



**MINUTES
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING
JULY 15, 2013**

Present: David L. Ferguson, R. David Brown, Mary Lynn Kinley, Kamau Marcharia, Carolyn B. Robinson, Mikel R. Trapp, Council Members; Davis Anderson, Deputy County Administrator; John E. James III, County Attorney; Michael Kozlarek, Parker Poe Adams Bernstein.

Shryll M. Brown (was present at the opening of the meeting; however, she was excused from the meeting at the point when Council entered executive session).

Dwayne Perry (was not present at the opening of the meeting; however, he joined Council in executive session).

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 Herald-Independent, The State, and Winnsboro Cablevision, and sixty-four other individuals.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ferguson called the meeting to order at 5:08 P.M.

2. INVOCATION

Council Member Kinley led in the invocation.

3. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Executive Session: Receive Legal Advice

At 5:09 P.M., it was moved by Council Member Robinson; seconded by Council Member Kinley to go in executive session to receive legal advice. The motion carried unanimously.

At 8:04 P.M., it was moved by Council Member Trapp; seconded by Council Member Kinley to come out of executive session and return to open session. The motion carried unanimously.

{Chairman Ferguson reported that Council Member Brown was not feeling well and left to go home after executive session.}

B. Recreation Discussion

Marcharia:

- Last time Council met, Council received a copy of the engineer's pricing sheet.
- Several remarks were made that Council come back; look at it; do a study, etc.
- Council has done several studies. Last study cost from \$22,000-\$25,000, which was for the entire County. Opined that each Council Member needs to go back to their respective district. District 4 knows what they want. It appears other Council Members are not sure of what they want. They should go back and study their district to ascertain what is appropriate for the money that is going to be allocated to them in their respective districts. See no need to hold the western Fairfield area as it relates to providing that building and having that land secured and the building placed on that land.
- Council indicated that Council did not necessarily have to vote on the building, but did not know what the other alternatives were. Over the years, other Council Members have received what they wanted.

- Asking for enough money to secure that land; clear it off and put the building on it (if it has to be done in increments). As time becomes available, suggest that Council be amenable to looking at this and that the budget be in place to continue to build on the project.

Trapp:

- ***Would like to make a motion to allow each individual Council Member to use the \$500,000.00 from the bond money to put recreation in their districts the way the Council Member and the community sees fit. Personally, would like mini parks in District 3. Council Member Marcharia would prefer to have a building.***

Marcharia:

- ***Second the motion.***

Perry:

- Council has seven different districts. When funds have been allocated, think any decision on how that money should be spent should come back before the full Council.
- What like to hear from the people who actually live in District 1. Would like to have an opportunity to sit down and have a community meeting; come up with a price; what the building should look like and what it should include so they would be more aware.
- Need to make sure that the communities are involved.
- Do not think any one Council Member should be allowed to go out and make decisions for the County. This is County Council, and any decisions, based on a district, should go before the full Council.

Marcharia:

- Council has known this for months (that the money was there). It is good for the district representative to go to the community to get their opinion. In the meanwhile, why would Council want to hold the project up for western Fairfield.
- Western Fairfield had their plans and blue print drawn up.
- Asking for a supervised, organized recreation for District 4 community.
- Opined that Council should not wait another seven years or for each district to find out what they want and bring it back before full Council. Think Council needs to proceed.

Perry:

- Did not say Council should wait seven years. Anticipate, over the next couple of months, that a decision should be made on how Council should be moving forward.
- Mindful of Council Member Marcharia's district. Also had numerous individuals from the Greenbrier community to ask Council to make sure that that area was not neglected.

Trapp:

- Do not think it is right to hold up other districts' progress when they have done their due diligence, i.e., obtained surveys from the communities to decide what they want in their community.
- Still can vote to allow the Council Members who have gotten to the point where they can start putting recreation in their districts so Council can vote on it.

Marcharia:

- Have met with Greenbrier several times. It is great for them to ask, but they don't have a plan for their community. They don't have land. Indicated to them to go back and prepare a plan (where the land will be purchased; what kind of building, etc.).
- There are other communities in the fourth district. Am willing to work on the plan. Am not neglecting anyone in the fourth district.

Perry:

- Talking about the constituents having a plan. Council does not even have a plan. There are seven different districts. Promised the people there would be some open dialogue and guidelines pertaining to recreation.

Trapp:

- Attorney gave definition of recreation. Can use money for economic development without guidelines. Can vote up or down on the districts that are ready to proceed.

Robinson:

- Received a study from the COG in 2009. Council looked at it one time. Did not like the way he was presenting it, as far as his recommendations to the Council for putting four buildings in the County. He was asked to come back to submit additional guidelines.
- Commented on the guidelines in the plan as it related to neighborhood parks.

- Have been fortunate to purchase two acres at a time. Council decided several years ago to no longer lease property. Was Council's decision to begin purchasing land and making improvements to it.
- New facilities and programs. Even if a new building was built and could be occupied, there is zero dollars in the budget to even turn the lights on; let alone dealing with running a program in that building.
- Report suggested in order to reduce the operation and maintenance cost of various centers, there needs to be a modified schedule to allow staff to rotate from one center to another, which helps reduce cost and provide facilities and programs.
- Recommended that for a community center to be in the eastern, western and central areas of the County and care should be taken to place these facilities in the population centers of each area and consideration should be given to multiple uses of the facilities to have community functions, satellite recreation offices, storage of maintenance equipment for all the County purposes, including County maintenance and Public Works equipment.
- The Council should deliberate and decide the most appropriate location to serve the needs of the citizens.
- Asked that Council look at what is best for the County; and not a district. There is no way for District 2 to provide recreation for that district.
- When SCE&G allowed the lease on the property, there were three phases in that facility: put in a baseball field, tennis court, bathrooms and picnic shelter. Phase two was to build two more tennis courts; add bathrooms, lighting and more picnic areas and shelters. Phase three: place a building on the facility.
- Heard about the eight.whatever acres on Ladd's Road. The present lease on that expires in less than six years. Council has a policy that if there is not a minimum of a twenty to twenty-five year lease, can only spend one thousand dollars on improvements there.
- Before Council can do anything the County has to look at leases to ascertain what can be done. Don't know if SCE&G will allow a building on that facility. No one has discussed that or shared that information.
- The report also suggested that Council pursue cooperative agreements with the School District to be able to use the Schools for program activities. At the last Intergovernmental meeting, Ms. Kinley asked the District to work on an agreement where the children in the western part of the county can go and use the gymnasiums. In addition to using a portion of the school building that is already there, the county should partner with the School District to update the playground equipment.
- Passing of bond issue was the worst thing that has happened this year as far as the County voting on money. It takes a minimum of four to approve spending \$500,000.00 for each district.

Perry:

- Have not had one meeting with the Director of Recreation to receive her input or her thoughts about recreation in this County. Not ready to make a hasty decision about recreation tonight without giving it the time it deserves.

Trapp:

- This is another stall tactic. The members who do not want to spend the money for the people in their district, just leave it. Vote on it with the members who are ready to proceed with recreation in their areas. Have people in each of the five areas who are willing to sell land to the County. The land is not an issue. A building will not serve District 3 in any way that the mini parks will not serve.

Marcharia:

- Heard the Vice Chairman say he has not talked with the Recreation Director. Last week, she submitted an engineering site study. If you have not asked her for a work up to do anything for your district or talked with her on your own volition, don't have anything to do with that. She clearly looked at it and gave feedback and submitted a study last week. The Lake Monticello Park is being misrepresented. Disagree in terms of the lease agreement. The lease agreement on the 8.12 acres of land, which was renegotiated in 2007, calls for fifty years. The community tried to get a multi-purpose center and a health center combined. Don't know what the hold up is. There is no haste about recreation. Need realistic ideas about each area. District four wants to clear that site and put a building on it.

Perry:

- It is actually not your money; it is the citizens' money. It is allocated for the seven of us here. You brought it forward, but it was voted down.

Kinley:

- Districts 6 and 7 will discuss combining the allocation; however, it would not be prudent to spend \$1 million dollars in the Town of Winnsboro. The recreation center is landlocked and they have started fitness classes for men and women. Equipment has to be moved out of the gym to have these classes. Fitness is something that needs to be looked at for all the citizens of the County. The old maintenance

building would be a good place to up fit for a fitness center. Council must be respectful of the \$500,000.00, allowing for utilities to be paid; to be staffed; etc. The senior citizens want a place to meet. Going to meet with Council Member Brown to coordinate this in the Town. It is not feasible to spend a \$1 million dollars in the Town.

Robinson:

- Looking at the map, District 2 touches District 3, District 6, District 7 and District 1. Mitford and Peay Ridge areas need something; yet, Council has not had a dialogue on recreation to make sure these districts are covered. The present lease on the 8.12 areas was effective June 1, 2006 and is good until the first project is licensed, which expires June 30, 2020. Until something is done about that lease, Council can only put one thousand dollars by the Council's guidelines on that property. Am not fighting not doing something for the children and the citizens. Am just asking doing it in a business, organized fashion to accommodate the majority of the citizens.

Marcharia:

- Normally have that lease agreement with me. Will bring it in tomorrow and get it to Mr. Anderson. Spoke to the Chairman about it and said that lease agreement was for fifty years. That is exactly what it is for. Could not put a health center on it if it was less than fifty years. Don't know how that got misconstrued. Been hearing this about using the schools. Talked with the Superintendent and at least two board members. They know absolutely nothing about somebody talking about using the schools. No one has approached the board or officially approached the Superintendent? He did not know anything about it. He was totally shocked. They want to know who is going to pay the bill. We are going to pick up the tab? Night after night—using their gym; wearing out their floor and electricity. We just want to use a room at the school and asked the custodian to come. They usually pay them minimum wage. When we want to use it as a community, we have to pay \$12 to \$15 dollars an hour for a custodian to come and make sure we clean up. Don't think that was just or fair.

Kinley:

- Were you not at the last Intergovernmental Meeting when that discussion was held; and the Chairman of the School Board said she would take it to her Board for discussion? She promised she would. Spoke with the Superintendent last Tuesday. He indicated he has had some calls after the meeting of people requesting that. He did not know anything about it then; but said he would go back and speak with the School Board. Think this needs to be pushed with the School Board. The County said it would assist with managing and making sure these buildings were supervised. Great idea during the fall and winter to open the facilities a couple nights a week and on Saturday to give the students something to do (volleyball, basketball, etc.).

Marcharia:

- What about something intellectual learning? What about organized recreation to keep them off the streets and make them decent human beings? Don't have much more to say about this. District four is much more deserving. Over the past thirty years, over a billion dollars have left our community and we have absolutely nothing to show for it. The roads in other areas are smooth. To ride out in Monticello, it will tear your car up. There might be twenty-five miles of road over in the Monticello area (around the lake area)—it's a dead end; one way in; one way out. Lake Wateree, in terms of economic disparity, certain communities get far more than other communities. Asking for our fair share. We deserve a decent building for our senior citizens and our children in our community.

Ferguson:

- Don't disagree with anything that has been said. One of the things that keep coming to my mind is where that building was to be placed when the study was done. It was to be placed somewhere on Highway 215. The reason was because it would be more accessible to more people in that district, which would include some people from District 3. Is Dawkins the most convenient place for more people to deal with that building? That is a legitimate question. This needs to be looked at and studied. Where are the most people? Where would be more convenient for it to be? Lake Monticello on Highway 215? The Plan called for it to be closer to McCrorey-Liston School.

Marcharia:

- Here's a picture of where they recommend the sites to be. One on Ladd's Road where we are talking about and the other one is in front of McCrorey-Liston, which is a drain field. After they looked at it, they said it would be impossible to put a center on a drain field for the school. The other two are in Districts 1 and 2. When you ask about population, there are close to 300 children attending McCrorey-Liston.

Within a ten to twelve mile radius in that area (Blair, Dawkins, Monticello), there are over 500 children. If we have to drive from where we are to Winnsboro, you are talking about a sixty-mile round trip.

Ferguson:

- Would you say that you have more accessibility on Highway 215 than you do down in the Dawkins community?

Marcharia:

- More in the Dawkins community than Highway 215. They encompass that ten to twelve mile area.

Ferguson:

- Mainly concerned with the accessibility of it because Highway 215 is the main thoroughfare from Greenbrier all the way through Districts 5, 4, and 3.

Marcharia:

- If you ride across Meadowlake where this proposed building is, SCE&G has their own park in that area. They have to send four, five or six peace officers on weekends. That's how many people are using that park, which is less than a mile from where this recreation center is proposed to be built.

Kinley:

- Can you stay within the \$500,000.00 limitation with your plan? You say piece-meal; next year, this money won't be there again. How would you piece-meal what you want to do out there?

Marcharia:

- If everybody else would, in their departments piece-meal theirs, or ask for monies or budget, could probably go along with that. We need to get it up and see what the allocations will be. Citizens have said they would organize churches to make sure they get certain amenities. People are ready to roll up their sleeves to get involved in this. It won't be all on the taxpayers. People can write grants. If the County can go this far, the community would be willing to step up and do their part. They are responsible enough to do that. We will work things out as we go. In a few years from now, there might be better times in Fairfield.

Ferguson:

- *All in favor, signify by saying aye. All opposed, signify by the same sign.*

Voice vote: AYE (Trapp, Marcharia); NAY (Perry, Kinley, Robinson); INAUDIBLE (Ferguson)

Trapp:

- May we get a show of hands?

Ferguson:

- *All in favor, raise your right hand. All opposed, raise your right hand. **The NAYS have it.*** As a chair decision, in two months' time, I would like for this Council to make a decision on what we are going to do with that bond money. We keep voting on this thing, and I don't think that is too much to ask.

Trapp:

- If you all have other discussions, I am going to exclude myself, because it is going to be another round of what we have been through the last (however many years, Mr. Marcharia). Have a good night. *{At this point, Council Member Trapp left the dais}.*

Robinson:

- At some point, I think it is important to sit down with the director of that department and see what kind of guidelines that she would recommend.

Ferguson:

- Mr. Anderson, if you will try to line that up. I will work with you on trying to set up a timeline, but that two months' time is what I would like to see us to come up with a decent plan.

4. **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned, upon the unanimous approval of Council.

Transcribed from recording:
SHRYLL M. BROWN
CLERK TO COUNCIL

DAVID L. FERGUSON, SR.
CHAIRMAN