

JOINT MEETING
Greenville City Council/Greenville Utilities Commission Board

April 20, 2026

6:00 PM

City Hall Council Chambers, 200 West 5th Street

- I. Call Meeting to Order -- Mayor Connelly
 -- Chair Garner
- II. Approval of Agenda -- City Council
 -- Greenville Utilities Commission
- III. Public Comment Period -- For issues that are germane to both the City Council and the Greenville Utilities Commission Board

The Public Comment Period is a period reserved for comments by the public. Items that were or are scheduled to be the subject of public hearings conducted at the same meeting or another meeting during the same week shall not be discussed. A total of 30 minutes is allocated with each individual being allowed no more than 3 minutes. Individuals who registered with the City Clerk to speak will speak in the order registered until the allocated 30 minutes expires. If time remains after all persons who registered have spoken, individuals who did not register will have an opportunity to speak until the allocated 30 minutes expires.

- IV. New Business
 - 1. Approval of Minutes from the September 22, 2025, Joint City Council-Greenville Utilities Commission Board Meeting
 - 2. Consideration of Recommendations from Classification & Compensation Study Consultant
 - 3. Consideration of Market Adjustment/Merit Allocation Program for FY 2026-2027
- V. Review of 401(k) Employer Contribution
- VI. Adjournment -- Greenville Utilities Commission
 -- City Council

Joint City Council and GUC Board Meeting
September 22, 2025
Council Chambers, City Hall, 200 W. Fifth Street
6:00 p.m.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The September 22, 2025, Joint Meeting of the Greenville City Council and Greenville Utilities Commission (GUC) Board was called to order at 6:00 PM. Mayor PJ Connelly presided over the meeting on behalf of the City Council, and Chair Mark Garner called the Greenville Utilities Commission meeting to order.

City Council Members Present: Mayor P.J. Connelly, Mayor Pro Tem Monica Daniels, Council Member Tonya Foreman, Council Member Marion Blackburn, Council Member Matthew Scully, Council Member Les Robinson, Council Member Portia Willis

City Council Members Absent: None.

Greenville Utilities Commission Members Present: Chair Mark Garner, Secretary Ferrell Blount, Commissioner Wanda Carr, Commissioner Dillon Godley, Commissioner Simon Swain, Commissioner Robert Shaw, Commissioner Justin Fuller, City Manager Michael Cowin

Absent: None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Connelly asked for any recommended changes to the agenda. Hearing none, he called on the City Council for a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion by Council Member Blackburn, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Daniels, to approve the agenda. Motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Chair Garner asked for any recommended changes to the agenda. Hearing none, he called on the GUC Board for a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion by Commissioner Godley, seconded by Commissioner Blount, to adopt the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mayor Connelly opened the Public Comment Period and called for speakers to come forward, explaining that it was reserved for comments relevant to both the City Council and GUC Board.

Seeing none, Mayor Connelly closed the Public Comment Period.

During this time, GUC General Manager/Chief Executive Officer Tony Cannon noted that Executive Secretary to the Board Amy Wade was celebrating her birthday, which was acknowledged with congratulations from those present.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Minutes from the April 14, 2025, Joint City Council - Greenville Utilities Commission Board Meeting

The minutes from the April 14, 2025, Joint Meeting were presented for approval.

City Council - Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Daniels, seconded by Council Member Scully, to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

GUC Board - Motion by Commissioner Godley, seconded by Commissioner Blunt, to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Joint Committee Recommendations on Plan Year 2026 Health and Dental Plan Benefits

Mr. Joe Harten, Partner and Office Practice Leader with Mercer Health & Benefits LLC, presented the medical and dental insurance renewals for city employees and commission employees for 2026.

Mr. Harten stated that while the City's and GUC's health plan has been very stable with few changes in recent years, the current year saw a difference due to large claims. For 2026, the projected rate increase was 9.4%, which Mr. Harten noted was still below the market average of nearly 11%. He presented a graph showing that the City and GUC have generally performed better than market trends over the past five years. The impact on employee contributions would range from as little as \$.67 cents per paycheck to a maximum of \$31.90 per paycheck for full family coverage in the richest plan.

He stated that Cigna has made a modification to the transplant network, focusing on facilities that perform the most transplants with the best outcomes. Mr. Harten stated that impacts on employees would be minimal since major regional medical centers remained in-network for transplants.

For dental coverage, Mr. Harten reported that costs were on budget for 2025, but would increase by 3.6% for 2026, with minimal impact on employee contributions.

After a general discussion, motions were made by both boards to approve the recommendations:

City Council - Motion by Council Member Robinson, seconded by Council Member Blackburn, to approve the recommendations for Plan Year 2026 Health and Dental Plan Benefits. Motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

GUC Board - Motion by Commissioner Carr, seconded by Commissioner Fuller, to approve the recommendations for Plan Year 2026 Health and Dental Plan Benefits. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Joint Committee Recommendation on Community Service and School Involvement Leave Policy

City Human Resources Director Leah Futrell presented the proposed Community Service and School Involvement Leave Policy, which was approved by the Joint Pay & Benefits Committee at its September 11, 2025 meeting.

Director Futrell explained that the purpose of the policy was to foster stronger community connections and parental involvement in schools. The policy would apply to regular full-time and designated part-time employees who have successfully completed their initial probationary period. Full-time employees would receive 8 hours of paid leave per calendar year, while those on three-quarter schedules would receive 6 hours, and half-time employees would receive 4 hours.

Director Futrell stated that participation would be voluntary. The volunteer activity must be with a governmental entity or community service organization defined as a non-profit, non-partisan organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The volunteer activity must be performed during normal working hours to receive paid leave, with supervisor approval required. The leave does not accumulate and is not paid out upon separation.

Director Futrell stated that the 8 hours can be split up rather than taken all at once. She stated that employees not eligible for the paid leave, such as those still in their probationary period or part-time employees without benefits, would still be granted 4 hours of unpaid leave per year in accordance with North Carolina state law to attend or be involved with their school-aged child's school.

Council Member Willis expressed support for the policy as a good start but suggested possibly increasing the allotted hours in the future if demand proves high.

City Council - Motion by Council Member Scully, seconded by Council Member Blackburn, to approve the Community Service and School Involvement Leave Policy. Motion passed 6-0.

GUC Board - Motion by Commissioner Swain, seconded by Commissioner Carr, to approve the Community Service and School Involvement Leave Policy. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Update on Compensation Study

GUC Human Resources Director Richie Shreves provided an update on the compensation study. She stated that the City and GUC approved moving forward with a comprehensive compensation study in order to keep up with market rates to attract and retain qualified workers.

She stated that after initiating a request for proposals (RFP) process and conducting interviews, they selected Segal as the consulting firm. She stated that Segal has over 80 years of experience and the City and GUC have a longstanding relationship with the firm, which helps them understand the unique requirements and obstacles faced by both organizations. She stated that Segal would provide their recommendations in the spring so that any approved changes could be implemented for the new fiscal year beginning July 1, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Connelly called for a motion to adjourn the City Council meeting.

Motion by Council Member Blackburn, seconded by Council Member Robinson, to adjourn the Greenville City Council meeting. Motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Hearing no objections, Chair Garner declared the Greenville Utilities Commission meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

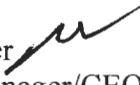

Amy Wade
Executive Secretary

APPROVED:

Wanda Carr
Secretary

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council
Greenville Utilities Board of Commissioners

FROM: Michael W. Cowin, City Manager 
Anthony C. Cannon, General Manager/CEO 

DATE: April 15, 2026

SUBJECT: Joint City/GUC Pay and Benefits Committee Recommendations for FY 2026-27

The Joint City/GUC Pay and Benefits Committee met on Wednesday, March 25, 2026. The result of this meeting was the following recommendations to be considered by City Council and GUC Board of Commissioners at their upcoming Joint Meeting scheduled for Monday, April 20, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Pay Philosophy

In order to mitigate pay compression and to attract and retain high-performing employees, the City Council and Greenville Utilities Commission’s Board of Commissioners use an “at market” pay philosophy. As such, both organizations strive to pay at market and adjust the salary structures as needed to maintain market competitiveness. This enhances the City’s and GUC’s ability to recruit and retain qualified and high-performing employees. This is especially important in today’s increasingly competitive and tightening labor market.

Market Adjustment/Merit Allocation

The City and GUC have traditionally used Catapult’s (formerly CAI) annual *North Carolina and Regional Wage & Salary Survey* as the primary benchmark guide for establishing the market as it relates to wage growth. Catapult’s survey provides comprehensive pay practice and salary data for private and public-sector employers across North Carolina, with a small number of employers located in the bordering states of South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Georgia.

In order to make informed compensation decisions and to ensure that Catapult is truly representative of the market, the City and GUC have also used other reliable data sources such as reputable published surveys and wage data from public-sector benchmark organizations and local private-sector employers. Following is data collected from the published survey sources:

Survey Company	Projection
Catapult*	3.4%
Economic Research Institute (ERI)	3.5%

Survey Company	Projection
Korn Ferry	3.5%
Mercer	3.5%
The Conference Board	3.4%
Willis Towers Watson	3.4%
WorldatWork	3.6%

**COG and GUC have traditionally used Catapult as the primary benchmark guide*

As depicted in the chart above, 2026 wage projections and trends among all these surveys are relatively consistent, collectively averaging 3.5%.

As previously noted, in addition to gathering published survey projections, COG and GUC staff also surveyed our established benchmark public-sector organizations and several local private employers to determine their plans related to compensation decisions for FY 2026-2027.

- Public-sector benchmark organizations: The public-sector benchmark organizations are comprised of 26 municipalities and utilities. Of the organizations that responded, 13 gave their employees pay increases in FY 2025/26; the average actual increase was 4.6% (market and/or merit). Most of the benchmark organizations are in the process of developing their FY 2026/27 budgets and have not made a decision regarding pay increases. Of the 5 organizations that have responded, the average pay increase projection for FY 2026/27 is 4.0% (market and/or merit).
- Local private employers: For FY 2026/27, 19 private-sector employers were surveyed. Of the 3 employers that responded, they are projecting pay increases that average 4.0% (market and/or merit). Those same employers reported actual increases averaging 3.7% (market and/or merit) last year.

COG/GUC Combined Market and Merit Adjustment Benchmark History

Fiscal Year	Catapult	Private Sector	Public Sector	COG	GUC
20/21	2.5%	2.1%	2.2%	2.0%	2.0%
21/22	3.1%	2.7%	3.9%	2.0%	2.0%
22/23	3.8%	4.8%	5.2%	4.0%	4.0%
23/24	4.2%	3.7%	5.5%	2.0%	2.0%
24/25	3.9%	3.4%	4.6%	4.0%	4.0%
25/26	3.9%	3.7%	4.6%	4.0%	4.0%
26/27	3.4*	4.0%*	4.0*	TBD	TBD

**Projections per Catapult's NC and Regional Wage & Salary Survey. The private & public sector data represents projections collected during the Spring of each year as part of the Pay & Benefits planning process.*

GUC/COG Combined Market and Merit Adjustment History

Fiscal Year	Annual		Combined
	Market	Merit	
21/22 (GUC)	.5%	1.5%	2.0%
(COG)	.5%	1.5%	2.0%
22/23 (GUC)	2.5%	1.5%	4.0%
(COG)	1.0%	3.0%	4.0%

GUC/COG Combined Market and Merit Adjustment History			
Fiscal Year	Annual		Combined
	Market	Merit	
23/24 (GUC)	.5%	1.5%	2.0%
(COG)	.5%	1.5%	2.0%
24/25 (GUC)	2.5%	1.5%	4.0%
(COG)	3.0%	1.0%	4.0%
25/26 (GUC)	2.5%	1.5%	4.0%
(COG)	3.0%	1.0%	4.0%

Recommendation

In order to maintain market competitiveness, the Joint Committee recommends that the City and GUC fund an employee pay adjustment of 3.25% for FY 2026-2027, applied as deemed appropriate by each entity.

401(k) Employer Contribution Review

Last year, the Joint Boards approved the Joint Committee’s recommendation to increase the 401(k) employer contribution from 3% to 4% per pay period effective FY 2025/26 for full-time and select designated part-time employees (excluding sworn law enforcement). Additionally, the Joint Boards approved an increase from 4% to 5% effective FY 2026/27. This change to 5%, recommended to be effective January 1, 2027, will align all eligible employees with sworn law enforcement officers who, pursuant to North Carolina General Statute, receive a 5% 401(k) employer contribution. Both organizations continue to see the positive impact of recent changes to 401(k) employer contributions as it relates to employee retention and recruitment.

Consideration of Recommendations from Classification & Compensation Study Consultant

Segal Consultants will provide an overview of the Joint Classification and Compensation Study and a recommendation for implementation of the study results.

Recommendation

The Joint Committee recommends implementation of the study results for FY 2026-2027.

We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming Joint Meeting on April 20th at 6:00 p.m.

cc: Ken Graves, COG Deputy City Manager
Dene' Alexander, COG Assistant City Manager
Chris Padgett, GUC Assistant General Manager/Chief Operating Officer
Andy Anderson, GUC Chief Administrative Officer
Leah Futrell, COG Director of Human Resources
Richie Shreves, GUC Director of Human Resources