

**ORDINANCE NO.: 2015-094**

*Enacting Temporary Waiver of Business License Fees for Contractors for a Period of Ninety Days to Provide for the Expeditious and Coordinated Management of Building Permit Applications; Providing for Severability; Providing an Expiration Date; and Setting forth an Effective Date*

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WHEREAS, the City of Columbia has been severely and catastrophically affected by record levels of rain from the late evening hours of Saturday, October 3, 2015 through Tuesday, October 6, 2015; and,

WHEREAS, this catastrophic 1000 year rain event resulted in widespread flooding throughout the City of Columbia causing fatalities, injuries, dam breaches, washed out streets and bridges, the loss of homes and businesses, thousands of individuals to become homeless, and the loss of potable water and food supplies; and,

WHEREAS, the City activated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to provide communication and coordination of safety efforts to residents and to address the necessary clean up following the storm; and,

WHEREAS, the President of the United States, Barack Obama, at the request of South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley has declared a Major Disaster pursuant to 42 U.S.C. Section 5170 for the City of Columbia and the County of Richland; and,

WHEREAS, the Governor of the State of South Carolina Nikki Haley has declared a state of emergency for the State of South Carolina and activated the National Guard for assistance due to the rainfall and resulting flooding; and,

WHEREAS, the 1998 Code of Ordinances of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, Chapter 5, includes requirements for the appropriate applications, forms and plans for the issuance of building permits to home and business owners, acting as owner/contractors, or to appropriately licensed contractors to ensure compliance with the Building Code, and,

WHEREAS, the emergency situation created by the severe storms and resultant flooding during October 3, 2015 and immediately thereafter has resulted in a unique situation wherein damage to structures require immediate response and repair in order to ensure the protection of the health, safety and welfare of the citizens and businesses of the City of Columbia; and,

WHEREAS, the City deems it in the best interest of its citizens to take all measures to expedite and assist homeowners affected by the floods to begin repairs and rebuilding; and

WHEREAS, and to provide for and manage the influx of contractors from out-of-state and out of the area since the flooding event of early October and to enhance competition and provide the citizens of Columbia with as many available resources as possible, including licensed contractors for home and business repairs and rebuilding; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Columbia, South Carolina, this 18th day of November, 2015, that:

1. Waiver of permit fees: Contractors who apply for a business license between the enactment of this ordinance and the expiration of this waiver of fees, who otherwise qualify for a City of Columbia business license, shall be issued a business license free of charge. Any work performed by a contractor, which work qualifies for the building permit fee waiver under Ordinance 2015-092, shall be exempt from consideration for the purpose of calculating that contractor's business license fee.

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2. If any section, paragraph, sentence, clause and phrase of this Ordinance is severable, and if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this Ordinance shall be declared unconstitutional, invalid or unenforceable by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality, invalidity or unenforceability shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections of this Ordinance.

3. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption and remain in effect for a period of three (3) months, at which time it shall have no further force or effect.

Requested by:

Mayor and City Council

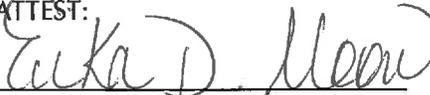
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Approved by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager

Approved as to form:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney

ATTEST:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Introduced: 11/2/2015

Final Reading: 11/18/2015