



**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
DECEMBER 11, 2017**

Present: Billy Smith, Doug Pauley, Neil Robinson, Jimmy Ray Douglas, Dan W. Ruff, Mikel Trapp, Bertha Goins, Council Members; Jason Taylor, County Administrator; Davis Anderson, Deputy County Administrator; Tommy Morgan, County Attorney; Patti L. Davis, Clerk to Council.

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 twenty seven other individuals.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Smith called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Council Member Trapp and seconded by Vice Chair Goins to approve the Agenda. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

3. INVOCATION

Council Member Douglas led the invocation.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Council Member Trapp and seconded by Council Member Pauley to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of November 27, 2017. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

5. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

None.

- 6. 1ST PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES):** All public comments made during this session must pertain to items on the agenda for which no Public Hearing is scheduled. Each speaker is allocated three (3) minutes for comment. The total time allocated for the public comment portion of the meeting is thirty (30) minutes. Those wishing to make public comment must sign to do so prior to the Council Chair calling the meeting to order. The Clerk to Council will make a public comment sign-up sheet available at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the meeting.

- Jeff Morris - Hospital Agreement

7. Public Hearings

- A.** To Authorize Fairfield County to Purchase and Develop Approximately 336 Acres of Real Property Tax Map No. 057-00-00-003 (Part); Tax Map No. 041-00-00-

024; Tax Map No. 041-00-00-023, to be Used for Economic Development Projects, and Other Related Matters. **NOTE:** Public hearing amended from original advertisement which stated total acreage of 508. Chairman Smith opened the public hearing at 6:05 p.m. Ms. Yvette Howard signed to speak and was called to the podium. No one else signed to speak concerning the public hearing matter; therefore, motion was made by Council Member Ruff, seconded by Council Member Douglas, to close the public hearing at 6:06 p.m. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

8. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND ORDERS

- A. Third and Final Reading Ordinance No. 689** - An Ordinance to Amend Ordinance No. 404 and Subsequently Ordinance No. 529 to Reduce the Number of Members on the Fairfield County Council on Aging Board from Nine (9) Members to Seven (7) Members. It was moved by Council Member Trapp and seconded by Vice Chair Goins to approve Third and Final Reading of Ordinance No. 689. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

9. BOARD AND COMMISSION MINUTES

Library Commission and Hospital Board. It was moved by Council Member Robinson and seconded by Council Member Trapp to approve the minutes as presented. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

10. BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

- A. Disabilities and Special Needs** - Appointment of Mrs. Shirley Greene – District 2. It was moved by Council Member Trapp, seconded by Council Member Pauley to approve the appointment. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.*** Mrs. Shirley Greene was appointed to the Disabilities and Special Needs Board representing District 2.

11. OLD BUSINESS

None.

12. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Escrow Agreement in Support of Providence Emergency Center.** Chairman Smith asked Mr. Taylor to explain this matter further. As part of the Transformation Agreement with Providence Hospital, an escrow agreement must be entered to set aside the money to fund the arrangement. The County obtained quotes from four (4) groups to include BB&T, Chicago Title, Regions Bank and US Bank, and recommendation is made to Council to proceed with BB&T. After due diligence, it was found that BB&T is the most cost effective option and had the least requirements, including \$1000 per year and the County would retain any interest income based on the escrow agreement. Per legal advice, no action by Council is needed as this is part of the Agreement already in place.

13. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

A. Tax Assessor Department Overview and Update - By Director, Mr. Randy Roberts. Mr. Roberts thanked the Council for the opportunity to speak concerning the department. He presented the following information to Council:

- Functions of the Assessor's Office:
 - Values land/improvements within the county jurisdiction with some valuations being handled by the Department of Revenue.
 - Processes applications for exemptions with legal residence and agricultural use being the primary exemptions. Exemptions are also processed that are approved by the Department of Revenue.
 - Processes all deed transfers including property splits and straight transfers.
 - Processes most permits for new construction with some also being processed by the Department of Revenue.
 - Maintains and updates GIS layers.
 - Prints maps for the public and other County departments as needed.
 - Enters information needed for the auditor's office to generate bills for rollback taxes.
 - Estimates taxes for real estate closings.
 - Issues permits to move mobile homes.
 - Sells GIS and CAMA data. A fee is charged depending on how the data is used.
 - Provides information to the public, to include taxpayers, abstractors, appraisers, attorneys, surveyors, mortgage companies and realtors, with many individuals also utilizing the department's website.
 - Provides information to other county departments, to include code enforcement, auditor, treasurer, tax collector, E911, fire service, administration, economic development, etc.
 - Maintains and updates CAMA package, which is the software used to do evaluations of land and improvements.
 - Processes appeals which usually requires a visit to the property.
 - Damage assessments from natural disasters.
 - Countywide reassessment once every five years with next assessment to be held 2020 and will include sales from January 1, 2015, through December 31, 2019.
- Legal Authority: The department operates under Title 12 of the S.C. Code of Laws and Chapter 117 of the Code of Regulations. The assessor's duties and responsibilities are listed under 12-37-90, reassessment is listed under 12-37-50 and legal residence and agricultural exemption is listed under 12-43-220. General requirements for ratio study is listed under Code of Regulations 117-1720.2 and Cadastral maps and parcel identifiers under Code of Regulation 117-1740.2. For further information, the public can visit <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/code/statmast.php>.

- Compliance:
 - S.C. Department of Revenue: Approves reassessment program, audits records at anytime, provides updates of legislative changes, values all manufacturing properties in the County.
 - S.C. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulations (LLR): Tracks continuing education and receives payment for license renewal.
 - Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP): Operates under Standard 6 for Mass Appraisal.
- Assessor's Office employees:
 - Jeff Bruorton with 11 years of experience, GIS Manager and Certified Residential Mass Appraiser.
 - Guerry Hensley, Deputy Assessor, with 8 years of experience and a Certified Residential Mass Appraiser.
 - Jessica Alford, Administrative Assistant, with 4 years of experience.
 - Randy Roberts with 27 years of experience in county government including Richland, Lexington, Kershaw and Fairfield Counties with a Certified General Mass Appraiser's license.

Mr. Roberts thanked the Council again for the opportunity to speak at tonight's meeting and asked if there were any questions. Council Member Pauley asked Mr. Roberts to explain the process of rollback taxes. If someone is receiving the agricultural exemption and any of the property is used to build a home, for example, the taxes would be rolled back on the portion used for the home for five years and appraised at the market value as opposed to the agricultural value. Rollback taxes are required by State law. Council Member Douglas asked who decides if a raise is needed in property taxes as it appears they are raised every five years. Per Mr. Roberts, the department reviews it, reviews the sales to see if a change is warranted, which is capped at 15% increase. Council Member Douglas also inquired concerning changing the method of assessing new construction mid-year in 2015 and where in the State statute does it state that this can be changed mid-year and not during the reassessment year. Some processes were changed and Mr. Roberts would need to refer to his records for specifics. Further, a process can be changed whenever it is deemed necessary by the assessor's office. Mr. Roberts began his employment with Fairfield County in February 2013, following which some changes were made. The changes were discussed with the Department of Revenue and changes were approved. Any potential changes were also discussed with the County Administrator. Discussion ensued concerning the method of obtaining assessments. Some assumptions must be made when measuring the structures. Chairman Smith thanked Mr. Roberts for his presentation.

B. 2017 CDBG Needs Assessment Report - Per Mr. Taylor, each year to qualify for community development block grants that the state offers to counties/municipalities, the information must be taken before Council and to the public to determine the priorities. Several categories are given and must be ranked, including the following categories:

1. Community infrastructure: Contains most of the money, \$10m per year available, and this includes roads, water, sewer, etc. Up to \$750,000 can be obtained.

2. Community enrichment: \$3m for libraries, fire stations, buildings that would improve the community. Up to \$500,000 can be obtained.
3. Neighborhood revitalization: \$1.2m and up to \$500,000 can be obtained. This area is highly competitive.
4. Special projects: For immediate need, gap financing to complete a project.

Council should primarily look at #1, #2 and #3 to prioritize need. Mrs. Laura Johnson reported on the 2017 needs survey. The survey was distributed through Fairfield Behavioral Health Services, Council on Aging, Disabilities and Special Needs, Administration Building and other County buildings. It was also advertised via handbills on the counter and pizza boxes at a local restaurant, announced at churches and other local organizations, local cable network and flyers mailed to churches. The survey covered 15 areas of potential need and for each area, there were between 11 and 21 questions to be completed, with ranking of no need, low need, moderate need or critical need. A total of 42 surveys were completed and returned. Most surveys listed the following as critical needs: Job creation and job training, water, emergency medical services, healthcare and police services. Mr. Taylor informed the Council that this will be on the agenda for the next meeting to ask Council to rank and vote on the urgent needs of the County. Council Member Ruff was surprised at such a low number of questionnaires returned. Per Mrs. Johnson, this process is completely voluntary, and even though the surveys are handed out, it is up to the individual to complete and return.

14. CLERK TO COUNCIL'S REPORT

The Clerk reminded Council of the Intergovernmental Meeting hosted by Town of Winnsboro to be held on Wednesday, December 13, 2017, 6:30 p.m. at the Women's Club building.

- 15. 2ND PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES):** All public comments made during this session must pertain to items not on the agenda or under Council's consideration. Each speaker is allocated three (3) minutes for comment. The total time allocated for the public comment portion of the meeting is thirty (30) minutes. Those wishing to make public comment must sign to do so prior to the Council Chair calling the meeting to order. The Clerk to Council will make a public comment sign-up sheet available at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the meeting.

- Jeff Morris - Counsel for Council
- Yvette Howard - Transparency

16. COUNTY COUNCIL TIME

Ruff: Questioned what happened to the 2 acres to be donated by the Presbyterian Church. Per Mr. Taylor, the church has not donated this property at the present time. This will most likely be revisited. Council Member Douglas added that the church was to donate 2.17 acres and he has a meeting with the parties after January 6. Council Member Ruff further questioned why the Council jumped ahead from the donated property to the purchase of the 14 acres. Council Member

Douglas further commented that the process was taking longer than expected for the donated acreage from the church and he was attempting to find an alternate area for the fire station; however, there were stipulations on the 14 acres. Council Member Ruff feels that going forward, patience should be practiced in this endeavor.

Douglas: Commented concerning the \$1m a year for the emergency room. This is not an investment to make money. The Council has supported the emergency room possibly since its existence. No more is being paid, only what has been paid in the past.

Goins: Reminder concerning the Community Meeting on December 16, this Saturday, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Jenkinsville Recreation Center on Highway 215. Everyone is welcome to come and participate in this community discussion. Also, with this being our last meeting of the year, she thanks God for the journey so far with the County team and the community. She has learned a lot concerning government structure and operation and the wheels of government move very slowly. She also asked the community to be encouraged, because Fairfield County is by no means finished. Be encouraged and get ready to work for the best county in South Carolina.

Smith: Understands the concerns regarding the hospital agreement. All the noted concerns were raised throughout the process as evidenced by the fact that this was listed on the agenda several times and disappeared a few times which signified returning to the table for more discussion. The fact is that if the present agreement were not in place, there would be no deal, and in a year there would be no emergency room in Fairfield County. He does appreciate the concerns and hopes everyone understands. He also wished everyone a good holiday season.

17. 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.)

At 6:40 p.m., it was moved by Council Member Ruff and seconded by Vice Chair Goins to go into executive session for (a) Legal Matter - Concerning Potential Litigation against SCANA/SCE&G in reference to the Abandoned V.C. Summer new Nuclear Project. The contractual matter involving the escrow agreement no longer needs to be discussed in executive session. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

At 6:55 p.m., it was moved by Council Member Trapp and seconded by Council Member Robinson to come out of executive session and return to open session. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

There was no action taken in executive session.

18. ADJOURN

At 6:56 p.m., it was moved by Council Member Robinson, properly seconded by

Council Member Douglas to adjourn. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

PATTI L. DAVIS
CLERK TO COUNCIL

WILLIAM B. SMITH, JR.
CHAIRMAN