. Board Member Wayne Fox was not in attendance.

Corporal Eric Zink from the Horry County Police Department, Highway 90 Liaison Michael Hughes, and Amelia Wood represented the public in attendance. There were no members of the media present.

The following individuals were also in attendance: Danny Knight, Executive Director; Ed Marr, Assistant Executive Director; Esther Murphy, Director; Jan Bitting, Director; Stephanie Todd, Director; Richie Stetter, Director and staff members Mike Small, Eric Dudgeon, Davis Paul, Cameron Williamson, Dustin Keith, Timothy Grissett, Josh Nesbit, Nick Kovalski, Chris Calhoun, Drake Morris, Katherine Bell, and Monica Collier.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Kemp called the meeting to order and asked Mr. Berry to render the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Kemp led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Mr. Berry moved to approve the Agenda as presented. There was a second by Mr. Jones and the Motion was carried.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Kemp asked for any questions on or amendments to the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held on February 24, 2026; however, there were none.

**Mr. Berry moved to approve the Minutes of the February 24, 2026, Regular Meeting. There was a second by Ms. Creech and the Motion was carried.**

**PUBLIC INPUT**

Chairman Kemp stated there was no Public Input.

**DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS/ UPDATES**

**Recycling and Corporate Affairs** Mrs. Murphy offered an update of various projects in the Recycling and Corporate Affairs Division that were included on pages 12-20 in the Board Packet.

**2026 CRA Conference Update** – Mrs. Murphy provided an update on the Carolina Recycling Association Annual Conference, which was held the previous week at Kingston Plantation. She

reported that the SWA contributed to this year's conference by hosting a tour of the facility last Monday. Mrs. Murphy reported that approximately 22 attendees participated in the tour. She also stated that the SWA served as presenters in the Upcycle Together session, where staff member Kendra Dickerson shared information about recycling and participated in crafting activities.

Mrs. Murphy stated that the conference overall was very successful and that several Board Members were in attendance. She advised the Board that the Carolina Recycling Association (CRA) would be undergoing a rebranding. She stated that the new name would be Circular Carolina. Mrs. Murphy stated that the organization had operated as the Carolina Recycling Association for 36 years, but the updated name better reflected the current direction of recycling efforts in the Carolinas. She said the CRA plans to complete the rebranding within this calendar year.

Mrs. Murphy stated that Dr. Hayward, Ms. Creech, and Mr. Ives attended the conference. Mrs. Murphy asked if anyone had any comments at this time.

Ms. Creech said that she thought it was a good conference and found it very interesting. She stated one of the things she really liked was the composting containers that were usually available, but the same company also had slightly larger red and black containers designed for recycling lithium batteries from phones, computers, and other devices. She said she learned something she did not previously know—that vaping devices also contain lithium batteries, and that a significant number of them are being discarded.

Ms. Creech stated that she encouraged members of the SWA staff to review the red and black battery recycling bins, as they may be worth considering for placement alongside composting containers. She emphasized the importance of educating the public that lithium batteries do not belong in the landfill.

Ms. Creech also mentioned that one presenter demonstrated how to cut crates used for storage, and another showed the teeth that go into the shredder. She said the presentations given by staff were very good.

Mr. Ives said it was a very good conference and beneficial to see what North Carolina was doing. He stated that the sessions were very informative.

Dr. Hayward added that the conference was very informative and that he learned a great deal about lithium batteries.

Mrs. Murphy said that, regarding lithium batteries, staff had been consistently promoting them through the current Be-Battery Smart series of ads, which were running on most television stations and focused on their associated dangers. Mrs. Murphy said that the SWA accepted and properly disposed of lithium batteries and vaping devices at the HHW facility. She informed the Board that staff was working to ensure these items stayed out of the landfill.

Mrs. Murphy said that one part of the conference she had not yet mentioned was the State of the States presentation. She stated that the SC Annual Report was discussed by DES staff and that she would bring the information to the next Board Meeting.

**Statement of Economic Update** – Mrs. Murphy said this was the final reminder to the Board that it

was time to file their Statements of Economic Interest electronically through the State Ethics Commission. She informed the Board that the filing deadline to avoid penalties was 12 p.m. on March 30, 2026. She suggested that Board Members submit their filings as soon as possible.

**Caught Green Handed Update** – Mrs. Murphy informed the Board the February “Caught Green Handed” recipient was Ms. Elaine Montgomery. She stated Ms. Montgomery was a recycler at the Landfill Recycling Center and she was thankful to be recognized.

**Finance and Administration Update** – Mrs. Bitting offered an update of the following items which were included as pages 21 – 40 in the Board Packet.

**Monthly Finance Reports** – Mrs. Bitting reported that the SWA should be a little over 66% of budget. Mrs. Bitting said that Solid Waste revenue was at 66.40% of budget, Mixed Construction revenue was at 71.97% of budget and Yard Waste revenue was at 70.47% of budget. She reported that overall tipping fees reflect a little over a 21% increase compared to this same time last year.

Mrs. Bitting reported that recyclable sales were slightly below budget at 64.20%. She said the C&D Processing Facility saved 26 days of airspace. Mrs. Bitting reported that the Material Recycling Facility saved 58 days of airspace.

Mrs. Bitting reviewed the Income Statement and reported revenue over expenses was \$25,710.53. She said the SWA’s year-to-date revenue over expenses was \$2,940,157.74. She said revenues were at 64.26% of budget and expenses were below at 57.67% of budget. Mrs. Bitting commended staff for doing a great job.

Mrs. Bitting gave an overview of the landfill tonnage and reported that Solid Waste increased by 1.65%, Yard Waste increased by 13.36%, and Mixed Construction increased by 18.19% compared to last year.

Mrs. Bitting reported that pages 38 and 39 included an update on the status of capital projects and capital expenditures. Mrs. Bitting stated that staff recently purchased a bulldozer for which \$850,000 had been budgeted, but the actual cost was \$796,500. She said that several other projects were listed along with their corresponding budgeted amounts and expenditures to date. Mrs. Bitting said these figures will continue to change, and she would keep the Board updated.

Mrs. Bitting stated that page 39 included two additional pieces of equipment: a front loader with a budget of \$550,000, purchased for \$439,000, and the scales repair project, with a budget of \$50,000, purchased for \$31,931.

Mrs. Bitting reminded the Board that the Budget Workshop would be held on Thursday, March 26, at 2 P.M. She said she had provided the budget books and asked Board Members to review them, take notes, and bring any questions they had. She stated that the workshop would be very informal and intended for open discussion.

Mrs. Bitting also informed the Board that staff would attend the County’s Budget Workshop next Wednesday, April 1, 2026, and that the SWA would be first on the agenda. She informed the Board that one of the key topics they plan to discuss was the landfill expansion.

Ms. Creech stated that on page 22, she was reviewing several items that could be discussed at the Budget Workshop. She reported that the MRF showed a 26.78% decrease, the landfill showed a decrease of over 23%, and C&D showed a 17% decrease. Ms. Creech said she had been looking at the months in which recycling reflected negative numbers, including October, November, December, July, September, and February. She asked whether the recycling center was operating every day.

Mrs. Bitting responded yes. Ms. Creech asked again for confirmation, and Mrs. Bitting stated that the MRF was also taking in some material on Saturdays.

Ms. Creech said that at the Budget Workshop, she would like to review some of the negative percentages and the months in which they occurred. She also stated that some of the scrap plastics, PET, and aluminum graphs showed zeros, while others reflected percentages.

Ms. Creech said these items may be appropriate to discuss during the budget process. She said that she noticed several items in the operating expense report related to departmental costs.

Ms. Creech stated that she would like to see each administrative department listed, along with the amount of money allocated, the number of employees, and related information, at the Budget Workshop. Mrs. Bitting said that this was something they typically discussed and that personnel costs were always broken down. Mrs. Bitting informed the Board that this information would be provided at the workshop.

Mr. Knight said that he wanted to clarify one point. He stated that, when reviewing the MRF and the materials going through it, staff would meet with the City of Myrtle Beach next week to discuss their recyclables. He said staff planned to gather information from each mayor regarding what their municipalities were doing and what types of savings they were experiencing. Mr. Knight said that staff had been taking a closer look at the incoming material. Ms. Creech said that was a positive step. She shared that she had spoken with the new mayor of the City of Myrtle Beach about recycling having declined at one point and expressed hope that he would be instrumental in improving participation. She said he appeared very interested.

Mr. Knight said staff would provide the mayor with the chart next week and offer any assistance needed. He said that he had spoken with Mr. Cannon about the noticeable increase in the number of trucks coming in. Mr. Knight stated that this information would be available at the workshop for the Board to review.

**Operations and Planning Update** – Mrs. Todd presented the following updates which were included on pages 41 – 61 in the Board Packet.

**Landfill Update** – Mrs. Todd reported the landfill had its monthly inspection on Tuesday, March 3rd. She stated that all evaluated areas had been inspected and found to be satisfactory.

**Household Hazardous Waste** – Mrs. Todd reported that the seventh HHW pack-and-ship with MXI resulted in the collection of 28,436 pounds of material. She stated that this brings the total collected to 194,580 pounds (97.28 tons) to date, and that the cost of disposal had totaled \$73,702.72.

**Driver of the Month Update** – Mrs. Todd said the March Driver of the Month was Mr. John Livingston who works for Pich & Haul.

**C&D Recycling Update** – Mrs. Todd reported that material processed at the C&D Recycling Facility in February 2026 decreased by 30.75% as compared to February 2025. Mrs. Todd said the decrease was due to the snowstorm and extreme cold temperatures, which resulted in the facility being closed for two full days one week.

**MRF Update** – Mrs. Todd reported a 3.53% decrease in the amount of recyclables received at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) in February 2026 as compared to February 2025.

Mrs. Todd informed the Board that February was historically a very low month. She said that each year, recycling volumes seem to drop off in February for reasons staff still do not fully understand. She stated that during staff meetings and in conversations with Mr. Cannon, it was reported that tonnages were beginning to pick up again and that cardboard volumes were increasing as well. Mrs. Todd stated that this hopefully indicated that the overall volume was starting to improve.

Mrs. Todd said that, with respect to sales, the SWA continued to receive prices above the national average for the material that staff could move. Mrs. Todd said that the SWA was taking hits on PET plastic. Mrs. Todd reported astronomical increases in freight costs and that prices are lower because of shipping, but the SWA does not pay for it. She stated that freight was expected to increase by \$75 to \$150 per container, depending on raising transportation rates by \$7 to \$10 per ton. Mrs. Todd said these increases would take effect on April 1, 2026.

Mrs. Todd reported that PET bottles have plummeted in recent weeks, with the national average falling to under 2 cents per pound. She stated that the average price in the Northeastern United States was approaching zero in the recycling markets. Mrs. Todd reported that in early March, PET bale prices were the lowest in both the Northeast and the Midwest, contributing to capacity reductions and closures among reclaimers across the country. She indicated that many facilities had already closed as a result.

Mrs. Todd reported that OCC prices increased to \$115.75 per ton, up from \$110.85 in February, and that mixed paper increased to \$85.67 per ton, up from \$78.89 in February. Mrs. Todd informed the Board that staff was closely monitoring the market and doing everything they could to maintain cleanliness, send out bids, and work with buyers to ensure the agency received the highest possible value for its materials.

Mr. Ives stated that during the CRA Conference, there was a discussion about PET and the current market conditions. He said that losing two major customers had a significant impact. Mr. Ives added that virgin material prices had dropped considerably. He asked Mrs. Todd whether the market was attempting to drive prices down to eliminate competition or if producers could truly manufacture and maintain prices at such a low level. Mrs. Todd responded that it is difficult to say.

Mr. Marr reported that at the Recycling Market Development Advisory Council (RMDAC) meeting, Mr. Glenn Odom, the PET representative who monitored that particular market, provided an update on current conditions. He stated that there was a significant lack of demand for nylon, PET, and similar materials. Mr. Marr said that North Carolina had already seen flaking and washing plants shut down due to declining demand. He indicated that even nearby facilities with processing capacity had been forced to close because demand had dropped so sharply that they could no longer remain operational.

Mr. Marr stated that, according to Mr. Odom, the downturn reflected a combined market impact across both recycled and virgin materials. He said that demand for nylons and PET resins had fallen substantially and that, at this time, it was unclear which products or industries might replace the lost demand, as current market indicators do not show any emerging alternatives.

Ms. Creech said that at the CRA Conference, she took notes during the Tuesday sessions in which there was a discussion about a company now operating in South Carolina that was taking PET. She said she could not recall the presenter's name, but the information was shared during that session. General discussion ensued.

Chairman Kemp stated that the Board appreciated Mrs. Todd and her staff for their work and the prices they secured. He said that the SWA remained above average on nearly every material and that achieving those results required significant effort from everyone to maintain quality and ensure the SWA was not taken advantage of. He stated that the Board Members truly appreciated those efforts. Chairman Kemp also noted that the amount of rejects was down, and he acknowledged that reducing rejects required considerable work. He expressed his appreciation for that as well.

**Landfill Fire Update** – Mrs. Todd reported that at approximately 7:00 P.M. on March 13, 2026, an SWA employee, Mr. Nick Kovalsky, was visiting his mother’s home on East Cox Ferry Road when he noticed smoke coming from the area of the landfill. He immediately reported his observations to his supervisor, Mr. Stetter, who then contacted Mr. Calhoun. Mr. Calhoun, in turn, called the operators to assist with the fire.

Mrs. Todd stated that Mr. Dudgeon was contacted first because he lived closest to the landfill, and he arrived at approximately 7:15 P.M. She said the remainder of the crew arrived at around 7:30 P.M.

Mrs. Todd stated that Mr. Calhoun and the landfill supervisors followed best management practices by maintaining a dirt pile near the working face of the landfill for fire control. They were able to use this dirt to quickly contain the fire until additional help arrived. As a result of this practice, the potential for injuries to personnel and damage to equipment was significantly reduced. By approximately 8:45 p.m., the fire was fully extinguished.

Mrs. Todd informed the Board that it is through this level of coordination and the efforts of the SWA professionals that the organization was able to contain and limit, to the greatest extent possible, any damage or community impact resulting from a fire at the facility.

Mrs. Todd acknowledged the landfill staff that were in attendance, stating that they got the job done, made the process easy for customers, and that she appreciated all they do more than they know.

**Executive Director Update** – Mr. Knight provided an update, which was included on page 62 of the Board Packet.

**Landfill Fire – March 13, 2026** – Mr. Knight said that it was remarkable to have staff who respond the way they do. He said that between 7:00 and 7:30 p.m., they were able to get 10 to 12 employees on site, and that everyone Mr. Calhoun called came without hesitation. Mr. Knight stated that it was reassuring to know the SWA staff could be counted on. Mr. Knight added that with the increase in

lithium-related flareups, the SWA would likely see more incidents. He mentioned that there was another small lithium battery fire the previous day, which fortunately was minor.

Mr. Knight informed the Board that Mrs. Todd reported the fire to DES immediately and provided photographs. He said staff wanted to present to the employees in appreciation, and he requested permission to take a group picture to recognize their efforts.

Mr. Marr presented envelopes to landfill staff members Josh Nesbit, Dustin Keith, Davis Paul, Mike Small, Eric Dudgeon, Cameron Williamson, Timothy Grissett, and Nick Kovalski.

Chairman Kemp said that he had always been impressed by the quality of the SWA's employees. He stated that he was not surprised to hear the report about the fire or about how quickly the staff responded. Chairman Kemp said their actions are a testament to the leadership and the supervisors. Chairman Kemp said that the employees do not respond to the Board but respond to their supervisors and to one another, and that their willingness to do so demonstrates how well the organization works together. Chairman Kemp offered his congratulations and said he hoped everyone would take pride in that.

Mr. Knight said that everyone takes pride in their work, and he appreciated the comments and support, including funding for the budgets, the family atmosphere within the organization, and the work staff accomplished together.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

There were no Committee Meetings held during the month.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no Old Business to come before the Board.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Roundtable Discussion** – Chairman Kemp invited the Highway 90 liaison, Michael Hughes, to come forward and address the Board.

Mr. Hughes addressed the Board and stated that both the Board and the staff were doing a good job. He explained that, as the Highway 90 Liaison, he felt it was his responsibility to inform the SWA of concerns about trash being thrown along Highway 90. He said he had taken photographs, and a presentation was displayed.

Mr. Hughes reported that he went out around 5:00 P.M. and observed trash scattered along the roadside. He said that this was not the first time this had occurred. He stated that the County does a good job of picking up the trash; however, based on his observations, he believed the debris likely came from the back of a hauler. Mr. Hughes stated that certain areas along Highway 90 were worse than others and that he assumed some haulers were not securing their loads when they left. He stated that he was unsure who was responsible for ensuring drivers properly cover their loads.

Mr. Hughes stated that the issue was causing growing concern because paper and other debris were now being blown into his neighborhood. He said that residents were aware of the proposals being discussed and that the SWA may want to address this concern. Mr. Hughes emphasized that the concern extended beyond Highway 90, saying that he had spoken with the League of Cities, officials around the County,

and several mayors who were also paying attention, as the SWA serves the entire County.

Mr. Hughes said he had encouraged residents who were concerned to attend public input sessions so they could hear explanations for why these issues may be occurring and/or speak directly with SWA staff if they had questions.

Mr. Hughes thanked the staff for coming out that morning to pick up trash. He stated that while the County does a good job, they would have to pick up every day to keep Highway 90 clean.

Mr. Hughes concluded by saying that these were the types of issues being observed, and he wanted the SWA to be aware so they could be prepared, as people are genuinely concerned. Mr. Hughes advised the Board that if there was anything he could say or do to assist, he was willing to help.

Ms. Creech stated that staff sometimes become lax when customers are leaving, but it was important to ensure that drivers put their covers back on before exiting.

Mr. Knight said that trash along the roadways was a significant problem. He applauded the County for assembling a team to address the issue and stated that HCPD was assisting at the centers.

Mr. Ives indicated that the State had provided a phone number for residents to report violations, and that residents should be encouraged to report on what they see.

Mr. Jones asked what the SWA's rules were regarding putting tarps back on before leaving. Mr. Jones then asked whether the SWA enforced that rule and how enforcement was being handled. Mr. Knight said that after today's discussion, staff would work to increase enforcement efforts.

Mr. Jones stated that the Board had previously discussed and, to his understanding, approved of a requirement that haulers must put their tarps back on before leaving. He said that if the rule were that no one could leave until the tarp was secured, that would help address the problem. Mr. Hughes responded to Mr. Jones, stating that he did not see the container or truck involved and does not want to assume that the debris came from a hauler, as other large trucks also travel on Highway 90. He agreed, however, that covering tops when leaving would help. Mr. Jones said he did not believe it would solve the entire problem, but it would certainly help.

Sgt. Zink of the Horry County Police Department stated that the County Ordinance required all loads to be covered. He stated that if a load is empty, it technically does not have to be covered. He said that if loads are not covered, he can issue a warning when he stops a driver. He noted that he usually does not issue citations because the haulers are affiliated with the SWA. He added that Highway 90 was difficult for traffic stops due to heavy traffic.

Mr. Jones asked what the downside of enforcement would be. Mr. Knight responded that the challenge was getting haulers across the scale when they arrived and managing outgoing traffic. He said even the scale house staff can stop drivers, but the SWA staff cannot issue tickets.

Mr. Knight stated that staff would take another look at the issue to determine what can be done.

Mr. Berry suggested placing a sign instructing haulers to raise their tarps. Mr. Jones noted that signs have already been installed. Mr. Berry stated that there was no law requiring haulers to put their tarps up

once they enter the highway. Sgt. Zink confirmed that all loads must be covered under the County ordinance.

Sgt. Zink stated that the fine can range from zero, issued as a warning ticket, up to \$500. He stated that if a driver appeared in court, the judge would usually reduce the fine.

Sgt. Zink explained that during their routine checks at the facilities, when officers see individuals arriving with uncovered loads, they typically pull them aside, explain the ordinance requirements, and try to educate them on proper procedures.

Mr. Hughes commented that perhaps he should be speaking to the County Council rather than the SWA. He said that now that he has informed the SWA staff, the next step may be to approach the County Council to consider implementing stiffer fines.

Mr. Ives indicated that the State's reporting number should be publicized and that residents could photograph the offending vehicle and its tag, after which the driver would receive a notice and be fined. Sgt. Zink clarified that this was not correct, explaining that law enforcement cannot issue a fine unless an officer personally observes the violation.

Sgt. Zink informed the Board that the ordinances used for uncovered loads carry higher penalties than State law, even compared to littering violations. He explained that State law does not specifically address uncovered loads; instead, such violations fall under littering. He said that under State law, littering fines range from \$25 to \$100, and if the amount exceeds 500 pounds, the fine can go up to \$1,000. Sgt. Zink stated that to issue a fine at that level, he would have to prove the debris weighed more than 500 pounds, which would require weighing it on a scale. He stated that HCPD relies on County ordinances, which allow for a maximum fine of \$500 across the board. Sgt. Zink indicated when officers write tickets, they are written for \$500, but it was ultimately up to the judge in court to determine whether the fine is reduced or dismissed. General discussion ensued.

Ms. Creech stated that she wanted to ask Mr. Marr to explain the resolution and if it had passed. She asked him to clarify what it was and where it currently stands.

Mr. Marr explained that the resolution was intended to recognize recycling in the State and to affirm support for recycling efforts whenever and wherever possible. He stated that the resolution was submitted through the House, where it passed, and was then sent to the Senate and referred to the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. He said he had hoped to receive an update on whether it had been pulled from committee but had not yet heard anything. He said he was waiting for it to come out of committee and hoped it would receive a favorable response.

Ms. Creech reported that the Board Packet showed the SWA revenue for wood chips as zero and asked whether the program was still active, since wood chips had previously been a revenue source. Mr. Marr responded that he was unsure why the report reflected zero, explaining that he had purchased two loads that week, that shipments were going out regularly, and that a tractor-trailer load of brown chips had gone out the previous Thursday. He acknowledged he could not explain the discrepancy but confirmed the material was moving.

Ms. Creech added that past discussions had included ideas like bagging compost for sale, and she expressed interest in revisiting opportunities related to chips, compost, and other materials that could

generate revenue for the organization. Mr. Marr informed the Board that staff would review the matter and provide any necessary updates. General discussion followed.

Chairman Kemp asked Mr. Marr whether he had an estimate of the percentage of C&D material entering the landfill that was cardboard. Mr. Marr stated that he has the report but could not provide the exact number at that moment and would show it to him after the meeting.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

There being no further business to come before the Board, **Mr. Berry moved, seconded by Ms. Creech, to adjourn the meeting. The Motion was carried,** and the February Board Meeting was adjourned at 4:10 P.M.

Minutes approved on April 28, 2026.

HORRY COUNTY SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY, INC.

BY: \_\_\_\_\_ (L. S.)  
Robert J. Kemp, Chairman

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_ (L. S.)  
W. Norfleet Jones, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_ (L. S.)  
Amos C. Berry, Sr.

\_\_\_\_\_ (L. S.)  
Pam J. Creech

\_\_\_\_\_ (L. S.)  
Wayne Fox

\_\_\_\_\_ (L. S.)  
Dr. Albert G. Hayward

\_\_\_\_\_ (L. S.)  
Bo Ives