



**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL  
JULY 11, 2022**

**Present:** Moses Bell, Shirley Greene, Cornelius Robinson, Clarence Gilbert, Doug Pauley (Council Members); Malik Whitaker (County Administrator), Charles Boykin (County Attorney); Dr. Kimberly Roberts, Clerk to Council)

**Absent:** Timothy Roseborough

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 two other individuals.

Due to COVID-19 (Coronavirus), the meeting is being live-streamed through the County's YouTube page in order to keep citizens informed.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Bell called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Motion made by Councilman Trapp, seconded by Vice Chair Greene to approve the agenda. ***The motion carried 6-0.*** Mr. Bell announced that Councilman Roseborough was unable to attend the meeting due to health issues.

**3. INVOCATION**

Councilman Pauley led the invocation.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion made by Councilman Trapp, seconded by Councilwoman Greene to approve the minutes from the Inaugural/Regular Meeting June 27, 2022. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

**5. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

None.

**6. 1<sup>ST</sup> PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES): INPUT MUST PERTAIN TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA, FOR WHICH NO PUBLIC HEARING IS REQUIRED OR HAS BEEN SCHEDULED. THE TOTAL TIME ALLOCATED TO THIS PUBLIC COMMENT SEGMENT IS 30 MINUTES.**

Dr. Roberts read the following statement:

Fairfield County Government welcomes public input during appropriate times at County Council meetings. Such input will be allowed in the time, place and manner determined by the Chair of the County Council as the presiding officer. Persons wishing to speak must conduct themselves in the following manner:

Sign up at the appropriate time to speak, refrain from engaging in conduct or speech that seeks to disrupt or disturb the meeting, respect the time limit for the public comment, and refrain from personal attacks or personal statements about any individual(s). Such statements are disruptive because this part of our meeting is not conducive for such exchanges between individuals.

As stated, speakers were expected to express themselves within the time, place and manner previously described. Any violation will result in a warning from the Chair of County Council or the presiding officer. Any failure to heed the warning of the Chair or presiding officer will result in the violating speaker forfeiting their opportunity to finish speaking or to speak during the remainder of the meeting. Council welcomes the comments from members of the public and ask for the cooperation of everyone to allow for the orderly conduct of the people's business.

Dr. Roberts asked the citizens to be mindful of the three-minute timer displayed on the screens to the right and left of the dias.

- Michael Branham - Rezoning
- Pelham Lyles - Rezoning
- Peter Gainey - Rezoning
- Donita Harris - Rezoning
- Jeff Schaffer - Transparency
- Jeremy Harris - Rezoning
- Paul Craig - Rezoning
- Randy Bright – Rezoning

## **7. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None.

## **8. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND ORDERS**

- A.** Third and Final Reading Ordinance No. 795: An Ordinance to Consider the Request to Amend the Fairfield County Land Management Ordinance No. 599 and the Related Zoning Map, to Provide for the Zoning Reclassification From RD-1 (Rural Residential District) to I-1 (Industrial District), For 392.49 Acres of Undeveloped Property Indicated as TMS# 165-00-01-016-000, Owned by Gum Springs, LLC. Motion made by Councilman Trapp, seconded by Councilwoman Greene. Mr. Whitaker

read for their consideration: their Community Development and Economic Development staff had continued to critically think about their merging Planning and Zoning needs. As staff, they understood and appreciated the community's concerns about the potential rezoning. They also understood the need for balance in the Fairfield County approach and desire for smart and sustainable growth and the desire to maintain the beauty and unique character the County had for its resident's enjoyment. To that regard, in working with land owners and entities that may purchase land zoned industrially, they wanted the Council and community to consider the following – (from a zoning perspective) Fairfield County had a buffer yard requirement for all developments and those buffer yards could be quite dense depending on the industry. The strictest buffer yard was 100 feet but it would depend on the industry. He noted that the buffers could include walls. The buffer yard requirement would not be enacted until there was an actual project and then the County would work with the landowner to determine the applicable buffer yard. They had an ordinance on minimum buffer yards and they could always require stricter buffers as conditions for approving a project. From the Economic Development consideration, should Fairfield County be involved in a project (Mr. Willoughby stated there was no project currently being considered), with the Gum Springs property they would require the prospective industry to meet set landscaping and buffer requirements. Depending on the prospective industry, those recommended requirements could be increased to be more stringent. Staff suggested that no matter the industry, at a minimum, they should require the following:

- No less than 100 feet of buffer alongside US HWY 34
- No less than 25 feet of buffer alongside Gum Springs and Devil's Racetrack
- Vegetation to include both canopy trees and shrubs
- Maintenance and compliance with buffer requirements to be enforced by Fairfield County

Mr. Whitaker said Mr. Willoughby responded to some of the questions that might be helpful:

**Q:** How would the County require this of a company?

**A.** Just as the incentives they offered in the past were tied to investment amounts and the number of jobs created, the County could also tie those incentives to landscape requirements (or anything else they saw fit). Should they fail to meet those requirements, the County could clawback the incentives provided.

**Q.** But isn't the land privately owned?

**A.** Yes, the land was privately owned but the County was still capable of providing economic development incentives to projects located on private land.

**Q.** How do these proposed requirements differ from what the county already requires?

**A.** Currently buffer and landscaping requirements for industrial districts alongside main roads range from 20 – 100 feet. At a minimum, they would require a company to comply with the maximum length that was currently in their land management ordinance.

He said he wanted to offer some ways the County could support buffering as a means of making sure the potential industrial use did not disturb the residents. Mr. Whitaker thanked him and his staff for looking at ways to accommodate the needs of the community and any forthcoming projects.

Mr. Pauley thanked everyone who spoke. Their words definitely showed their love for Fairfield County and their community. Those words were definitely from the heart and he thanked them. He said he would read what he read the last time. He said they needed to make sure that the residential communities were not destroyed by commercial properties. He repeated that they needed to make sure that the residential communities were not destroyed by commercial properties. The citizens living in that area were living there for peace and it not being commercial. At that present time, there was no one interested in the property. The Planning Commission voted unanimously not to rezone the property and Council should do the same.

Mr. Gilbert asked if there had been a road study completed to see if the roads would be able to handle the large trucking. Mr. Willoughby said the study would come after a project was there. There would be a traffic study required depending on the amount of traffic the project would use – DOT would get requirements for updates to the road. Mr. Gilbert said his understanding was it should be done before the rezoning. Changing an area from residential to industrial required a road study be completed first. Mr. Willoughby said he was not sure on the rezoning part of road studies. Mr. Gilbert said if they checked the law, he thought there should be a road study before a rezoning and for that reason his vote would be no on that project.

Mr. Pauley said to Mr. Whitaker that he appreciated the comments he made and if they had those comments before they had a public hearing and had them explained to the residents the buffer process,

they would have had the opportunity to ask questions. He said personally he did not see the need with no one interested in the property that night that it could be tabled and have another hearing with the information he (Whitaker) provided that night to the residents where they could come and ask questions about the buffers and the different things that would be required for the property. Mr. Bell asked if he was looking for an answer from Mr. Whitaker. Mr. Pauley asked if they could table it and have some kind of meeting based on the information that he (Whitaker) provided that the citizens could ask questions about the buffers and the rights they would have according to their property. Mr. Bell said he did not mind tabling it if the Council agreed to do so, but what he did not understand was that on July 8, 2019, Council (with the exception of Mr. Trapp and Moses Bell) voted 5-2 to rezone 11.2 acres on Airport Road in Airport community to put in an incinerator. There was no road study done and they voted to do so when they knew it would be an incinerator that would cause health issues to the public. Now, all of a sudden, when everyone had told them (economic development folks) that the County needed that land rezoned. Every member of Council knew that – all of them sitting on that stage knew the property needed to be rezoned. They were trying to make a political statement. They had Mr. Whitaker and the economic development folks to look at a way whereby they could accommodate the citizens and a project if it came to them. They ran all of those laps that week. He and Mrs. Greene went out and looked at the property to see how best to proceed. They all knew that it was in the best interest for that County for economic development to have a parcel of land that was 392 acres, that had rail accessibility, water, sewage, utilities and high speed broadband. They had always voted together for those types of things but if they wanted to table it, he would go with it. Mrs. Greene said she had a point of order – essentially, there was a motion on the table. Mr. Bell said right, they were in discussion so he (Pauley) could proceed. Mr. Pauley said to Mr. Bell that he stated that the County voted in favor 5-2 of putting in an incinerator. Mr. Bell said the vote was for rezoning. He had the minutes in case he wanted to see them. Mr. Pauley said the vote was for rezoning but the incinerator was not there, correct? Mr. Bell said it was not there. Mr. Pauley said once the citizens protested the incinerator, the vote was changed, correct? Mr. Bell said the vote was changed after they went down there and looked and he did not think he attended. Mr. Pauley said but the vote was changed and Mr. Bell said yes. Mr. Pauley said and the incinerator was not on the property and Mr. Bell said no but he (Pauley) voted to rezone it to put the

incinerator there. Mr. Pauley asked if the incinerator was there now and Mr. Bell asked if he voted. Mr. Pauley asked if the end vote was unanimous not to put the incinerator there and Mr. Bell said that was good. Mr. Pauley said 7-0. Mr. Bell asked for any other discussion and said there was a motion on the floor. He asked for those in favor and Mr. Pauley asked if the motion was to table it. Mr. Bell said no that motion was not on the floor. Mr. Pauley said his vote was no. ***The motion carried 4-2 with Councilmen Pauley and Gilbert voting nay (by show of hands).*** Mr. Bell said let the record show 4-2 in favor of rezoning.

**9. BOARD AND COMMISSION MINUTES**

None.

**10. BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS**

Disabilities & Special Needs – Edwinda Goodman, District 6. Motion made by Councilwoman Greene, seconded by Councilman Trapp. Mr. Robinson said he talked to Councilman Roseborough because he already had a representative for District 6 so Ms. Goodman would be the representative for District 4. Mr. Bell said he did not hear him and asked him to repeat. Mr. Robinson said he already had a representative for District 6 but he spoke to Mr. Roseborough. Mr. Pauley said he thought before when Mr. Gilbert tried to do the same thing (use someone from his area to represent his district), it was said it could not be done. Mr. Bell said he did not think that was said and asked Mr. Gilbert if he withdrew it. Mr. Gilbert responded off mic. ***The motion carried 4-2 with Councilmen Pauley and Gilbert voting nay.*** Mr. Bell said 4-2 in favor of the appointment.

**11. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**12. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**13. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

**A. Rural Stabilization Fund** - Mr. Whitaker said due to the recent census and the shifting of populations into the state and throughout the state, the General Assembly put \$12 million into a Rural County Stabilization Fund. Under that proviso, any county that had population growth, as determined by the 2020 census of less than 5.35% since the 2010 census shall be eligible to receive monies from the fund as follows: a baseline (about 35 counties experienced negative population growth), the population growth



in the state was about eight areas and Fairfield County lost about 12%. A baseline of \$300,000 to each eligible County, an additional \$100,000 to eligible counties with a population between 50,000 and 99,999 (they did not fit in that category) and an additional \$200,000 to eligible counties with a population of more than 100,000. He said under the Rural Stabilization Fund, Fairfield County should receive around \$351,000 to help them work on issues around population. Currently, County Administration was thinking strategically about how to leverage those funds for capacity building. They would come back to Council with a plan and he thanked the General Assembly for putting that money aside for Fairfield County. They should be presenting something within the next month or so.

- B. Earmarked Funding** – Mr. Whitaker acknowledged Senator Fanning, Mr. Bell and Jason Pope. He said before he brought up Senator Fanning to share some good news about an earmark request pertaining to their fire services department, he asked their Fire Service Director, Jason Pope, to briefly update them on the deadly crash on I-77 southbound in Fairfield County that caused significant traffic delays and a chemical spill. He said while Mr. Pope was coming to the podium (on behalf of Fairfield County), he wanted to thank Leonardo Brown (Richland County Administrator) and the team led by Columbia-Richland Fire Chief Aubrey Jenkins for the leadership and support they offered to the County during the crisis.

Mr. Pope said the plan was to offer a basic timeline for the incident on Thursday morning on the interstate. On Thursday morning about 3:50am, their County fire units were dispatched to a reported tractor-trailer fire on Interstate 77, just south of the 32-mile marker. The units found two vehicles involved – a pickup truck and a tractor-trailer, both of which were on fire. One person was unfortunately entrapped in the pickup truck. There were also Sheriff's officers on the scene. They arrived ahead of their fire units and did what they could to rescue the entrapped person, however, they were unsuccessful. It was confirmed with the Coroner that the result of death was blunt force trauma – the accident was the cause of death and not the fire. It was a terrible situation but a bit more of a relief to the Sheriff's office that even if they had gotten him out, there was nothing they could have done. Their crew began fire suppression and once they started, they discovered an unknown product being transported in the trailer. They immediately called for the Columbia Fire Department for mutual aid. They needed help specifically with identifying the product. The Fairfield County service had very limited technical capabilities – technical hazmat, technical rescue they were not staffed or equipped to handle those kinds of incidents. When they had a hazmat incident on the interstate they had to call for outside help. If it had been closer to Chester County, they would have called someone in Chester County. It was standard procedure to call someone in

for technical support. Both southbound lanes were shut down and the Sheriff's office began clearing the interstate and closing down access. Once the units from the Columbia Fire Department arrived, together they made the call to cease firefighting operations and to close all lanes of the interstate (north and southbound) until they could identify the product. At that point, the Sheriff's office had nine traffic control points in order to reroute traffic around the interstate. It was a huge lift for them and they did a wonderful job with controlling the incident and getting the cars off the interstate. At approximately 7:50am, they ordered a shelter in place for a one-mile radius around the incident location and about 30 minutes later, they added the Town of Ridgeway. The reason was due to a very low cloud ceiling – the weather was not in their favor. They did not know at that time what the smoke was and it was not going anywhere. Normally, it would go up, dissipate and go out with no harm to anyone but the smoke was lingering down low. They had to move their instant command post to get out of it. Because the product was unknown, they decided to order a shelter in place. They continued working to contact the trucking company to identify the product. At about 9:30am, they had a positive confirmation of the product from the trucking company. Before that, all they knew was the trucking company, the driver's name and where he was headed. The produce in the truck was ammonium sulfate. Together with the Columbia Fire Department, they developed an action plan on the next steps. By 10:30am, they had the fire contained (not out but contained) and they lifted the shelter in place for both areas. Shortly after that, they reopened the northbound lanes. They worked with the towing and recovery partners and the Coroner's office to remove the vehicle on scene that had the fatality. They removed the vehicle from the scene and conducted the victim extrication at a separate site. They extinguished the fire and removed the tractor-trailer from the roadway. Their start time was 3:50am and their last unit cleared the scene around 2:30pm. They turned the scene over to highway patrol and left. It was a multi-agency response. The County fire department had 11 people on scene – six were volunteer firefighters, some of which were present at the meeting (Melissa and Glen Adams, Dewayne Bell, Ruby Bell, Caroline, Jay Joyner, and Butch McGraw a retiree). Those and others worked tirelessly until the job was done. He could not say enough about their volunteer firefighters and the work they did – they needed a lot more of them. The mutual aid from the Columbia Fire Department was invaluable. They provided the technical assistance needed in addition to the man-power. They had multi-agency response – from Fairfield County, they had fire, EMS, rescue squad, Sheriff's office and the Emergency Management division. The State partners involved were the highway patrol, SC transport police, DOT and DHEC. They conducted an



after action meeting with most of the departments attending. They discussed what went well as well as areas of improvement. He asked for questions and there were none. Mr. Bell thanked him and the agencies for their work and the volunteers. Mr. Pauley thanked him for all that was done that day from the first responders. Mrs. Greene said thank you. Mr. Gilbert commended the first responders for their heroic response to the accident. They put their lives on the line for the citizens of Fairfield County and he appreciated them. Their service should not go unnoticed.

Mr. Whitaker said Fairfield County had many capital needs and they were working diligently to inventory and systematically address those needs. Fire and rescue services were one of their most critical public safety services that any community could provide and the men and women who heroically performed those services needed proper and safe equipment to perform that work. To that regard, he invited Chairman Bell and Senator Mike Fanning to share some good news about an equipment request for the fire services department. Mr. Bell acknowledged the Fire Chief from Southeastern, Dewayne Bell, and Jaime Webb, who could not be there. He asked all of the volunteer firefighters to stand. He also acknowledged Melissa Adams – she scheduled a training session with Southeastern and Ridgeway and she invited Senator Fanning. (Pictures of the session were displayed on the screen). He said Senator Fanning attended the training at least once a year. When he wrote the request to ask for funding for air packs (they needed \$1 million), Senator Fanning could not provide \$1 million but he knew the need and went through the process to get them some aid. Mr. Bell said the citizens needed to be aware that the air packs would cost about \$1 million and Senator Fanning secured \$400,000 towards that project. They could purchase the air packs on a timed schedule. With that money towards air packs, they could use the upcoming ARPA money towards a fire tanker. He said this works. He and Jason talked about how this was a team effort to get these things done. He thanked everyone for their work and thanked Melissa for organizing the training and getting Senator Fanning to the training.

Senator Fanning asked all of the firefighters and Representative Annie McDaniel to join him at the podium. He said although it was a Senate proviso, she made sure it made it through the House or they would not have it. He said for too long people said they supported first responders and then they did not do it. He was not talking about Fairfield but as a teacher, he heard it all the time – we support public education, but in South Carolina, they never do. They did not spend the money in education. That year in South Carolina, they were the only State that did not give teachers a raise – the biggest teacher shortage ever. It offended him when people said they supported public education but they did not put their money

where their mouth was. That day they just heard about one of the greatest fire horror stories in years in South Carolina – in Fairfield County. He received calls all weekend from folks across the State because they were watching. They kept saying he did not know how big of a problem it was. After about the 20<sup>th</sup> phone call, he did. Their firefighters did something that firefighters across the State had not had to tackle before. It was one thing to say thank you but the other was to do something about it. He thanked every member of Council and Chairman Bell. He said when the Senate did earmarks, every county got a turn and this year was Fairfield County's turn to get money in the State budget. He called Chairman Bell and asked what should be his priority in the Senate and he said first responders – their fire firefighters. He sent him to Jason Pope, who used the word "air packs" more times in one minute than had ever been used in the history of the world. He sent him to Melissa and the Ridgeway Fire Department and put him through the training. They did not want to just tell him about the 253 air packs that had a 15-year life expectancy (they were almost at the end of that). Mr. Bell said they were at the end – past due. Senator Fanning said they strapped one of the air packs on him, which weighed 10,000 pounds and it was 15 years old and it was not much air left in the air pack. They then blindfolded him and ran him through an obstacle course. At the end of that, he was exhausted and they said to him - you know why we need the air packs. He said again, it was one thing to say they supported their first responders and it was another thing to say what the needs were. He appreciated Chairman Bell connecting him to Jason and Melissa to show him why the air packs were so essential and the fact that 253 were past life expectancy. He said they did a great job in hiring Malik Whitaker, who just described almost \$400,000 in rural money coming to Fairfield County. That was \$400,000 non-Fairfield tax dollars coming to Fairfield County. The money he was talking about then was another \$400,000 non-Fairfield tax money coming into Fairfield County to meet a need. Because of that request, because Jason said air packs to me every day for years and because of the sheer torture that Melissa put him through, they were proud to announce that they had \$400,000 coming to Fairfield County. He could not leave out his tag team partner, Representative McDaniel, who promised him she would wear an air pack that night but she left it in the car. He said please know that he could not take credit because he got it to the Senate but it meant nothing if it did not get through the House. They had a team in Fairfield County. No matter what happened other times or what happened earlier that night, do not let the divisiveness override what was really happening in Fairfield County. There were a lot of good things happening – they had a great Administration in place and an outstanding top in the State fire department that was doing amazing things. Because

they were working together, he was excited to announce that they now had \$400,000 in State money coming back to Fairfield County for one of their biggest needs (air packs for their first responders) – he was told they would get the check in September. He closed by saying just as it bothered them to hear they support first responders without action, he was happy to see that in Fairfield County, they not only say they support their first responders but they did.

- C. Spec Building Contract (**ACTION ITEM**) – Mrs. Williams said they recently put out a request for qualifications for construction management at risk contract to construct a 100,000 square foot speculative building, which would be located on parcel 9 of the Fairfield Commerce Center. A selection panel reviewed the six submittals and rated them based on qualifications. THS Contractors received the highest score and was recommended by the selection committee. They were asking Council to approve moving forward with signing the contract with THS Contractors to complete the construction of the speculative building on parcel 9. Motion made by Councilman Robinson to approve, seconded by Councilwoman Greene. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

- D. Wastewater Update – Mrs. Williams said they made great progress on the wastewater treatment plant project and she wanted to provide Council with a quick summary of where they were and where they were going. She said they were aware of the settlement with Dominion that put aside \$45 million for the wastewater treatment plant. Last year, the County and the Town of Winnsboro worked together to create the Fairfield Joint Water and Sewer system, which they called the Joint System, an independent political subdivision that would be managing the wastewater treatment plant in the long term. Winnsboro, the County and the Joint System were currently in negotiations for a master project participation agreement that would cover construction and operation of the wastewater treatment facility. In the meantime, the parties identified an opportunity to maximize the funding available for the project and to make progress on a few critical pieces of the puzzle. Namely, they believed there may be grant money available to fund approximately \$20 million of the project. Accordingly, the parties had been working together to seek grant funding for the line that would ultimately connect Ridgeway and the Commerce Park area to the joint system's future infrastructure. To that end, they (the County) signed a contract with American Engineering Consultants, Inc. to provide a preliminary design of the Ridgeway connector line and related infrastructure. American Engineering would also prepare a South Carolina Infrastructure Investment Program (SCIIP) application for grant funds to construct a portion of the Joint System. The SCIIP grant was funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and they believed the Joint

System project was a strong candidate. American Engineering would prepare the application on behalf of both Fairfield County and the Town of Ridgeway. At that time, they had only engaged American Engineering for preliminary engineering work and the SCIIP grant application. The preliminary engineering was a requisite step to construct the Joint System regardless of the course of action they decided to take when the preliminary engineering work was completed. After the engineering was completed, they planned to pursue the project on the following terms, which would be negotiated in a separate agreement that they would present to Council before signing. The grant funds would require a 15% match from the local government (Fairfield). The design of the construction line would be paid for from the settlement funds, if applicable, and would count towards the 15% match. They notified Dominion that they intended to use the settlement funds for that purpose. Once constructed, the Joint System would own the line – not the Town of Winnsboro. However, because the Joint System currently lacks staff and equipment to operate the line, the Joint System would lease the line to the Town of Winnsboro for a nominal sum until the new wastewater treatment plant was constructed. The lease payment would only be a nominal amount but the Town of Winnsboro would have to maintain and operate the line at its own expense during the lease period. During the lease period, the line would carry wastewater to Winnsboro's existing plant. Winnsboro would fund the maintenance and operation on the line out of Winnsboro's revenue from treating wastewater carried by the line. When the Joint System's new plant was ready, Winnsboro's lease would end. Winnsboro would reverse the flow in the line to send the effluent to the Joint System's new plant for treatment, which would be necessary to get the new plant up and running. At that point, the Joint System would pay the costs for maintaining the line. They would not begin construction or commit to a construction contract until the terms referenced above were memorialized in writing. Before any such contract was signed, they would present it to Council for full discussion.

Mr. Bell thanked Mr. Whitaker and Mrs. Williams and said it was a big deal. He thanked staff for all of the work they were doing. He encouraged Council to ask questions if they had any. The documents were signed for the design of the line.

#### **14. CLERK TO COUNCIL'S REPORT**

None.

#### **15. COUNTY COUNCIL TIME**

Mr. Gilbert said in the last meeting, he was told that it was in their bylaws that they could not ask the Administrator questions if it was not on the agenda. He read the bylaws and he did not see it anywhere. Everyone knew he was an



advocate for the employees of Fairfield County. He said to Mr. Whitaker that a department head position was filled by an employee that was still under the probationary status. His understanding was that he had not been evaluated and a former deputy and another qualified employee was overlooked for the position. It was also his understanding that one of the employees resigned. In policy EP6, it stated it was their policy to provide a planned orientation program for all new employees. The program would provide in-processing necessary for bringing a new employee on board as well as helping the new employee feel at home, a part of the team and to provide information concerning what the organization expects of him. All new employees would be given a probationary period for one year or less. The period allows supervisors time to evaluate each new employee's adjustment to and ability to perform the job. The probationary period was not a guarantee of employment for one year. His understanding was that the employee had not been evaluated. He said there was a personnel action policy also (2-B) that stated it was also the desire of the County to utilize each employee to their fullest potential and to encourage and foster personal development and advancement. To that end, selection officials shall fully consider all qualified employees, regardless of department of assignment, who apply for job vacancies. Personnel action 3-B stated if feasible, certain job vacancies would be filled from within. That would have a positive effect on morale, demonstrate a desire to reorganize employee loyalty and encourage personal development of employees. The question you must ask yourself was were you making a sound decision for improvement for a department and county? Would promoting a probationary employee to the top position be sound if he had not been graded effectively in the technical position yet? Was this employee the most technical employee in the candidate pool? Would the promotion of this candidate have a positive effect on morale, demonstrate a desire to recognize employee loyalty and encourage personnel development of an employee? If the answer was no, then you would be hurting the following elements in your workforce morale. New employees move over a long-term employees – seniority time with the county did not matter. Work ethics – why have a good work ethic if it will be overlooked.

Mr. Pauley addressed Chairman Bell and members of Council. He said he spoke that night on several issues concerning Fairfield County and the taxpayers. On June 3, 2022, the Council received an email from the Administrator addressing issues at the animal shelter. In the email, he stated the County strived not to euthanize animals due to space constraints. The current state of overcrowding necessitated the decision. At a meeting after the email, he (Pauley) made a motion to help animal control and provide some type of funding with help for air conditioners from an account that was found with \$187,000 in it and they did nothing. They did use \$11,000 for the repaving of a basketball court and other recreational items but nothing for animal control. Four options were



given on how to help with that problem. At the last Council meeting, Mr. Innis (the Director) gave an awesome presentation on conditions at the animal shelter and what they needed to do. Still, on the agenda that night, there was nothing scheduled to discuss animal control in Fairfield County. Pictures posted that morning showed animals standing in mud and other harsh conditions. He thought they actually cut their budget by 10%. He said thank you to Senator Fanning for the \$400,000 for the air packs and what he did for fire services in Fairfield County but he still needed to address first responders. They did not fund anything for first responders in the budget. Sheriff Montgomery sent every Council member a letter describing the rate at which he was losing good employees. In the exit interviews, they stated they loved working there but needed to make more money. In the past month, highway patrol, DNR, Chester County and others had raised salaries and committed to sign-on bonuses. Nothing was on the agenda or had been scheduled to address that issue. He was speaking for all first responders. Jason Pope had been told for three years that there was no money for a fire marshal but they created a position for a custodian at \$52,000 for the new administration building. They also created a position for a Deputy Director at the Detention Center for \$90,000. If they had spoken to Mr. Caulder (Director of HR), he could have told them that the position was done away with years ago and the reason. They opened the recycling centers up for \$75,000. In closing, he thought the Council needed to address those issues very, very soon. They could not continue to move forward without addressing the issues that were brought before them.

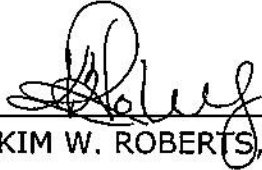
Mrs. Greene said she wanted to address some of the things talked about in terms of the Gum Springs Road the decision moving forward. When they looked at economic development, as the Chair of the Economic Development Committee, they were certainly looking at the proximity of a site to I-77. That was very important in terms of the attributes that many corporations were looking for. Knowing that there was existing infrastructure there was also important in terms of water, sewer, electricity, utilities and such. There was also a sense of ease of development – the site was sufficient for quick development. The size was the kind that a lot of industries in the \$100,000 million to \$2 billion dollar investment pool was looking for. She knew it was a difficult decision and many of the people who spoke that night had left but she thought when looking at investments in Fairfield County that it was a decision that would benefit them in the future. She just wanted to make that statement. Mr. Bell thank the first responders and for their work.

**16. EXECUTIVE SESSION: (The following statement is provided in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act:**

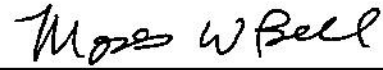
**Subsequent to Executive Session, Council may take action on matters discussed in Executive Session.) None.**

**ADJOURN**

At 7:19 p.m., motion made by Councilman Trapp, seconded by Councilwoman Greene, to adjourn. ***The motion carried 6-0.***



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



MOSES BELL  
CHAIRMAN