

## Gray Court budget passes first reading

By John Clayton  
Editor

The Gray Court Town Council passed first reading of the town's budget for the 2019-20 fiscal year Monday night.

Council members will vote on second and final reading at their regular June meeting, which will also feature a time for public comment on the proposed budget. First reading was passed unanimously by the council of five.

The budget as currently written is virtually the same as the 2018-19 fiscal year at about \$718,000, and is expected to include at least a 2 percent pay raise for Gray Court's two salaried employees. The increase would coincide with cost-of-living raises for state employees.

It would also include

\$10,500 for contracted lawn and landscaping work as well as funding for the currently vacant clerk position for municipal court.

The vote followed a work session with Gary Bailey, who is the town's accountant.

Bailey said the town's general fund is in good shape.

Council members were also tasked with solving the town water department's financial woes.

According to Bailey, the water department is operating at a deficit of about \$20,000 this year. The deficit is due to increased prices from suppliers, a downturn in usage and collections.

As an enterprise, the water department is designed to be self-sufficient but that has not been the case for the past couple of years.

As part of the upcoming budget, council voted to raise fees \$1.25 per customer to cover the deficit.

In other news:

• Jeff Shacker, a field service manager with the Municipal Association of South Carolina, presented council members with an award for completing Municipal Elected Officials Institute of Government training courses offered by the Municipal Association.

Shacker said Gray Court was one of 11 municipalities from across the state to have 100 percent participation and completion in the training courses.

Newly elected councilwoman Shaterica Neal will be enrolling in the courses, which are available online or on DVD.

## Trails Day Celebration set for June 1



The first Laurens County Trails Day Celebration will be held on National Trails Day, June 1, from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. at Lake Rabon Park located on SC Highway 252 at 647 Lake Rabon Drive eight miles west of Laurens.

The Laurens County Trails Association, host of the event, will extend a welcome and offer an update on trails in Laurens County at 11:00 at Pavilion #1, and a guided 2-mile hike will begin around 11:30.

Self-directed hikes and picnicking are possible throughout the park. Kayaking and paddle boarding opportunities will be provided by Asbury Adventures at a slight fee. Critters and More On the Go! will offer hands-on environmental education experiences.

Marcus' Barbecue will be on hand and there are plenty of

spaces for picnics on the park grounds and along the paved portion of the lake trail.

side to enjoy some of the county's local natural treasures and trails - both paved and unpaved -- that are suitable for all.

There are plenty of spots for rest, relaxation, rejuvenation and simple fun. Come spend a few hours or the whole day on Saturday, June 1, and show your support for developing trails in Laurens County.

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## Thornwell reunion planned

A reunion of Thornwell residential and day students, faculty and staff from 1969 through 1979 will take place on June 8 at the Clinton House Plantation, 15171 Hwy. 56 N out of Clinton, and organizers with the Thornwell Alumni Association are working to get the word out about the drop in and reunion party.

It's not just for graduates from those years but it's for everyone who was part of

Thornwell during that time, and they are welcome to come and bring a guest if they like. The event will include snacks and non-alcoholic beverages, with optional BYOB, and a DJ will provide dance music.

For more information contact Tea Madden, class of '79, at teamadden@gmail.com, 843-324-8029; or Pat McKee, class of '69, pwmckee@mckeeelaw.com, 770-683-8900.

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## Join us this year at Laurens Electric's 2019 Annual Meeting! Saturday, June 1

Laurens Electric's Main Office, 2254 Highway 14, Laurens, SC 29360

Registration & Voting for Board of Trustees

8:30-10:30 a.m.

Entertainment

9-10 a.m.

Early Bird Prize Drawing

10 a.m.

Business Meeting Begins

10:30 a.m.

Prize drawings will follow the business meeting.

Entertainment  
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Registration Gift

Each member who is present and registers at the Annual Meeting will receive a

• **\$25 Credit on their electric bill.**

(Limit one \$25 electric bill credit per membership)

Grand Prize

• **2014 Chevrolet 1500 Truck**

Grand Prize vehicle similar to the one pictured.

Early Bird Prize

• **YETI® Tundra Haul Portable Wheeled Cooler** that holds 45 cans

(Must be registered prior to 10 a.m.)

Just for High School Seniors

• **Two \$1,000 Scholarships**

Two \$1,000 scholarships will be given away to high school seniors whose parents, grandparents or guardians are members in attendance (student does not have to attend). The member at the annual meeting can register for the scholarship drawing on the student's behalf.

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Registration cards for the Annual Meeting will be mailed by May 17. You should receive **one card** and will be given **one gift**, even if you have multiple accounts. Only members who register in person will receive a gift.

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