

**MINUTES  
BUDGET WORK SESSION I  
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL  
APRIL 18, 2022**

**Present:** Moses Bell, Shirley Greene, Mikel Trapp, Timothy Roseborough, Cornelius Robinson, Doug Pauley, Clarence Gilbert, Council Members; Malik Whitaker, County Administrator; Synithia Williams, Deputy County Administrator; Dr. Kim W. Roberts, Clerk to Council.

**Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Anne Bass, Beverly Mozie, Brad Caulder.

In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (e), as amended, the following persons and/or organizations have been notified of the time, date and location of this meeting: The Independent Voice of Blythewood and Fairfield, The Country Chronicle and one hundred forty one other individuals.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Bell called the Work Session to order at 6:00 p.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion made by Councilwoman Greene, seconded by Councilman Roseborough, to approve the agenda. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

**III. INVOCATION**

Vice Chair Greene led the invocation.

**IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

**A. FY 2022-2023 Budget**

Mr. Whitaker stated the letter in front of Council was an amended letter from the one they received in their budget books and he would read it. Before reading the letter, he thanked the budget leadership team – Mr. Caulder, Mrs. Anne Bass, Mrs. Beverly Mozie, and Mrs. Williams for the difficult and thoughtful job to help come up with the two recommendations for Council. He also thanked the department heads. They came to this team of dedicated leaders with some very difficult conversations. They listened and tried to do their best to present responsible budgets based on what they thought their

needs were for the fiscal year. There were very difficult conversations but everyone acted with respect and understood that they were facing some difficult times. He said he would read the letter, which included his recommendations. He read: April 13, 2022 – we live in challenging times and yet he believed in their capacity to meet the challenges of the day by believing in each other and working together. He was sharing the best efforts of Fairfield County’s Administrative team to propose a budget for funding County operations for fiscal year 2023. What was presented here was a work in progress that would require teamwork, vetting responsible ideas and building consensus on the best course of action for the County’s financial health. Fairfield County Government continued to experience a budget deficit and though County staff had worked really hard to cut costs in their departmental requests, additional measures, including developing new streams of revenue, were needed over the course of the next several years to overcome this ongoing and consistent budget shortfall. Current revenue changes included:

- Moving one and one half mills from the debt services to fund the general fund as a result of the Installment Purchase Revenue bond refinance
- Adding one mill to the Library, Fund 801

Long-term practices might include:

- Using monthly budget reports to closely monitor the upcoming year
- Working with directors to identify where contracts for services could be modified, switched or reduced
- Working with Council to consider accepting the consumer price index as an increase to combat the rising cost of inflation
- Working with Council to consider creating a millage or adopting a fee for capital projects, public safety (fire, EMS)

With a County Council mandate to cut recurring county government operating costs to reduce County government’s reliance on unassigned fund balance to produce a balanced budget, Fairfield County Government Administration was presenting for their review, analysis, and consideration, two options for proposed FY 2023 budget cuts that reduce the deficit. They acknowledged the economic realities of higher gas prices, retirement costs and insurance costs. These costs were necessary and they would continue to analyze processes and practices that would increase cost savings to the County. They also acknowledged higher costs in some necessary supplies that made a challenging budgetary environment even more difficult. With that, they made recommended cuts to get closer to the anticipated revenues. They also studied the history of last year’s budget development process to understand the

context for this year's process. In studying the records, they confirmed several things:

- For several years, County expenses exceeded revenues
- For several years, Fairfield County was a community that despite stagnant revenues, continued to grow the size of its local government – Fairfield County was a community of 21K that had 308 full time employees – based on Fairfield's population, a local government with that many full time employees was an outlier in South Carolina (from the South Carolina Association of Counties) – and according to the last census, Fairfield County lost 12% of its population
- To present a balanced budget, Fairfield County depended heavily on unassigned fund balance without executing revenue development plans
- Historically, little had been done to increase revenue sources to finance the government budget making the needed but very difficult cuts in expenditures inevitable and necessary

They believed that they were responsibly moving in the right direction. This situation was created over many years and would not be corrected overnight. Fairfield County Government's anticipated revenues to finance County operations for the upcoming fiscal year was \$33,787,551.00. County anticipated expenditures were estimated at \$35,098,701.00. The County's identified capital needs were \$5,825,393. The original operating expenditures submitted to Administration exceeded revenues by \$2.9 million. County Administration and Finance cut these original requests to \$1,732,318 over expected revenues, which was presented in the budget book (Option 1, Budget Book Section 2). This recommendation acknowledged the following reasons for this year's growth in expenditures:

- PEBA Health insurance increased by \$368,512.00
- Retirement rates increased by \$174,706.00
- Fuel costs were on average 25% higher than last year
- Supply costs, in particular medical supply costs, had increased as high as 30% more according to some vendors
- Agency allocations set to FY 2022 levels

It cost more to run County government than it did a year ago. After careful consideration of the history of previous budget developments and understanding the context of this year's needs, he was presenting an additional option for Council's consideration (Option 2). Option 2 involved a 10% across the board cut from non-essential accounts. This would result in an additional \$562,554.52 in savings, though the requested expenses would still exceed anticipated revenues by \$1,169,763. They could not responsibly recommend

further cuts from essential accounts such as utilities and leases. They were also recommending the use of anticipated excess funds from current capital projects and the second allotment of American Recovery Act funding to address some capital needs (Budget Book, Section 4). The work needed to get a balanced budget was going to be challenging and would require the work of County Council, Administration and Department Directors. The two options available were accepting the original Administrator's recommended budget or taking a 10% cut to non-essential accounts. They also recommended Council consider other options such as increasing the County's millage by this year's CPI percentage of 4.70%, dedicate an assigned millage for capital projects, consider developing an assigned millage and/or fee for public safety (fire, EMS) and continue to support economic development projects, which bring additional revenue into the County. He said thank you and turned it over to Deputy Administrator Williams and Mrs. Bass for additional comments.

Mrs. Williams reiterated thanks to the directors for working with them when they went back to them after seeing the original submittals. There were many who came back and offered additional cuts to get closer to the anticipated revenues. They realized it was a challenging budget and to get out of this situation would not happen overnight. The reason for including the Consumer Price Index increase was because it recently came from the Association of Counties. Seeing the Association of Counties bringing out a CPI at 4.70%, reiterated the fact that inflation was happening across all sectors – not just us but our employees and the citizens, as well. They realized it made it even more challenging to identify different revenue streams as they go forward. It was also why they tried to identify ways to address some of their capital needs in Section 4- to look at the second allotment of ARP funds and to look at excess revenue from other projects that may come in under-budget. If they continued to be under-budget, they may be able to address some capital needs. Looking at a long-range plan, they would look at ways to address on-going capital needs. They might not have all of the answers at the end of this cycle but they would dedicate themselves over the next year to continue to look at all options to address the different capital needs to bring back to Council in order to make good financial decisions for the County.

Mrs. Bass said there was not much more to be said but she did think that the Consumer Price Index coming out that high – in her tenure, she had never seen it that high. She thought it was a very strong indicator of inflation and that they needed to expect the cost of business to go up and that it was going to be a great challenge.

Mr. Pauley asked Mrs. Williams if she would (for the record) state why the meeting was not live streaming via YouTube. She said she was not aware that

it was not live streaming but she would check. After doing so, she reported that IT was experiencing technical difficulties with streaming but were recording and would post it later.

Mr. Bell thanked everyone because he knew the process was difficult and challenging putting the budget together. He also appreciated the portion of the book that contained information regarding the ARP funds but did not believe those funds could be used as part of the budget process. It was there for information only. It was good to have so they could begin to look at it and start to consider how those funds could be used for capital expenses. He said with the 10% cut option that Mr. Whitaker offered they would have \$1,169,763 coming from the unassigned fund balance. He said this budget proposal did not include a tax (millage) increase. Mr. Whitaker agreed. He said they had about \$414,000 from the sale of the hospital property. They took \$1 million out for the Fairfield County Complex and left about \$414,000 (Mrs. Bass agreed) and then they had \$1.9 million from Dominion in cash. If they were to adopt the 10% reduction, they could use these monies and not have to go into the fund balance. He asked Mrs. Bass if he was correct. Mrs. Bass said at the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2022, to the extent that their revenues exceed their expenditures and that year closes, that amount rolls into the unassigned fund balance. To the extent of the two items mentioned, they would technically roll into the fund balance – so whatever fund balance they used as budgetary fund balance for this year, it would still be called budgetary fund balance but they could not budget to exceed that amount. Mr. Bell asked with this budget that they were currently in they used \$1.4 million from the unassigned fund balance the last time. Mrs. Bass said yes sir. He asked if she thought they would be able to use that this time. She said no – looking at interim reports, she did not believe so. Mr. Gilbert asked where they stood year-to-date as far as the budget, percentage wise. Mrs. Bass she did not have that information off the top of her head. She had not looked at it that day and every time they cut a check batch and every time the Treasurer's office posted a receipt, it changed. As they looked at it throughout the year and particularly recently, it appeared they were in a much more favorable position. Mr. Bell said Council had a pre-budget meeting to make sure everyone understood how much money they would get from revenues. He asked Mr. Whitaker if after everything he and his staff did, were they still at \$1,169,000 that they would have to sort of "eat" because any additional cuts would be devastating to this organization. Mr. Whitaker said yes sir. Mr. Pauley asked if it included all capital requests. Mr. Bell said no sir – there was no capital included. They looked at that and another process may be needed - they could get that on the agenda the next time. Looking at the capital process, they would look at the ARP money and try to fund some of the capital expenses so it would not hit the

County so hard. He believed they had \$1.5 million for the Courthouse. They planned to do more with the ARP money (buy some Sheriff's cars, ambulances) but that went in another direction so they did not have that. With this ARP money, if Council supported it, it could be used for an ambulance, the Courthouse, a couple of Sheriff's cars and some air packs. That would help them stabilize the budget somewhat. Mr. Bell said they got continual complaints about the recycling center being closed on Mondays. He wanted them to figure out a way to open the center on Mondays. He said it was him as one Council person talking and they all had a right to bring up anything they may have. If they had to keep the center closed on Wednesday's, they needed to find a way to give a day back to the citizens because they were complaining with calls almost weekly. Mrs. Greene said just taking a look at the 2022 budget she wanted to know how many unfilled positions did the County have. Mr. Caulder asked if she meant at any given time. She said yes. He said they averaged around 300 filled and he believed they were close to around 340-350 spots. Mr. Gilbert asked what if they cut back on some the "want" projects rather than some of the "needs" projects. Mr. Bell asked what were some of the "want" projects. Mr. Gilbert said like the mini-parks – to postpone them to later on until they get the budget back on track. Mr. Bell said he appreciated the question but the mini-parks were not taken out of the County budget. They were taken from the ARP monies. They were recommended for outdoor spaces. Mr. Gilbert said whether it came from ARP or not, it was money that could be used to help fund the budget. Mr. Bell said that money had been allocated already. What they had to look at was what was allocated in the current ARP funds. Mrs. Greene said as she looked at some of the budget information received, she wanted to know if they looked at any unified phone/cell phone carriers. Mrs. Bass said they currently used one carrier pretty much across the board unless there was a specific need. For example, some of the fire stations might be in an area where a particular carrier does not pick up well. Mr. Pope was looking into a program carrier specifically designed for emergency services. Otherwise, they tried to keep the County uniformed in order to get the best deal. Mr. Whitaker said the general question revolved around efficiency. It would take time to analyze processes and contracts to understand if there were opportunities to increase efficiency. They would engage in that process going forward. Mr. Pauley said he knew they all had questions for Mrs. Bass, Mr. Caulder and Mr. Whitaker but the department heads were there and he thought they should let them give their presentations and the Council could ask their questions after. Mr. Bell said he was okay with that and they could give their presentations but were they asking for anything in their requests other than what was presented. With what was shared, even with a 10% cut they were still \$1 million over in unassigned fund balance. He said Mr. Pauley had a point and they could come forward. Mr. Whitaker said to Mr. Pauley that

he thought their (department heads) voice was important and he thanked them for coming. Their plan was to present the document for Council to ask any questions of the departments they may have. He asked Mrs. Williams to explain the 10% because there was a lot of critical thinking that went into the analysis and what could be done with that 10%. It was not a 10% across the board cut and he encouraged any department head that wanted to address Council to do so. Mrs. Williams said they received the initial department head requests and they met with some of them to talk about their capital needs and to see if there were other ways to fund them. They were not able to include all of the new personnel recommendations. In some cases as with Parks and Rec, they might have added some funding for part time employment but they did not add any new positions to the current budget. After they met with the departments, they looked at a 10% cut of nonessential items. They did not feel it was responsible to do an across the board cut for things like utilities, cable, phone, leases – those were set costs. If they set a 10% cut on a lease on a building, they would be under budgeting. The cuts were related to things like travel, office supplies, meals, etc. – those were the accounts that had the 10% cut. If they saw an area where they do not see a savings that was an account that was considered essential. They did not want to intentionally cut (like) a cable account or a telephone account. There was not an across the board cut but rather of nonessential functions but it may still be challenging and they would monitor it throughout the year. Mr. Pauley said he understood that but he wanted to emphasize that the department heads were there and there were a lot of things they did not know by looking at the paper. He encouraged every department to stand up and voice their concerns and needs and let them (Council) decide what they needed for their departments. Mrs. Williams said she believed there was a certain order but there were some that needed to go first. Mr. Bell said the savings from the refinance of the bond was about \$333,000 and they were only going to use about \$220,000. He asked if that was still the case because he felt they should be able to use more than that. Mrs. Bass said the refinancing on the IPRB bond reduced the payment of that bond by about \$333,000 for about the next 4 years (she thought) and then after that it stepped down further to about the \$500,000 mark. She said every year to make the payment on that IPRB bond, the way the structure was set up, they issued a General Obligation bond to the cost of that payment. They made the payment to the IPRB bond from the General Obligation bond. The IPRB bond was a promise of future revenue in anticipation of the nuclear plant. The General Obligation bond was what they could actually use to pay their debt service millage. They could not pay the IPRB payment with debt service millage because it was not a General Obligation bond. It was the reason the structure was set up as it was. To issue a GO bond to pay the IPRB, they assessed millage for debt service to pay the General Obligation bond. Their

IPRB bond payment for fiscal year 2023 would be \$1,332,000. Their total General Obligation bond debt service for fiscal 2023 was \$1,373,000 because they had bonds that they issued in the past that they still had to pay. Each year moving forward as they issue a new one, they would be issuing it to make a lesser payment so it would certainly trickle down. When she looked at the three-year average, and she just looked back at the last three fiscal years, what they had collected with their existing debt service millage was about \$1,560,000. She knew they would have GO bond debt payments of \$1,373,000. They talked about some potential increases with real estate property because the real estate market was changing and they might be able to get some increases there and they might be able to see some increases in assessments. When she looked at the average of \$1,560,000 (and she knew she had to have at least \$1,373,000) that was where she came up with a decrease of \$220,000. Mr. Bell asked if after her review and their conversation if she still thought it should be \$220,000 versus \$250,000 or \$280,000. She said she did but she would look at it again. Mr. Bell said ok. Mrs. Bass said the departments would usually go in order to speak but she had two that needed special consideration and she would let them go first. Mr. Pauley referred to the budget book where it read annual budget by organization report. There was one of two and two of two and it had 2022 adopted budget and a 2023 County Administrator budget. He asked if that was what the County Administrator was recommending to Council for the budget for each individual department. Mr. Whitaker said yes, option A was what he and his team were recommending. Mr. Bell said that option B, which was the 10%, was not accurate. Mrs. Bass said it did not reflect the 10%. She said the worksheet that Mr. Pauley was referring to showed the total by department, the dollar amount they were over or under and the percentage they were over or under for the 2022 adopted and the 2023 recommended. The detail was behind that. They could start and look at the total and if they needed to go into detail (it was usually how they did it). The detailed report (it was 85 pages) Ms. Lawson's department started on page 21. Her requested was \$2,195,000. She had very minimal requests for increases – one in particular was juvenile housing and another was medial services and supplies.

Juvenile Detention Center – Ms. Lawson said in the past, the juveniles had not cost very much money. They currently had five at DJJ for murder and they would not be getting out of jail. They were already several thousand over budget because of the low budget she received for juvenile funding. School was about to be over for the summer so they were expecting an increase with the juveniles. It was \$50/juvenile and if those 5 stay there for a year, even with what she asked for and then going back to Mr. Whitaker and cutting it down after he asked them to cut the budget, it would still cost \$91,250 which

would be \$48,250 over budget. She did not foresee a decrease in the juvenile population anytime soon. Mr. Pauley asked if she had any capital requests for vehicles. She said she did request a vehicle but she could hold off. She had one new vehicle and one that was suitable to get around town. Her other capital request were locks. The locks at the jail were 23 years old although they have had substantial upgrades to the jail. However, those locks were used on both sides – as air locks and then flipped and used as electric locks. For every two locks that break, they have to be sent to Alabama and it costs about \$872/lock to be repaired. If all or several in a cell goes out at one time, it would be cheaper to spend about \$175,000 to replace them all than to keep paying \$872/lock. That was the biggest thing she needed now because that was a security issue. Mr. Robinson asked for the amount. Mrs. Greene said \$175,000. She asked when she looked at account 5238, was that what she was referring to when she said juvenile housing. Ms. Lawson said yes ma'am. Mrs. Greene said she saw a recommendation for \$35,000. Ms. Lawson said she asked for \$50,000 but when Mr. Whitaker brought them back in, she cut it down a little bit. If they picked up some juveniles with lesser charges, it would not affect the juvenile housing budget as much as if the violence continued. They had never had five juveniles down for murder at one time (some with attempted murder) and they had one as young as 14 years old, so he would be there for a while and they would continue to pay for him. Mrs. Greene asked if her initial request was for \$91,000. Ms. Lawson said no, her initial request was for \$50,000 and she cut it. Mr. Pauley asked about staffing – were they short on people. She said yes sir, she did ask for her two positions to be reinstated that the Council froze. She had an officer injured at the hospital last night because she did not have additional personnel to perform a two-person transport. The Sheriff's Department responded and she was grateful but by the time they arrived, the officer was already hurt. Mr. Pauley asked if she could use two more. She said yes sir. Mr. Pauley thanked Ms. Lawson for being there. Mr. Bell asked if any other Council had questions. Mr. Pauley asked if there was a policy at the Detention Center that stated two officers were needed to accompany a transport. She said yes sir, Brad established that a long time ago when he first came back as HR but as people dwindled and found cleaner jobs, it was hard to staff with low pay. Mrs. Greene asked aside from the two frozen positions if she had any vacant positions. She said yes ma'am and she had a copy of the newest staffing analysis. She said Robert Benfield and Blake Taylor did the report that would come before Council. Mr. Benfield was supposed to meet with Mr. Whitaker, Mrs. Williams and her but would be having surgery so the meeting was postponed. What they had before them was his suggestions as to what it would take to keep the detention center running appropriately. Mrs. Greene asked if the staffing analysis was going to tell them how many were recommended by the State. Ms. Lawson said yes

ma'am, some of the positions were frozen from previous Administrations. She believed when Council froze those positions, they were looking at the titles and not as they were actually freezing the floor positions. Mr. Caulder said they had been fighting that all year. They did change the shifts/schedules during the year to save a significant amount of overtime and to try to keep the officers as fresh as they could by keeping straight day and night schedules instead of rotating. They would rotate every 3 days. They also worked to recruit as much as they could but they were not competitive. He said Ms. Lawson could share that if you looked at other local facilities and the State that everyone had massive shortages. They were thinking about adding some kinds of incentives to have people available when they needed them – like last night. He said it was happening more and more. With combating COVID and everything else that came with it, it had really stretched her office staff during the day because they had officers that did administrative work during the day that report off their job to go help in the back. He said they were stretched thin there. Mr. Pauley asked for the starting pay for a detention center officer. Mr. Caulder said he believed it was around \$34,000. Mr. Bell asked if he said these were the same issues across the State. Mr. Caulder said yes they were, especially in their area. Ms. Lawson said she ran four shifts and during COVID she had two officers in the hospital with blood clots in their lungs and she just had an officer who deployed to Germany. She also had a young lady that was leaving because something happened at the jail and it upset her so she turned in her resignation. That meant two employees were gone and when they went from four shifts to two shifts, people were dropping off those shifts. It was hard to keep the doors open and it was not competitive. Mrs. Greene thanked her as well as Mr. Whitaker.

Transit – Mrs. Bass said her budget started on page 46. She said this budget had several sub departments – administration, operations and Medicaid sub departments under administration. This department was partially funded by South Carolina DOT grants and each month when the report were filed for what would be qualified and reimbursed, they would move those expenses from general fund to revenue fund but they had to track it by sub departments. Ms. White said they were asking for a small amount in their capital of \$21,000, which was what they needed to get grant funding for the roof, the windows, and the paving. They had a freeze in administration last year and they were requesting that position as well. Mr. Bell asked if she was asking for \$21,000 additional besides what was in the budget. She said no, not additional – just her capital. Mr. Bell asked if it was currently in the budget. Mrs. Bass said it was not in the general fund but in the capital requests. Mr. Bell asked if she was asking for \$21,000 to get a grant for how much. Ms. White said the grant was \$219,337. Mr. Bell stated she needed \$21,000 to get \$219,000 – that was

not a hard decision. Mr. Trapp asked if the frozen positions from last year were included in this year's budget proposal. Mr. Whitaker said no. Mrs. Greene asked Ms. White if she said she had one frozen administrative position. Ms. White said yes. Mrs. Greene asked if she was asking for that position to be reinstated and Ms. White said yes ma'am. Mr. Trapp asked for the total amount of the frozen positions. Mr. Caulder said \$1,309,000. It did not include all of the frozen positions but those recommended based on absolute necessity but they took that out. Mr. Bell asked if that would have been an additional \$1 million. Mrs. Bass said that was in the original recommendation. Mr. Trapp asked how many positions were frozen countywide. Mrs. Bass said she would have to look back at the ordinance and count them. There were less than 24. Mr. Bell said they currently had 300 filled positions and asked if there were another 24 unfilled. Mr. Caulder said that was what was frozen last year. Mr. Bell said if you looked at the Association of Counties, for a county their size, 308 was an outlier and asked if they (Administration) were saying it should be 324. Mr. Whitaker said they used the 308 as a data point to do analysis. Some folks said the 308 was due to them providing different services. What they were in the process of doing was to find out what their 308 meant – what did it mean to provide their level of services. Based on the size of the population of the county, they had a lot of staff compared to other counties who had similar populations but what did that mean in terms of the level of the quality of services they provided. They wanted to continue to analyze that. Data could be used for a lot of different things but they were looking at what it meant with other counties with populations of 20-30 thousand that had 173, 193 employees – what did that mean. If it was lined up, it looked like they had more staff than similar counties. Mr. Bell agreed and said they had conversations with the Association of Counties and Fairfield County was an outlier as it related to budget and staff. Mrs. Greene said she wanted clarification and wanted to be sure the numbers were correct. She asked how many frozen positions there were. Mr. Caulder said he was referring to last year's ordinance and what was frozen then was 24. Mrs. Greene said 24 frozen positions and asked if they had 40-50 positions that were unfilled. Mr. Caulder said he was looking at the total proposed from last year – it was 337 and they did not add anything this year and that was full time employees. Mrs. Greene asked if that was 37 unfilled positions. Mr. Caulder said as of right then, they were frozen. The 24 vacancies were not counted in that number. The current count fluctuated from week to week as they hired and people left. They had about 337 full time positions. Mr. Trapp asked if before the next budget work session they could have a list of all of the frozen positions. Mr. Whitaker said ok. Mr. Pauley asked Mr. Caulder if the 337 included the Sheriff's Department, EMS and all of that. Mr. Caulder said that was right. Mr. Pauley asked Ms. White if she needed any vehicles/buses. She said no sir, she was working on

a budget with DOT for the vehicles because she knew there was a struggle for the County. She said the Administrative Assistant position would not be fully funded by the County because DOT would pay a portion of that salary. Mr. Pauley asked if she knew how much they would pay. She said it varied but currently in the 44%-50% range. Mr. Trapp asked if that was the position that was frozen. She nodded yes. Mrs. Greene asked what they did with excess equipment – what happened when they retired a bus. She said with DOT, they had to take it out of their bus account. She did not know what the County did but if the DOT buses reached their age they could use it but not as a public service vehicle. Mrs. Greene asked what happened to it after it was used – did they sell it, State surplus, how was it handled. She said it should be sold but she had not witnessed that process with Fairfield County. Mrs. Bass said usually with any assets that rolled off, they sold them through State surplus. Mr. Whitaker and Mr. Pauley thanked Ms. White.

Mrs. Bass said they could go by department, which would start at about page 5. The first department was County Council. She wanted to say that many departments would have some increases due to insurance and retirement. She wanted to say that so it would not have to be repeated throughout this process. With County Council, all of the increase was in personnel services related to insurance and retirement.

The next department was legal services and Mrs. Bass said they increased that based on the history and what they thought they would spend.

The next department was County Administration and Mrs. Bass said there were some overall decreases there. Some of it was related to personnel. They had two part time people as receptionists and they did not have to rely on temporaries to fill in if someone was on vacation and they also had some internal people trained to fill in if one of the part time people had to be out. Mr. Pauley apologized because he was trying to find the correct page. He referred to page 6 and asked if they expected the attorney fees to go from \$250,000 to \$400,000. She said she did. She said they looked at the history - \$250,000 was the adopted budget for 2022 but they were going to exceed that. She thought they would be kidding themselves if they budgeted \$250,000. If they needed more detail and history, it could be provided – she could get a trend. Mr. Pauley asked if the County Administrator's budget included the Deputy Administrator, the receptionist and what about the two consultants they had (one just recently left). Mrs. Bass said she thought those were in the general operating department. She said they were not in the salaries portion of County Administration's budget. They were coded under professional services. There were some "flip flops" in the personnel budget for County Administration between full and part time employees and there was a

reduction in medical insurance because they used part time versus full time employees. She said the finance department had a slight increase – she thought it was related to personnel services, medical insurance, and retirement. They had two vacancies – one was frozen and one that had not been filled but to reduce some of their budget for the annual audit - they were trying to get the existing position funded. The total increase was a result of retirement and medical insurance.

Ms. Bass said there were some slight increases in Human Resources almost entirely related to insurance and retirement. In the Purchasing Department, it was the same – related to retirement and insurance. Mr. Bell said any department heads could report if they wanted to. Mr. Whitaker and Mrs. Bass agreed.

Human Resources – Brad Caulder, Human Resources Director, said they were requesting \$20,000 for a class and comp study. The last one was conducted in 2015-2016. They had seen a ton of inflation and different circumstances and they had a lot of responsibilities changed. He felt they needed to look at their positions overall to ensure they were paying employees according to the job they were doing. It would help address turnover, the benefit package and give them a good idea of where they sit in terms of employee compensation. Mr. Bell asked if this request was in the budget. Mr. Caulder said it was not. Mr. Bell said based on what they had to work with (\$33 million) they were over \$1 million (with the 10% cut). He asked if there was anything other than what was recommended that they saw them doing. He said if the department heads had anything outside of the recommended budget, they could come before Council. Mr. Pauley said they wanted to hear the needs of the departments. They may have gone through the process with Mr. Whitaker and Mrs. Williams but all of Council was not involved in that process. He would like to hear from the Recreation Center, Voter's Registration, etc. Mrs. Greene asked Mr. Caulder if his request was for a compensation study and he said yes. She asked if he had a cost for it and he said he asked for \$20,000. She asked if any 360 staffing was done for HR and he said yes ma'am. She asked if it was a regular part of their processes. He said they did it for new hires. In the past, they used them on a yearly basis but that stopped some time ago. They were looking forward to implementing that again. They performed new hire appraisals within the probationary period. He added since 2014, the cost of living increases had been 5%. The cost of living increases given by Social Security during that time period was 15.6%. It was outside of the tier they did in 2021 because it was not the same for all salary ranges. If the tiers were added, people below \$30,000 had received 11% since 2014, people below \$40,000 received 9%, people below \$50,000 received 7.5% and people above \$50,000 received 6%.

Since 2010, the retirement system employee contributions increased 2.5%, employee insurance went up 14% last year and this year, and the State was currently proposing 3% cost of living for employees and an additional \$1,500 bonus. They (the State) were also evaluating covering the cost of the increase of insurance. Mr. Pauley asked if from 2014 to present if they had an average of 5% of what was given to employees as far as raises. Mr. Caulder said that was outside of the tier. He said they did the tier structure one year but outside of that it was 5%. Mr. Pauley asked if Social Security increased 15.6% during that time and insurance increased 14%. Mr. Caulder said that was correct. He said the Social Security cost of living adjustment that they assigned every year took into consideration the consumer price index and many other factors. When they looked at compensation and how it moved from year to year, that was usually their baseline/starting point. Mr. Pauley said he knew Fairfield County had to work within their budget but wanted to know, based on his knowledge in the field of Human Resources, if he would recommend instead of a bonus, a cost of living raise to offset the cost of retirement and insurance if they could afford to do so. Mr. Caulder said over time, they did that and they found themselves where they were. He thought it was okay sometimes but you would fall behind over time. Mr. Pauley asked if he was referring to the bonuses or the cost of living. Mr. Caulder said the bonuses. He said some years the County gave a bonus and others a cost of living but there were some people who did not progress in pay range and he talked about it a couple of years ago. Governments were built to reward retention and tenure and that was accomplished by cost of living increases. When you do not have those, people do not progress in pay-band as they should. Mr. Trapp asked if that had been going on since 2015. Mr. Caulder said it was since 2014. Mrs. Bass said she would go in order by each department and if they wanted to speak, they could approach the microphone.

Data Processing – Marvin Allen, Director of IT, said he requested to fill a vacancy that was in his department for a little over three years. The demand for protecting their data never ended and with the new facility, they had a new audio-visual system to learn and a new system that made employee badges that they would have to operate as well. This was in addition to their day-to-day duties to keep the data center operational. His department only had three employees and they supported 34 departments to ensure data was always active and available for the County's business. He was asking to fill the three-year vacancy. Mr. Trapp asked if it was a frozen position. Mr. Allen said no and it was a long story behind that. The position was emptied (it was a long story) but it was not frozen. Mr. Trapp asked if the position was still on the books. Mr. Caulder said it was not. Mr. Trapp asked if it would have to be a new position and Mr. Caulder said yes sir. Mr. Gilbert asked the cost of the position.

Mr. Allen said he could only speculate around \$40,000 for a starting salary plus benefits. Mr. Caulder said he thought it was budgeted for about \$70,000. Mr. Allen said \$40,000 was probably a very low number to hire someone who was effective. Mrs. Greene asked if she heard \$70,000 and Mr. Caulder said yes ma'am and it included taxes, insurance and retirement.

Tax Assessor – Assessor Guerry Hensley was present but had no additional comments.

Delinquent Tax Collection – Ms. Watkins was not present. Ms. Bass said she had a small decrease. Her department was very small with staff and had minimal supplies.

Building Maintenance – Keith Branham (Director) said he was looking at \$80-85,000 in personnel. He had two people who were paid from the Public Works temp service money to keep the grass service in place. If they did not receive that help from them, they would have lost grass-cutting services. He also requested temps to help Ms. Adams at the new building. There was no way she could clean the building alone. He could not use the inmates due to the Sheriff and the children. Mr. Trapp asked if that was a total of four positions. Mr. Branham said he already had two that Public Works helped to pay for last year and he was asking that they be put back in his budget and two at the new Administration building to help with cleaning. He said the new building had a lot of square footage and Ms. Adams would not be able to clean it alone. Mr. Bell asked if he thought it would take two more people for the new building. Mr. Branham said he thought two temporary staff would be sufficient. There were a lot of grounds and floors. They would have to walk 100 yards to take the trash out because the trashcans were behind the old cafeteria. Mr. Pauley asked if building maintenance was responsible for all of the grass cutting for all of the buildings. Mr. Branham said correct. He had two trucks running with two inmates on each truck and they cut a certain amount of grass. There was so much of it that he had a contractor to cut the Commerce Center, Walter Brown 1 & 2, the adoption center and the school. Mr. Pauley said thank you.

Community Development – Daniel Stines, Director, said one of the bigger expenses he had was to update the land management plan. It had been about 12 years since it was last updated – it was a \$30,000 increase for that. He also asked for one staff person – a code and zoning enforcement person. He said since he started six months ago, the requests for litter and illegal dumping had been substantial. He said Monica was their only code enforcement officer and it was a lot for one person, despite their assisting when they could. In regards to his fee schedule, he proposed a 21.31% increase, which would put them at a 50% cost recovery. The past year they were at about a 28% cost recovery

and operationally that was fine but looking at the staff and operations, they were not quite covering everything. However, there would be an increase in revenue in the upcoming fiscal year if Council approved the fee schedule as presented. Mrs. Greene asked if he expected to have 21% cost recovery with the fee schedule for next year. He said no ma'am – he estimated a 21.31% increase from the past year. This year they did about \$180,000 in fee collection overall and he anticipated about 21% additional with the increase in fees. He evaluated four other counties that were similar geographically, in size and in population and he mirrored and made up for some of Fairfield's fees where they should be. Mr. Pauley asked Mr. Whitaker if this fee schedule was something to be done in this budget or would it come before them at another time to be voted in favor of. Mrs. Bass said it would come before them. She said because the road maintenance fee had come to light State-wide, they held off on sending it now – hoping to hear from the attorney as to whether it needed to be taken out. As she understood it (how the fee schedule worked), it would go through three readings. Any new fees would be brought forth in the public hearing. Mrs. Greene asked Mr. Stines if he was asking for another code enforcement officer. He said yes ma'am. He was asking for the position to be of a dual nature – code enforcement and assistance to zoning. He was currently doing the zoning/planning portion and acting Community Development Director and flood plain management – they were seeing an increase in demand from the public and development. Mr. Bell asked how much recovery fees did other counties have – how much money did they normally get for those services that were provided versus what other counties received. Mr. Stines said it varied because there were municipal and then county. Historically, municipalities would get 100% cost recovery and sometimes counties cannot for various reasons for a spread of resources and the elected officials' willingness to provide subsidies. It was a determination made by council. Most other counties were recovering 75-100% of their costs in the planning/zoning and community development departments. Mr. Bell asked how much they were recovering. Mr. Stines said this past year they only recovered 28%, which was far below the average. He proposed a 21% increase to hopefully match 50%. His logic was to keep the sensitivity to the citizens of the county as well as developers and not spike so much that it stalled services through developmental fees. Mr. Bell asked if a code enforcement officer was added, would that be about \$60,000. Mr. Caulder said probably closer to \$70,000 for a full time employee. Mr. Bell said ok.

Vehicle Maintenance – No representative present.

Economic Development – Director Ty Davenport said his budget did not change a lot – he had reduction recommendations. He controlled \$84,000 and he made

reductions and took out about \$16,000. He said due to the development at the Commerce Center, there was more mowing, trash pick-up and maintenance needed. Mrs. Greene asked if he was saying he needed an increase in trash pick-up, mowing, etc. – was he looking for some beautification. Mr. Davenport said yes ma'am – with the completion of the new pad, they would be doing some landscaping and it would have to be maintained.

Public Works – Director Jonathan Burroughs said his requests were capital related. They did the 5-year plan. On the road maintenance side, they had two bridges, which increased approximately 30-40% since they were closed by DOT. They were looking at Banks Square Road and CTC would contribute \$100,000 because it was on a paved road. They were looking at about \$550,000 for that bridge. Bull Run was a repair versus a replacement, which was about \$175,000. He knew it was a stretch but would mention anyway, the flex mower, which pulled behind the tractor - that would help Ty at BOMAG and the Airport and would replace the side mower that was a 2006 model. The mower was about 15 years old and it would be cycled out. Mr. Pauley asked for the price and he said \$23,000. Mr. Pauley said what concerned him with the road maintenance was Mr. Burroughs stated last year that there were five bridges in Fairfield County that needed repair or replacement and now he saying that two of them had increased 30-40%. Mr. Burroughs said since COVID the cost of materials had increased. They could probably save \$60-\$80,000 in demolition in-house and the rest would be construction and engineering. Mr. Pauley said he was concerned because if the five bridges did not get the attention needed the cost to repair/replace them would increase over the next 1-2 years. He asked for an estimate to repair/replace the five bridges if it was feasible. Mr. Burroughs said the current market was very volatile and to address all five bridges would cost approximately \$2.1-\$2.2 million, which included replacing correctly, passing inspection, engineer fees, etc. Mrs. Greene mentioned the infrastructure money being considered at the State. Mr. Burroughs said they were trying to apply for every grant at their disposal. Mrs. Greene said she knew they (the State) was holding off – delineating exactly where those monies would go or what pot they would be placed in for them to apply for grants. She wanted to make sure they had all of the priority needs identified and cost out so they were ready once the specifications were given. She felt the money should come from infrastructure money that was already proposed. Mr. Bell asked how long were the bridges out. Mr. Burroughs said a couple of them had been closed since 2020 – anywhere from 1 ½ - 2 years. Mr. Bell asked if all five bridges had been out since 2020 and he said yes sir. Mr. Bell asked if there were any other bridges out and he said there might be State bridges but not County. Mr. Trapp asked for the cost of the Fort Wagner bridge. Mr. Burroughs said approximately

\$415,000 to reinstate it as it was. If they went wider with double lanes and a shoulder, it would increase another 20-30%. He said they had options to put pipe in some areas but that would involve buying into the mitigation bank and paying the government because they would impact the stream through the pipe. They were adjusting to see if that was an option. Maggie Harris was the only option for that one because its ban was shorter. Mr. Roseborough asked if Glen Bridge Road was a State road and he said yes sir. Mr. Pauley asked if he could state where the five bridges were located. He said they were Banks Weir, Bull Run, Fort Wagner, Maggie Harris and Scott Crossings. A lot of them (Bull Run 1960) were built before regulations – just to get them to the other side. Mr. Bell asked about the area that they talked about that had a piece of cement across it. Mr. Burroughs said it was a crossing and not a bridge. Mr. Bell asked how could it be fixed and he said they would have to build a bridge. Mr. Pauley asked if he needed any vehicles (he knew he needed a mower). He said not on the road maintenance side but they needed a cardboard truck on the solid waste side. They were getting \$15,000 from the grant. This truck would haul cardboard – materials from the sites (tv's, electronics, tires, appliances). Through the grant, they would get \$15,000 and they were asking for \$15,000 to match the difference. They had some roll off trucks that were coming in the next couple of years that would need to be phased out. Mrs. Greene said in the past they talked about revenue and it may have been on the solid waste side. They talked about selling steel (scrap metal). Mr. Burroughs said they went from about \$24-\$25,000 when they had a contractor to come and this past year they made about \$58,000 by doing it in-house. Mrs. Greene asked if there were any excess costs with that and he said just fuel to get it to the recycling station to Mid-Carolina steel (about a 24-mile ride one-way). He said regarding the recycling sites, they get the same calls about being closed on Monday's. There was a savings of about \$53,000 because they did not have to pay the attendants and they were in line with the counties around them as far as the days they were open – 52 hours per week. Newberry and Chester were closed three days. Fairfield had about 32,000 residents and Lexington had almost 300,000 residents and they ran the same amount of hours as Fairfield – 52 hours. If Monday was added, it would be more costs for attendants and in the past they would have to work on Saturdays to keep up with the garbage and they had to be paid overtime. They had not worked a Saturday since July when everything came into effect. They understood the concerns from the citizens but it had been a significant savings on vehicles, overtime and paying the attendants. Mr. Bell asked if they opened all day on Wednesday how much would that cost. He said that would kill them on their scrap metal because that was the day they ran the scrap metal. Mr. Bell asked if they could change the days. He said it would not matter if they changed the days, it would still be an issue. It could not be back-to-back days. If it was not

Monday it would have to be Friday. Mr. Bell asked if the other recycling centers were open 12 hours. He said no, the majority were 10-11. Mr. Bell asked if they could possibly add more days if they shortened the hours. He said a lot of them shorten hours during daylight savings, they would open later and close earlier.

Animal Control – Mrs. Bass said Director Innis was out of the country. His main request was for funding for temporary help. Mrs. Williams said he had a capital request for a new vehicle to replace an older truck. Some of the other requests pertained to the increase in citizens dropping off animals and the costs incurred. The current County ordinance said if an animal was picked up and had not been spayed or neutered, it could not be released without that procedure. The ordinance stated the County had to be paid but if not it was a cost incurred by the animal shelter. There was also an increase in the cost of dog food and pet supplies. The long range was to look at how to supplement veterinary services and upgrade the facility. The shelter was very packed with the increase in animals. Those were the needs behind his requests for increases. In order to try to keep the budget as close to revenue as possible, they did not include personnel but he did have issues with overtime because he had a temporary position that was frozen. If there were calls on the weekend, the full time staff would step in whereas the temporary staff would have done that. Mrs. Greene wanted to know if there was an estimate for the cost of the temporary position. Mr. Caulder said he believed the request from the Director was \$27,000. She asked if in the past he used some prisoners to help. Mr. Caulder said yes ma'am and he still did but there were certain requirements for supervision from the full time staff, which takes them from working in other areas. The weekends were hitting them hard and there was another department where they could not keep staff. Mr. Pauley referred to the statement made by Mrs. Williams regarding the fees incurred by the County when an animal was picked up and given shots. He asked if the policy stated that the animal was not released until the owner paid the fees.

Mrs. Bass said the next several departments might not have any representatives present – the Probate, Tax Auditor, County Treasurer, Clerk of Court and Family Court. They all had modest changes.

Coroner – Coroner Chris Hill said he was able to give back \$6,000 from his budget that he was given last year for laptops because he acquired what was needed from last year's budget. His increased requests were related to autopsies and toxicology services. He said a lot of the pathologists were short staffed and in order to get autopsy and toxicology services in a timely manner, he entered into an agreement with MUSC in Charleston and Dr. Ward with Greenville Pathology Group. For autopsies, he used Newberry for over 30 years

but they were short-staffed. He tried to get his autopsies completed in a timely fashion so the family could take possession of the body. His increase was basically in those departments. In regards to training, they were required to be more proficient in organ procurement, which came from a federal level, and that required additional training. Some of the training was not in the State of South Carolina. He thought his budget increased by \$26,000 - \$15,000 was for a vehicle from State surplus. He spoke with Terry Smith from the Sheriff's office. The manager there said he could get him a good vehicle for a decent price. He needed the vehicle because his deputies were using their personal cars to respond to calls. Certain situations required them to have warning devices - like traffic fatalities, homicides - they were required to get there in a timely fashion. If something were to happen to his deputies while on assignment in their personal vehicles, they would have to pay their deductible. A lot of other county coroners that he talked to said they had a vehicle that their deputies used. For insurance purposes, he did not want his deputies to eat the cost if they were to get into an accident taking care of the department's business. It was also a lot of wear and tear on their cars. Some of them had been with him for the entire 6 years he had been County Coroner. They were putting gas in their cars responding to the calls and although they were not complaining and he appreciated that, they continued to serve the citizens of Fairfield County. With gas being \$4.00/gallon they still continue to serve the County. He asked at least for the \$15,000 for a used vehicle from the State surplus. It would be equipped with a radio and the necessary equipment they needed. He also spoke to Captain Padgett, who was over the fleet for the Sheriff's office, to see if they had anything coming off the line that he could use and he told him they only had an old Tahoe and he did not want that. Mr. Pauley asked if a deputy coroner used his personal vehicle to respond to a County emergency, were they covered under the County's insurance. Mr. Caulder said they would be under Worker's Comp. Outside of that, he did not know because they were not volunteers. He would have to check. Mr. Hill said they were part-time employees that paid into retirement. Mr. Trapp asked the difference between the volunteer fire fighters responding to a call versus the deputy coroners. Mr. Caulder said just the volunteer aspect. Through Workman's comp, volunteers would have a minimum rate they would receive if they were injured in the line of duty but they would assume the risk of damage to personal property. Mr. Bell said he thought volunteer fire fighters were classified as needed. Mrs. Bass said they were classified as needed but were not paid an hourly rate but an annual stipend that was based on calls responded to and educational requirements. Mr. Bell said the point he was making was that they were not considered volunteers but as needed. Mrs. Bass said they were not hourly employees. They were on the payroll and were paid an annual stipend - they were considered volunteers and not employees. Mr.

Trapp asked if they received any County benefits (insurance) and Mrs. Bass said no. Mrs. Greene clarified the request by asking if Mr. Hill was asking for \$15,000 for a vehicle, which would need customizations. She asked how much that would cost. Mr. Hill said they used West Chatman in West Columbia and Fairfield County were long-time customers. They gave the best rate they could – they did not ask for a lot but he wanted his staff to be protected. They all had full time jobs and he tried to take care of them and he did not want anything to happen to them. He was only as good as the people that worked for him. The credit went to his staff and not him. It was brought to his attention at a Coroner's Association meeting that they had Explorer's for their deputy coroners to drive and he talked to the President of the Association and she said he would rather they be covered under county insurance versus their personal insurance. If they were in an accident driving their personal vehicle, they could sue the County because they were on County business. If they were in a County vehicle, it would be different especially when they had the necessary equipment. Mrs. Greene asked if he had an approximate cost and he said he could probably get it done for about \$17,000. She asked if he was looking for that as well as the training cost. He said yes ma'am and the autopsy and toxicology cost. She asked if he put that in the budget request and he said yes ma'am. He said the total minus the extra \$2,000 was \$26,000. Mr. Trapp asked how many deputy coroners were in the department. Mr. Hill said he had five deputy coroners – one did transports, autopsies and filled in as needed. It freed him and his administrator because they were on call during the day. Mr. Bell asked if he had five deputies and he said yes. Mrs. Greene asked if he was looking for one car and he said yes ma'am. He explained his shifts as he and the administrator were on-call Monday-Friday from 6a-6p. The on-call deputy coroner for the week took call from 6pm Monday afternoon to the following Monday at 6am.

Sheriff's Department – Terry Smith, Lieutenant Office Administrator, said their biggest requests were for vehicles. They usually purchased six vehicles per year and did not receive any last year, which put them about 12 vehicles behind. They currently had seven vehicles with over 200,000 miles, 26 with over 100,000 miles and 18 with over 50,000 miles. They had 11 within the 15-20 year old age range and 20 that were 10-15 years old. They put a lot of miles on their vehicles and it becomes a safety issue with high mileage. She said a couple of years ago, Councilman Pauley suggested that as they approached 100,000 on a vehicle that it would rotate off but that was not implemented. When she first started, they would rotate out (possibly to another county agency) the vehicles that were within 90,000-100,000 miles. These were emergency response vehicles and if they were not replaced each year, they got behind. Mr. Bell said he thought just before last year's budget

they got four new cars and one truck. Ms. Smith said they average six new vehicles per year. He said at the end of the budget year (just before July 1 – in May) they got four cars because he thought they wrecked some of their cars. The County paid the insurance – there were four new cars and a truck. He asked if he was right. Mr. Whitaker said he thought that was what they got from procurement but he would check. Mr. Bell said they did get cars last year and that was the point he was making. Ms. Smith said some of the vehicles they got were from prior budgets. There was a shortage on vehicles currently. They were no longer making the Dodge Chargers and Ford was coming out with another Crown Victoria and they were basically the only companies supplying police cars (across the U.S.). There was a huge shortage and they were just receiving cars from the budget two years ago. Mr. Pauley referred to the packet and asked if 10 vehicles would cost \$550,000. She said she believed 12 replacement vehicles would cost on average \$35,850 but did not include the equipment or outfitting from West Chatman. They usually used the radios from the replacement vehicle and placed them in the new ones so they did not have to buy new radios all the time. Mr. Bell asked how much was requested for the 10 vehicles. She said it was 12 vehicles and it totaled about \$600,881. Mrs. Greene asked for an idea of the cost of maintenance of the old vehicles (regarding 100,000-mile rotation). Ms. Smith said it came from their budget but the maintenance shop did the work. They had about \$28,000 budgeted for that. Motor vehicle supplies was \$60,000 (oil changes, tires), \$2,000 for additional equipment, parts and supplies. Mr. Robinson asked what year were they bringing the Crown Vic back. She said she was not sure but was hoping 2023 – if not they would all be in bad shape. Mrs. Greene said regarding the 12 vehicles were they all required in this year or were they staggering them. She said normally you would stagger because of the replacement aspect. She knew they did not have cars last year but buying 12 cars in the same year, she thought of maintenance problems and the fact that they would need 12 cars again in the same year. She asked if there was a way to stagger the request. Ms. Smith said they would do whatever they had to do and she was correct. She said they had that issue in 2012 (she thought). Council did not allow them any vehicles and they got so far behind they had to ask for 12 more another year. She said it was a burden and it was why they ask for six vehicles each year because it was easier to rotate them. Mrs. Greene asked if there was a compromise if 12 was not feasible for the budget. Ms. Smith said they would take what they could get. They did not ask for more than what they needed – they would be happy if they got six this year. She invited them to drive some of the spares – they were scary. If you pushed on the brakes, the seats moved forward and if you pushed the gas, the seat went back. They were worn out and they took care of them as best they could. They had a 1999 truck that had 230,000 miles on it that needed to be taken off the road. The other

week, the Sheriff drove his personal vehicle while his was in the shop because there was not anything decent to drive. She said these guys were risking their lives – if they got in a chase going 100 miles per hour they were risking their lives. If a wheel came off or a drive shaft broke, it would be a huge cost to the County and that family. They typically ask for six each year, they did not get any last year and they were playing catch up. It was hard to find vehicles – she was currently trying to find one to replace one that was wrecked (insurance was paying for it). She said they would work with Council. Mrs. Greene asked if they ordered cars now what would the timeframe be for delivery. Ms. Smith said it could possibly be outside of the current budget year. They would be lucky to find some. She said Love Chevrolet contacted them and said they had some Tahoe's but they were more expensive than the Dodge Chargers. There were no Dodge Chargers – they were buying pick-up trucks now and they were probably not the best pursuit vehicles. They were just filling the requests from the budget before last. Mr. Roseborough said he thought at one time the Maintenance Director would look at the cars to determine if they were reliable. Ms. Smith said they relied on them to tell them the shape the cars were in but they could not afford to take them off the road. Even if they were breaking down or dangerous to drive, they could not sit the deputy down in the office and they not be able to respond. Mr. Roseborough asked if they were at the point where the Maintenance Director said the vehicles were unsafe to drive. She said yes sir they kept that on record and had that on file. If you had a vehicle that was 15 years old and had almost 300,000 miles on it, would you get in a chase? It was common knowledge that that vehicle was not in good shape.

Magistrate's Office – Judge Russell Feaster said he realized that County Administration had put money into their budget but he was asking for funding for one full time position – Court Security. He hoped to have a uniformed Sheriff's Deputy to fill the position. He said his justification was simple. He referred to the comments Ms. Lawson made regarding the level of violence they saw day in and day out. They just had a tremendous weekend of violence, including South Carolina. It was all about the safety and security of the citizens of Fairfield County. Currently they did not have control access. They shared a building with Family Court. Family Court had access at the front of the building and their access was on the side of the building and that was where everyone entered for Magistrate's Court. Since his four-year tenure, they had not had control access. They had a metal detector but no one to supervise it. He personally witnessed some instances where situations escalated and could have ended in violence. When he first started as Magistrate, he had to go around the County to do observations. He was doing an observation of a General Sessions murder trial in Florence County. Counties like Florence,

Lexington, Richland, all the large counties had security in the courtroom. Florence had about five deputies – it was a high profile murder case. At the end of the trial, the defendants were found not guilty and one of the co-defendants testified against him. In spite of all of the deputies present, the situation almost escalated. He had also come close to a physical altercation in his courtroom simply because a young man did not want to wear his mask. When he asked him to leave, he refused and refused to wear a mask and he threatened him. His point was they needed security at the Magistrate's Court. The Sheriff's office provided security for civil court because that was where something would most likely escalate but that was not enough. They needed a full time position. He said the last and most important reason was because it was ordered by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He has ordered that every court in the State have proper security and in his opinion, they currently did not. Chief Justice Beatty had the authority to shut the courts down. He said he thought it would behoove them all to consider funding the position. After you (Council) have been properly informed of the need, God forbid something should happen – how would the County look. How would you defend a lawsuit? He respectfully asked for the funding of the position. Mr. Pauley asked if there was a deputy that went back and forth between the Courthouse and the Magistrate's court but he was under the understanding that he wanted one full time, Magistrate's office, 9-5, Monday-Friday and Mr. Feaster said yes sir. Mr. Feaster said there was a deputy who did that but part of their building was for family court and he had that responsibility as well and he did not think that was adequate. He said in order to get an idea of some of the violence that happened inside court he suggested they looked at Court Cam via YouTube. They would see anything from a judge being assaulted, inmates being assaulted to family brawls. They also happened in South Carolina – most recently in York County and Orangeburg. Mrs. Greene asked how much the position would cost and would it come from the Sheriff's department's budget. Mr. Feaster said he did not know but estimated \$40,000 for an entry-level deputy but he did not consider insurance. Mrs. Greene asked if that was about \$70,000. Mrs. Bass said yes, it currently came from the Sheriff's department and they put an additional \$20,000 to bring it up to be able to fund the position. Mr. Bell asked if it was already included and Mrs. Bass said yes and it was related to the mandate by the Chief Justice. Mr. Pauley asked if the Sheriff would have to make the request by way of Mr. Feaster. Mrs. Bass said yes but it was already staffed with existing deputies. They put additional monies in instead of creating a new position to allow them to have staff there. She believed even if the deputy was 100% assigned at the Magistrate Court it would still have to operate under the Sheriff. Mr. Feaster said most larger counties had the Sheriff's office do that. Chester's Magistrate Court was inside the Sheriff's department, the Kershaw County Sheriff's office did that,

Newberry did not have security, Lee County had security provided by their Sheriff's department and Lancaster had security provided by a Constable.

Voter's Registration – Mrs. Bass said there was some increase in temporary staff due to the poll staff and some of that would be recovered through election costs. Debbie Stidham, Director, confirmed and said they were reimbursed by the State for poll workers at 100% (for what the State paid – Fairfield paid a little more) for the June primary. For the November election, they were reimbursed at 50% from the State. Mrs. Greene asked if that was for the November election at 50%. Ms. Stidham said yes ma'am and it included all costs – notices for the paper, rent, and poll-worker fees. Mrs. Greene asked if that was already in the budget. Mrs. Bass said it was. Mr. Bell asked if she was asking for anything other than what was in the budget and she confirmed. Mr. Pauley apologized for her wait.

Veteran's Affairs – Mrs. Bass said Ms. Woodard was out of town but had no overall increases except for what was related to retirement and insurance.

Airport – Mrs. Bass said Director Denise Bryan was not present but had nothing additional.

Emergency Management – Mrs. Bass said Director Brad Douglas had an overall decrease. Mr. Douglas said there were some increases and decreases. He was not asking for personnel or vehicles.

Mrs. Bass referred to page 42 with various allocations – they were all set and was for information for funding for 2022. They would come at another work session.

Parks and Recreation – Director Lucas Vance said his requests were mainly centered around personnel but they did have some capital requests. They used Mrs. Williams' 5-year plan. They included new bathrooms but moved it to accommodate the cuts. One big request was rewiring at Drawdy Park – one of the fields did not have lights. They were able to get through Spring sports with the time change but with Fall sports and the time change again it will get darker sooner. That field was their biggest field and they held a lot practices on that field – at any time there could be four teams practicing. For example, currently with Spring sports, they had one of their biggest turnouts. They had about 326 kids – a total of 27 teams, 12 t-ball teams. The t-balls teams practice on that field (field 3). He said they had done more with less but he did not know if they could do it long term, especially with some of the oncoming projects. Some of the facilities added since 2017 included Mitford and Monticello Community Centers and Fortune Springs pool, the fitness center just to name a few and they had not had any full time personnel staff added.

Therefore, one of their big requests was for personnel and with trying to make cuts in the budget that was one of the first things to be cut. Mr. Pauley asked Mr. Caulder if the Director's position was still interim or did they have a full time Director. Mr. Whitaker said he appointed Mr. Vance as full time Director and they got rid of the other position. Mr. Caulder said at last year's budget that position number was frozen and this year that same number would remain frozen. They would take Mr. Vance's current position number and change the title to Director. Mr. Bell asked if that was interim and Mr. Whitaker said no he was the Parks and Recreation Director. Mr. Vance said he accepted the offer to be Director but now there would not be an athletic coordinator by title. The work would still get done but there would be no staff to carry the title. Mr. Pauley asked regarding the new Fairfield County Complex that had a gymnasium and the new District 1 Recreation and Community Center what number would he give to properly staff them. With the Fairfield County Government Complex, would the staff from the Boykin Center go to that facility, would they be able to use both facilities for recreational purposes and what was the amount of staff needed at District 1 and the Fairfield County Government Complex? Mr. Vance said in his personnel request he asked for eight personnel – one for the Director's position, one for the Ridgeway facility and two Recreational Specialists (budgeted at \$40,000 each but would be higher once benefits were added). They asked for one more person at the Health and Fitness Center – it was opened about 60-62 hours per week and there was one full time person there. They had part time staff that opened and closed the building. He was a believer in "the next man up" system and he believed every department should have two full time persons. Their previous health and fitness specialist resigned and it took about 6 weeks to fill the position and they had to find people to cover - that position was requested at \$40,000 also. As for Boykin, their staff was moving to the new Fairfield County Government Complex. The two staff that worked in programs would be housed in the Activity Center and the Athletic Specialist, Director and Deputy Director would be above the gymnasium. They asked for a full time Program Specialist at Boykin and two staff for maintenance. Currently they were piecing things together and they would move the full time staff to the new government complex and they would shut Boykin down. They would have walking in the morning and at lunch, evening exercise classes and they planned to bring pickle ball in. There were upgrades to the pickle ball court. Mr. Pauley asked for the cost to complete the fitness center (located behind the former government complex). Mr. Vance said he did not know. There were two rooms that were not finished. One of them was supposed to have two showers and they were currently using it as a janitorial closet. The other was supposed to be an office – the walls were up but the floor was not finished. Mr. Pauley asked if they could find out the cost. Mr. Whitaker said he did not think it was

on their current project list and Mr. Vance confirmed. Mr. Bell said he understood that they overspent on the fitness center – he thought it was complete. Mr. Whitaker said he heard the concern from Mr. Pauley but there had been no action. Mr. Bell said he knew it was a past project but they needed to know how much was spent. As he understood, it had a lot of money in it – from Fairfield Forward and others. Mr. Whitaker said ok. Mrs. Greene asked for clarity as to the number of staff being requested and the cost of the rewiring of the Drawdy Park lights. Mr. Vance said the Drawdy Park lights quote (from West Electric in September) was \$34,000 and he requested eight personnel. One position was for the Director, which was filled, and if it was possible to give that money to an Athletic Coordinator position, it would very beneficial. That position served as a middle manager for a growing athletic program, especially coming out of 2020 and 2021 when kids were not participating in as many sports. They had seen a boom since the past winter and this spring. Mrs. Greene asked if he was requesting an Athletic Coordinator, someone in health and fitness and two maintenance people. Mr. Vance said yes as well as two Recreation Specialists for the Ridgeway Recreation Center in District 1 and an Administrative Assistant to help better serve the public (streamline registration, give information). He foresaw rentals becoming popular and currently his Deputy Director was handling most of those tasks and it kept her working in other areas that could generate revenue. Mr. Bell said if he calculated it, it was about \$400,000. Mr. Vance said yes. Mrs. Greene asked if he used (or was it possible to use) high school students and others to assist in the athletic programs. Mr. Vance said they used a lot of high school students. Some of those helping with afterschool were Dontarius Siebles, James Knapper, Matthew Few, Zoe – they also used them during the summer as camp counselors and lifeguards. Mrs. Greene asked if they were given a stipend and he said they were paid hourly. They also found ways to use WOIA and Vocational Rehab. Mrs. Greene said she was trying to find a cost effective way to give him what he needed. She knew it took a lot of coordinating and she was brainstorming. Mr. Vance said they had a lot of parks and facilities – if you were to line them up side by side with Richland County it would be a surprise. When you considered Richland County having 300,000 people and Fairfield County having 21,000, Fairfield should have a tenth of what Richland had. He wanted as many parks as they could get, he just needed people to manage, supervise and program them. He said they had gotten into some trouble with Monticello and Mitford. They were small but efficient but they did not hire any full time people. There was a beautiful office but no one to sit in it. It was not feasible to have full time programmers in Winnsboro try to program something that was 20 miles away. At the end of the day, it would be the programmers that would get folks into the facility. Mrs. Greene said she looked for creativity. With parks and recreation, sometimes there were large pools that may have

not been looked at. She knew it required vetting through SLED to ensure appropriate hires but she thought it was an area for creativity regarding staffing. Mr. Vance asked if she was thinking about volunteers. She said there may be basketball players that graduated from high school here or some who have worked in athletics – try to grow their own pool. She was not offering suggestions as to how he did his job. She was just brainstorming and looking at creative ways to meet their needs and to grow people who might be interested in athletics but had not been asked. Mr. Vance said they had a very strong relationship with the public school. The coaches had done camps for them and some were part time baseball coaches. Two of his full time staff were Fairfield Central graduates. While they were in school, they were counselors in training. He agreed with her and believed in growing their talent. Mr. Pauley asked about the participation fee for Fairfield County. Mr. Vance said they submitted some fee changes but currently it was \$20 monthly – for flag and tackle football, 7 on 7, soccer, basketball, t-ball, baseball, softball and gymnastics. Dance five and under was \$30 and dance six and up was \$35. After school was \$30 for the first child and \$15 for each additional child weekly. Summer camp was \$45 for the first child and \$25 for each additional child weekly. Group fitness classes, line dance, and Zumba were \$20/month and they usually meet 4-8 times/month. Gym memberships (Lake Monticello and Mitford had fitness/weight rooms) were \$10/month. The community fitness center was \$20/month. They offered combinations - exercise class and fitness center membership would be \$30. They generated revenue from rentals as well. Mr. Pauley asked if baseball, football, basketball all had a \$20 participation fee and Mr. Vance said correct. Mr. Pauley asked if he had done a study of surrounding counties to look at their participation fees and he said yes they had. Mr. Pauley asked if it was more than \$20 and he said in some cases it was \$300. Mr. Pauley said \$65-\$70 and asked if he agreed that \$20 did not even cover the cost of the uniform and that Fairfield County was burdened with most of the costs and that they should increase it to \$25 if not \$30. Mr. Vance said they submitted a fee change of \$35 for tackle football and baseball (they were the most expensive sports), \$25 for softball and they submitted fee changes for after school and summer camp.

EMS – Mrs. Bass said they did not have very many increases – some of them related to personnel, medical supplies, and gasoline and diesel fuel for the ambulances. Dan Sloan, Deputy Director, said they also had increases in their security services – they now had to pay for fire and smoke alarm detection in the Jenkinsville station. Their medical supplies had increased due to COVID and the shortages across the country. They asked for a \$16,000 increase in medical supplies. It was the same thing for household and laundry – a \$1,000 increase because they had to sanitize and clean more. They asked for a \$2,000

increase in clothing supplies. They were recruiting very well compared to other EMS services in South Carolina. When the newest employees start, they would have five open slots and the costs of uniforms had increased. He referred to the packet he gave them and said it showed how some of the costs were incurring throughout the year. Their EMS service was pretty large compared to other counties with a 21,000 persons population. They had to look at more than population, but the county size and what was inside the county. Fairfield County was one of the largest counties with a small population in the State of South Carolina - it was 686 square miles. They were obligated to respond to every corner of the County within 10 minutes of getting a 911 call. They did not want to delay any more than 10 minutes because in a cardiac arrest, every minute that CPR was not being performed the chance of survival decreased by 10%. They needed to get there as quickly as possible and have stations throughout the County able to respond. In comparison to like counties, Fairfield EMS was required to do medical services and rescue on two lakes and one river. Similar counties did not have those responsibilities. They had water rescue in effect – about a week and a half ago, they rescued two kayakers that were overturned in the water for over an hour. They also serviced Carolina Adventure World. When they go out there, the crew was probably on scene for two hours minimum. They actually go into the woods with an ATV to secure the injured, extricate them from the woods and transport them to the hospital. There was a dramatic increase (now that COVID was over) of accidents with people being out and it was never in the parking lot but in the backside where they had to go out and rescue. They also had more concerts and races, which increased the need for EMS. Similar counties did not have interstates and they had 25 miles of interstate to respond to and those were high velocity incidents with severe injuries. They could also require extrication (fire safety assist with cutting people out of vehicles) and they also provided assistance to VC Summers Nuclear Power Plant. They had to go through specialized training in case they had a nuclear accident or a medical emergency in a nuclear environment. They had to be re-certified every year. He said last year their call volume increased not just COVID related and had increased over the years. Last year was a record year for Fairfield County – they had never run that many calls (5,244). They had a lot of serious calls (trauma). Last year they responded to 511 traffic accidents, 571 respiratory related and gunshots and stabbings increased as well. They were obligated by South Carolina regulation 617 to carry specific equipment in their ambulances. It did not matter if one day it cost \$1 and the next day \$500, they were still required to have it. Over the last few quarters, certain items had dramatically increased in cost. Epinephrine was a medication used during cardiac arrest. In the third and fourth quarter of 2020, it cost \$80.33 and in the first and second quarter of 2022 it cost \$490.87. They currently paid \$396.00 per shipment for Narcan.

He said part of their capital budget request included three ambulances at \$906,000. They needed five ambulances but were only requesting three (to replace Medic 1, 4 and 11). They were international ambulances made by Taylor Made Ambulance. They no longer met the safety requirements for ambulances. They were grandfathered in because they were already certified with South Carolina. If for any reason, they lost the certification or if they failed an inspection, they could not be re-certified and they would lose the trucks because it would cost too much to retrofit them. Mr. Pauley asked if he ordered them that, day how long, would it take to get them and he said 18-24 months and the cost of \$906,000 fluctuated weekly. Mr. Sloan said last budget year they asked for three trucks and received none and they had to purchase two used vehicles (Medics 7 and 13). No ambulance service gets rid of their good trucks and the two used ones that they purchased were maintenance nightmares. In the past three months, they were in the maintenance shop 18 times. It had nothing to do with maintenance – they had done a spectacular job but the trucks had continual problems. He said invoices in South Carolina were highly regulated. If any of the ambulances required maintenance that took longer than two weeks, they had to decertify them with DHEC and they had to come out and re-inspect them. Their Medic 2 needed a new transmission and it was on back order and had to be decertified. They lost one of their really good trucks - they had two trucks that were maintenance problems and three that did not meet safety standards. He said year-to-date, they brought \$811,000 to the County. They collected 83.95% of their billing. They also requested to unfreeze the three paramedic positions. Mrs. Bass said it totaled \$240,000 with benefits. Also, there was a regulation they had to follow as advance life support servicer's and they had to respond to 95% of calls with a paramedic on board. If they violated that, they could lose their certification with DHEC. Looking at the call volume last year, it was roughly 262 calls that they could not respond to with a paramedic. The standard for an ambulance (which made it hard for EMS to have functional ambulances and why they were always asking for them) was highly regulated. The average person had the heating/air that did not work at some time – with EMS they would have to take that truck out of service. They were required by regulation to have an ambulance that could either heat or cool to 75 degrees. If a tree scratched the emblem on the side of the truck – the star of life, the strip on the side or the word "ambulance" it had to be taken out of service until it was fixed. It was so regulated that if they broke one of the sun visors in the cab of the truck, it had to be taken out of service. They could be pulled over at any time by DHEC and if they failed an inspection, there could be monetary fines, they could lose their certification or the truck's certification. There was required equipment by DHEC and it could cost \$1 today and \$10,000 tomorrow – regardless they were required to have it. They did not have much wiggle room with their budgets.

Mr. Pauley said he heard that some of the sub stations were shut down and asked if it was due to equipment or paramedics and what determined which sub stations were shut down. Mr. Sloan said it was due to lack of staff. They were recruiting well and were close to being fully staffed. At one point, they were down 8-9 positions and did not have enough crew members to open stations. They determined which stations to close based on call volume. They had a system of reports to see which stations were responding to the most calls. Mrs. Greene asked if the 8-9 positions were still unfilled. He said they were but when the newest employees started, they would have about five positions open. He said no EMS service would ever be at 100% staffed – there would always be something that pulled the crew away. The big thing currently was that some counties have 24-72 hour shifts. Fairfield County operated 48-96 hour shifts but they had a good reputation, which was the reason they were able to recruit from Richland and Lexington. Mr. Bell asked if their recruitment was one of the best across the State. He said he could not say for the entire State but when he spoke to other training officers and deputy directors, they were amazed at their recruitment ability. Equipment, training, and pay all went towards their recruitment. Mrs. Greene asked if he was requesting three staff and three paramedics and he said yes ma'am. She asked with the five open positions, what was his estimation for filling them. He said to fill them at 100% he did not see that any time soon. The State of South Carolina was in a critical shortage of EMS staff and he wanted the ability to fill the positions if someone came. Mrs. Greene said that was her question – if they had five positions open and they added two more, while they may need the seven people, it sounded as if they would have the positions but not the people to fill them. He said they recently hired 6-7 new people within the last 3-4 weeks and they were recruiting well. Mr. Pauley said they had Southeastern shut down for the entire day and asked if the nearest unit was coming from Greenboro. Mr. Sloan said it would be Mitford or Greenboro. They did not have trucks at all stations. When they had shortages, they moved them around to cover gaps. It was a complicated system and difficult to explain. Mrs. Greene asked if that was when they park in the middle of certain areas. He said yes but they also trained fire fighters to be emergency medical responders so in the event they could not get there immediately the fire fighters could get there and start medical attention. Their average response time was nine minutes and ten seconds, which was phenomenal by national standards.

Fire Safety – Mrs. Bass said they had sub departments for each of their sub stations, which were typically utility oriented – nothing else really changed. Jason Pope, Director of Fire Safety, said there were not any significant changes to their operational budget but they did have an item for the lease of a building. They would have to lease the community fire station (110 Winter Street and

owned by Rockton Baptist Church). They had a 50-year lease for \$1 per year and that expired. They wanted to renegotiate a new lease at \$300 per month for one year. He had not seen a contract but with recommendations from Administration, they agreed to a lease of \$300 per month for five years. They did not have much of a choice – they had to have the building. Mr. Bell asked if they were going to lease that fire station and he said yes sir – they did not have any other choice. It was \$3,600 per year and you cannot lease a space anywhere for that amount. It was not a lot of money but it was a new expense to operate the fire station at that location. Mr. Whitaker said it would be a huge cost to try to find another location. Mr. Pope agreed and said that was the only operational change to the budget. They had some personnel and capital requests. With personnel, they requested a full-time Fire Marshall, which he had requested for the last three years (this would make the third year) and a part-time position that was held for about two and a half years but the person decided to go back into retirement. They advertised the position for what they were paying, had two applicants and neither was qualified or had the time to give to the position. It was basically a full-time job considering the plan review of all commercial plans submitted into the County for fire protection and building inspections, which they were sadly unprepared in Fairfield County in terms of fire inspections. Most of their commercial facilities had never had a fire inspection. It was disappointing but they did not have the staff to do it. Even a full-time employee would not have the time to do that level of work but it was a start – a way forward. He thought they had about \$20,000 budgeted for a part-time person and he was asking for an additional \$40-\$45,000 for a full-time position in order for the salary to be competitive. Every year, he asked for more paid fire fighters. They had the best volunteer fire fighters in South Carolina. They were the most dedicated group of people and he loved every one of them. However, it was not nearly enough and they were not being replaced adequately. The average age of their volunteer fire fighters was about 50 years old. He had one station of volunteers whose average age was 72. The next youngest average age was 62. Their dedication was admirable and they turned out to help their community but they were limited and they would tell them that. At some point, the county had to add more paid firefighters. It was not do or die but they had to take incremental steps in the near future. He said their call volume was up – they ran a little over 1,200 calls last year and they did assist in some first responder medical calls. It was a great program - it helped EMS because sometimes all they needed was a driver and one of his personnel (paid or volunteer) was available to respond. Mr. Pauley asked if Fairfield County faced any liability for not having a fire marshal. Mr. Pope said the law said that the fire chief, regardless of his training in any unincorporated area was automatically the fire marshal and that would be him (Pope). He said he had no training to be a fire marshal but if he were the only paid employee,

they would be compliant. The law was antiquated and outdated but that was the law. Mr. Pauley said he knew Fairfield County recently instituted a business license fee and he thought in order to do that someone would have to go check the business – like a fire marshal or someone like that. Mr. Pope said they were required by law to inspect every public building on an annual basis and they did not come close to meeting that requirement. Mr. Pauley asked if they had four paid fire fighters and he said yes they had four full-time career fire fighters. Mr. Pauley asked if they rotated throughout different parts of the County or were they confined to one area like Blair, Jenkinsville, or Ridgeway. Mr. Pope said they were assigned to stations. They made their decisions much like EMS made their decisions – based on call volume. Their paid employees were at the five busiest stations. They had one station covered by two part-time employees. He mentioned they had three part-time fire fighters. Mr. Pauley asked for his capital needs/requests. Mr. Pope reminded them that they had not purchased any fire trucks in the last three years. They had 53 pieces of fire apparatus in their fleet – 17 of the 53 (over 30%) were over 20 years old and 10 of the 53 were over 30 years old. Those were not spare trucks – they were first out. The National Fire Protection Association, which published the guidelines and recommendations for the operation of fire departments, recommended that no first due fire truck be older than 20 years old. They could be kept until they were 25 years old but after that, they were considered spare trucks. The plan he submitted to Administration with the five-year projection included two new fire trucks every year for the next five years and that was a lot of money. A tanker that they needed now was \$340,000. The lead-time on ambulances - Dan talked about it being 18 months – it was the same for fire trucks. There were no fire truck dealerships where he could go and give them a check and take home a fire truck. If he received the money today, it would be 18 months to two years before he would get the truck. Time was of the essence. Mr. Bell asked if he said two fire trucks would be \$340,000 each. Mr. Pope said that was the price for tankers and the engines would cost a little bit more. Mr. Bell asked if that total was \$680,000 and he said yes sir for two tankers and that was a part of his request for that year. If they brought two fire trucks for the next five years, at the end of the five years their oldest trucks would still be 25 years old. His point was they had not even scratched the surface. The average age of their tanker fleet was a 1999-year model and their engine fleet was not much better at 2005. It was dangerous. The one tanker he was asking to replace this year was tanker 13. He reviewed its maintenance records for the last six months. They check the trucks once weekly and 14 times that truck would not start. It was a first due fire truck. If they called 911, that was one of the first trucks used to respond. Maintenance has worked on that truck and they do a great job trying to piece together our junk. After maintenance put a new carburetor in it, it caught fire going to a

call – that was embarrassing. He was not making any thing up – he was just telling the truth. He had been asking to replace trucks for three years with no success. The other truck that needed replacement had a blown transmission. It was slotted to go to the new fire station at the river. If that truck was not replaced, they could have the fire station ready tomorrow and he would not have a tanker to place there and it would not count as a fire station. Every one of his fire stations had to have at least an engine and a tanker in it to count as a fire station. If one of his trucks that was still in service (he had no spares) were 10-7 (out of service), as soon as he notified ISO that the truck was not there that fire station would lose its rating and everyone within five road miles of that fire station would have their home owner's insurance doubled. That scenario was in their future if those trucks were not replaced. He was the last man standing that night and he had no good news. Mr. Roseborough asked for the current ISO rating and Mr. Pope said it was a Countywide five. He said if a person lived anywhere in Fairfield County within five miles of a fire station, the rating was five, which was really good – outside of five miles the rating was ten. Mr. Bell asked how good was that because they had areas that did not have water. Mr. Pope said that was correct – someone outside of five road miles was a ten, which meant there was no fire station and it could not get any worse. Regarding their aerial ladder, theirs was the oldest truck in their fleet – it was a 1981-year model. It was over 40 years old and was given to them at no charge. They had it for about 15 years. It had to be inspected every year and for the last two years, it barely passed inspection. The next inspection was due in August or September and he doubted that it would pass, which would mean they would not have a ladder truck in Fairfield County. A new ladder truck would cost one million dollars and they did not need a new ladder truck. He was asking for \$250,000 for a used one. He knew there was an air pack issue and he thought there was a plan to fund through different monies and that was not a new issue. Mr. Pauley asked what was the time limit to replace the air packs and he said now. The City of Columbia replaced their air packs about two to three years ago. They approached the City of Columbia with their issue and they gave them (Fairfield County) all of their serviceable equipment and bought them time. They applied for a federal grant last year and were turned down. After that, he sent Administration an email saying they needed a plan. To replace the entire inventory of air packs, it would cost about one million dollars. Mrs. Greene asked if it could be staggered. Mr. Pope said they had some options. He did not want to speak for a vendor but they had some payment plan options over a three-year period, which would allow them to get all of them at one time and that was a huge advantage when it came to logistics. It was very dangerous to have half of air packs brand new and the other half old – it created interop and training issues and tons of liability. Mr. Pauley asked if he had an update on the Lake Wateree fire station. Mr. Pope

said he and Mrs. Williams were working with one of their engineering consultants on that plan. They had a pretty good timeline but the consultant had not given them the bid package yet because it had to be retooled. As soon as they received it, they were going to put it out for bid and move forward. He said they could build it tomorrow but he would not have a tanker to place there. It would sit empty. Mr. Bell said he was surprised about having to pay the lease for station one fire department. He remembered when Southeastern had the lease and no one would do any repairs to that fire station because it was a leased property. Station one had not been treated that way (Mr. Pope did not have anything to do with it) but it showed how some areas were treated differently than others. He was a member of Southeastern since its inception – they founded that fire department and to know that they had been repairing it and it was under a lease was very sad. They did not do anything with Southeastern until the County bought the property.

Mrs. Bass said she thought that wrapped up all of the departments. She asked Mrs. Williams if she wanted to go through the capital. Mr. Bell asked the Council if they wanted to go through the capital list and when was the next meeting. Mrs. Williams said the next regular Council meeting was Monday and the next budget work session was on Tuesday and they had invited the agencies to come and give quick presentations regarding their requests. They could also try to have answers to some of the questions and there was an additional work session scheduled for May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Bell said as he read Mr. Whitaker's letter on the budget, it said it was \$2.9 million over and the request that came in that night was \$4.2 million. Mr. Whitaker asked if he was referring to the staff requests. Mr. Bell said yes from the department heads. He wanted to remind them that they were one million dollars over revenue if they accepted the 10% cut. He was glad they included the ARP funds because with the previous ARP monies they thought they had about \$635,000 to use for some of the capital but it did not go as they thought it would. It was a lot to consider and as they looked at the requests and they also had to understand the shape the County was in. He asked for a motion to adjourn.

## **V. ADJOURN**

At 9:28 p.m., motion made by Councilman Trapp, seconded by Councilman Roseborough, to adjourn. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

**Note: Councilman Cornelius had to leave the meeting early.**

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KIM W. ROBERTS, Ed. D.  
CLERK TO COUNCIL

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MOSES BELL  
CHAIRMAN