



**MINUTES
BUDGET WORK SESSION I
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
APRIL 3, 2023**

Present: Shirley Greene, Peggy Swearingen, Timothy Roseborough, Cornelius Robinson, Clarence Gilbert, Dan Ruff (Council Members); Laura Johnson, Interim County Administrator; Synithia Williams, Deputy County Administrator; Dr. Kimberly Roberts, Clerk to Council.

Absent: Doug Pauley

Others Present: Beverly Mozie.

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

Vice Chair Gilbert called the Work Session to order at 6:00 p.m. He stated Chairman Pauley would be late due to a prior engagement.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Councilman Ruff, seconded by Councilwoman Greene, to approve the agenda. ***The motion carried unanimously 6-0.***

III. INVOCATION

Vice Chair Gilbert led the invocation. Councilman Gilbert stated Councilman Pauley called and said he would be late.

IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. AGENCY PRESENTATIONS

Mrs. Johnson introduced the Interim Finance Director, Beverly Mozie. Mrs. Mozie thanked the agencies for their attendance and presentations. She gave housekeeping reminders – location of bathrooms and as agency names were called to come to the podium and they would have up to five minutes to present. They did not need to discuss their budgets line by line because the Council had a copy of their budget appropriation requests. They should state their name, position/title with their organization, a brief purpose of their

organization, the amount requested for fiscal year 2024 and how the funds would be used. They should remain at the podium once their presentation was complete for tentative questions from Council. They were not required to stay after their presentation.

AG/ART TOUR & FARMER'S MARKET

Jamie Bain said she took over the Farmer's Market in 2022. The Market was under the Chamber and had a few people volunteering but did not have the structure to be the tourist attraction it had the potential to be. She volunteered 40+ hours weekly and her money to make the Market and AG/Art successful. She said she was asking for support for the upcoming AG/ART tour so Fairfield County could be well represented. The Farmer's Market was a 501c3 and she requested funds for it as well for flyers, signs, and a marquee. The tour would be June 17th-18th with 11 sites throughout the County. Mr. Ruff asked why the Farmer's Market was no longer run by the Chamber. Gene Stephens (Chamber of Commerce) said it became too much for them to handle. Mr. Robinson asked if the request would fall under the Hospitality/Accommodations Tax funds and Mrs. Johnson said yes.

AMERICAN RED CROSS

No representative was present.

BEHAVIORIAL HEALTH SERVICE

Director Vernon Kennedy said they were a non-profit organization designated to be the sole authority for substance abuse in Fairfield County. They provided services to adolescents and adults regardless of their ability to pay. Over the years, they expanded partnerships, services, staff and they relocated to a new facility. They were asking for \$77,000 – a slight increase from last year. They received diverse funding but those funds were designated for specific drugs or populations and did not include administrative and program support, which they desperately needed. They were also asking forgiveness for the 25-year loan given to build their new facility. The agreement stated they would have to pay that money back if they sold the facility and they had no intentions to leave. They had been there for over 40 years. Mr. Robinson asked if Administration had made any recommendations. Mrs. Johnson said they were giving the Council the opportunity to hear all of the requests and Administration would come back to Council with their recommendations. Mrs. Swearingen asked about the DUI re-licensing program. Mr. Kennedy said anyone who received a DUI had to go through a program to get his/her license back – dictated by DMV. His office provided the program, which included an assessment that determined if they needed the educational portion or treatment. What it costs them was far greater than what he was asking of

Council. Mr. Roseborough asked for more information regarding the loan forgiveness request. Mr. Kennedy said their facility was built four years ago. They received funding from the County with the stipulation it would not have to be repaid as long as they stayed for at least 25 years. He could not remember the exact dollar amount but it was over \$200,000. They received all of the funding from the State but gave some of it back due to the funding provided by the Council. They wanted the community to know that Council supported their organization. He returned a portion of the State funding so that other organizations would have access that were not getting support from their Council.

CENTRAL MIDLANDS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Mrs. Mozie said Central Midlands was a regional due paid by the County and their information was in the packets provided to Council.

CENTRAL SOUTH CAROLINA ALLIANCE

President/CEO Nelson Lindsay said they were a 501c3 public private partnership founded in 1994 and Fairfield County was a founding member. They were a regional economic development organization representing the City of Columbia and the eight surrounding counties – Fairfield, Richland, Lexington, Newberry, Kershaw, Calhoun, Orangeburg, and Clarendon. They provided four primary services – marketing, lead generation, research, and project management. They were having a very good first quarter with Scout Motors leading the way. They were at two and a half billion dollars in capital investment (record breaking) and 4,500 jobs. Fairfield County was well situated geographically to take advantage of that. Their request was the same as the last 30 years - \$72,000. It was the same amount that every County paid. Mrs. Greene asked if he knew an estimated amount for suppliers in regards to Scout Motors. Mr. Lindsay said those numbers had not yet been provided.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Director Gene Stephens said the Farmer's Market needed to be its own entity and the Chamber was helping with the transition. The Chamber would sponsor 17 major events that year and would draw over 40,000 people. They were able to increase their sponsorships but were asking for funding to incorporate for the first time a big comprehensive tourism push to increase awareness of Fairfield County. They completed their first comprehensive visitors guide last year and they were in the process of purchasing kiosks to place strategically in the County, which would offer more information about what was happening in the County. They were also working on building a tourism-only designated website.

CHAMELEON INSPIRATION LEARNING CENTER

No representative was present.

CLEMSON COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Stephanie, Fairfield County Coordinator and 4-H agent, said they offered education based on a variety of topics including health and nutrition, forestry and natural resources, horticulture, agriculture, and Youth Development 4-H. Their budget request was \$40,000 and would go towards employee salaries, fringe, and program supplies in order to provide no-cost opportunities to the schools and no-cost or minimal cost activities to the youth throughout the County. Mrs. Swearingen asked how many students did they interact with. Stephanie said it depended on the method but she would guess several hundred students per year.

COLUMBIA AREA MENTAL HEALTH

Kathy Hugg, Executive Director, said their center provided all outpatient mental health services for Richland and Fairfield Counties. In 2022, the Fairfield Mental Health Clinic served approximately 326 adults and 111 children. Children were seen in their clinic and the school setting. Combined, there were over 3,300 individual services provided to the residents in Fairfield County including mental health assessments, psychiatric medical assessments, medication administration, case management, psychosocial rehabilitation services, crisis services and individual and family therapies. They provided services to individuals regardless of their ability to pay. She said at that time, approximately 11% of the individuals receiving services in their clinic had no insurance. Crisis services were available 24 hours a day, seven days a week by their center's mobile crisis team and services were available to any resident of Fairfield County. Their budget request was \$70,000 to help support staff, and for building and clinic expenses. Mrs. Swearingen asked what the rental of \$55,000 was for and Ms. Hugg said it went towards their building expenses where the clinic was located. They rented the building – they did not own it.

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS

Latasha Taste, State Director of Strategic Partnerships, said they were a non-profit 501c3 public organization. Their mission was to surround students with a community of support empowering them to achieve in life and stay in school. They created access to educational supports and critical resources like food, housing, health care and counseling. Melissa Getz, Director of Development, said they were requesting \$15,000 to support their programs at Fairfield Elementary, Middle and High Schools. With those funds, they would be able to provide services to 1,400 students school-wide and between 120-140 students one-on-one. Dr. J.R. Green and Shadarius Hopkins (Site Coordinator) spoke in

support of the program. Mrs. Swearingen asked if any funds were requested from the schools. Dr. Green said the district committed \$60,000 last year to the partnership. Ms. Taste said they operated on a braided revenue funding model where there was a third from each partnership to help close the funding gap. She said they would host a future program tour and they would invite Council to a school site to learn more about the Site Coordinator's work in the classroom.

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

No representative was present.

DISABILITIES & SPECIAL NEEDS

Director Laura Collins said it was the 40th year that their organization provided opportunities for families with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder and head and spinal cord injuries in Fairfield County. They served 40 people in their residential program and 46 in vocational services. They requested \$55,000 for their vocational services/day program to include transportation costs. They partnered with and provided services at the Fairfield County recycling site at Jenkinsville, janitorial services at Fairfield County DHEC Health Department Complex, Palmetto Imaging Technology, local churches and they had a mobile yard crew. They promoted awareness through talent shows, they had an upcoming golf tournament and they currently had a cookbook fundraiser. They were working to develop a 5-acre park directly behind their facility and hoped to break ground in the fall. She provided information packets, which included their latest cookbook. Mrs. Swearingen asked how they gathered the recipes. Ms. Collins said from staff and family members. Mrs. Swearingen appreciated their work. Ms. Collins said the Fairfield County Disabilities & Special Needs Board and Fairfield County Council was awarded the Golden Palmetto Award by the State Department of Disabilities and Special Needs more than any other disability board in the State based on the collaborative efforts. Mr. Ruff asked how long she worked with the board and she said 33 years. He asked how many citizens they served annually and she said 40 people in their community training homes and 46 in their vocational program. She announced a Senate Bill (Senate Bill 602) that would place the SC Department of Disabilities & Special Needs under the governor's cabinet and that was where they received the majority of their funding. However, the caveat was they wanted to take control of the local DSN boards and their properties and make them state employees. They wanted to remain independent and part of the county. She would keep Mrs. Greene (their liaison) informed.

EAU CLAIRE COOPERATIVE HEALTH CARE

Lee Tan, Manager of Eau Claire Cooperative Health, said they were a non-profit community health center that provided health for approximately 57,000 patients across four Midlands counties, including Fairfield. They operated four sites in Fairfield County – three fixed and one school based (Ridgeway, Winnsboro and Jenkinsville). The school-based site was at McCrory Liston School of Technology. They offered services including pediatrics, adult and internal medicine, chronic disease management, women's health (OB-GYN). Behavior Health, pharmacy, dental, podiatry and vision. They accepted all patients regardless of their ability to pay. Approximately 48% of their patients were Medicaid, 19% uninsured, 12% Medicare, and 21% privately insured. They were requesting \$100,000 - \$15,600 would supplement the salary of the nurse practitioner - \$9,400 would go toward printing and advertising cost and \$75,000 towards outreach and awareness. Mr. Roseborough asked if they offered urgent care. Mr. Tan said they offered patient care by appointment but did not offer emergency or catastrophic care. They did not offer any kind of 24/7 care. Fairfield Director of Public Relations Jennifer G. Hawkins said they were strategically located in Fairfield County. They extended their services to rural areas – Blackjack Baptist Church had a kiosk where Fairfield County residents could come and see a provider via a digital device every Tuesday from 9a-12p at no cost. There was a \$25 charge but Cooperative Health has been able to pay for the visit, including the transportation and through partnership with Hawthorne Pharmacy, their medications were free. Mrs. Swearingen asked if there was a facility in the Feasterville area and Ms. Hawkins said no but they did offer transportation for those in their network. Mrs. Swearingen asked if the citizens were aware and Ms. Hawkins said that awareness was a part of their funding request.

FAIRFIELD HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Financial Manager, Rich Timmons said they were under the umbrella of DHEC and provided community health services to about 2,700 citizens in Fairfield County. Their budget request was \$50,730 of which 70% would be for their site manager and site administration team lead and the remainder for building operations (phone system and courier mail service). Mrs. Greene asked about the courier service. Mr. Timmons said it was a service that enabled them to send mail amongst the different health departments within the state – it was a DHEC specific service.

GOOD SAMARITAN HOUSE

No representative was present.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES INDIGENT CARE

Mrs. Mozie said it was an annual contribution required by the Medically Indigent Assistance Act. The calculations were based on various statistics such as personal income, property values, indigent hospital charges, etc. The amount for fiscal year 2024 was an estimate and they had not yet received the letter – it usually came later in the year. Mrs. Greene noted that the list regarding indigent care did not change. Looking at the fiscal year increase/decrease it looked like it was zero. Mrs. Mozie thanked her for the notation.

LIBRARY

No representative was present.

LOVE NEVER FAILS

President and Founder, Reginald Boyd said they were a 501c3 whose mission was to build a community based on love, faith, diversity and support with one goal in mind – building future leaders. They built relationships with the Fairfield County Sheriff, the school district, the Shiloh First Independent Church (Pastor Hollis), and Fairfield Behavioral Health (Vernon Kennedy). They used all available resources to bridge the gap between Fairfield County and its youth. They hosted mental health seminars, implemented a mentoring program, \$500 scholarships were given to seven graduating seniors last year and that month they were taking 40 students to the State House for a tour. They were requesting \$10,000, which would be earmarked for the continuation of the program to grow future leaders. Sheriff Montgomery, Pastor Hollis and Dr. Greene gave words of support for the program. Mr. Gilbert asked for the scholarship criteria. Mr. Boyd said it was not academically based but merit based. They asked their plans to give back to the community, critical thinking issues, etc. Mr. Gilbert asked if the scholarship went towards a college education and Mr. Boyd said yes.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

No representative was present. Mr. Robinson asked what the organization was about. Mrs. Johnson said she believed they mentored children. It was the organization Jeff Schaffer talked to her about.

PALMETTO CITIZENS AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

Executive Director, Charlene McGriff said they covered Lancaster, Chester and Fairfield Counties. They provided services to victims of sexual assault at no cost. They were funded through grants, federal, state and local funds. They provided training to law enforcement, the community and schools. They were a nationally accredited children's advocate center. They were asking for a \$10,000 grant match. With their last federal grant, which directly effected

Fairfield and Chester counties, they paid for three positions for three years within the county (almost \$300,000) – an investigator with the Sheriff's Office and a solicitor. Mrs. Greene asked how many persons were served. Ms. McGriff said 67 and the majority were children. They were provided with forensic interviews, a sexual assault exam, court accompaniment and counseling.

PUBLIC DEFENDER

The Chief Public Defender, William Frick said after the pandemic there was a sizeable increase in violent crime in Fairfield County. In 2021, Fairfield County had 6 murders, which exceeded Lancaster County. Those were the cases that took the longest to proceed through court. Their mission was to represent indigent people charged with criminal offenses anywhere from DUI's, bad checks, simple drug possessions, criminal sexual conduct to murder cases. He had 2 seasoned attorneys in Fairfield County that he was very grateful for. His budget request was due to the fact that they had become uncompetitive in their pay. A graduate with a law degree and license (passing the BAR) started at \$49,000 with the county. Currently, there were law clerks who started at \$60,000 – it was impossible to get them to come and work for him for \$49,000. He said recruitment was an issue all over the country. His ask was an effort to keep talented attorneys and staff.

RAILROAD MUSEUM

The Treasurer of the Museum, Henry Nekemias said they were a non-profit 501c3. All staff were volunteers with the exception of a part-time administrative staff. Next year (2024) would be the 40th anniversary of the railroad in Fairfield County. They were the only operating tourist railroad in the state of SC. Their budget request of \$30,000 was to continue to support their goal to be a major tourist attraction in the county – maintenance and expenses (work of the locomotives, backhoe, forklift). They were building a 30x50 foot shelter in Greenbrier and trying to hire a new administrative staff. He was thankful for their support. Mr. Gilbert encouraged everyone to visit the railroad museum.

I-77 ALLIANCE & SOUTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Mrs. Mozie said these were regional dues and Council had their information in their packets.

RESCUE SQUAD

No representative was present.

SISTERCARE

Rural Court & Community Advocate, Melva Rogers said their mission was to provide trauma-informed services and to advocate for domestic violence survivors and their children and to promote prevention of domestic violence through community awareness and training. They offered 24/7 crisis line services, individual counseling, court advocacy, children's counseling, legal representation and much more. They operated three emergency shelters outside of Fairfield County where domestic violence victims and their children could stay to begin living their lives free from violence. They also offered transitional housing programs to assist survivors in becoming financially independent, job search assistance, employment readiness assistance and resume writing assistance. At that point, they had assisted 21 Fairfield County residents. All programs were offered at no cost. They requested \$8,000, which was to help victims in the county and for Fairfield County residents that were in their shelter program. Mrs. Swearingen asked how many of those served went back to the abuser. Ms. Rogers said out of the 21 they served, about half of them went back but even in those situations, they still provide assistance if needed.

SOLICITOR SIXTH CIRCUIT

Randy Newman, Sixth Circuit Solicitor, said they prosecuted cases for the Sheriff's Office and any other agency that could create a warrant in their district – Kershaw County Correctional, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Health and Environmental Control, Department of Social Services, South Carolina Highway Patrol, SLED, Department of Juvenile Justice and the city and town police departments. They were also involved with diversion programs – to keep people out of court/prosecution to avoid having a record. Their budget request was for an additional \$56,082 – it was the same as last year because they did not get their request last year. They needed funding for the career ladder, an upgrade to their case management system, internet in the courthouse, and a DUI prosecutor. Mrs. Swearingen asked if the funding he requested would bring them up regarding their per capita. He referred to a handout he provided and said it would not get them to the Statewide average but would get them a lot closer than where they were. She asked about the per warrant funding and he said he did not have that information but would get that for her. She asked him to explain the per capita funding. He said the \$114,000 they received from Fairfield County was divided amongst the population and that got them the per capita funding. Mr. Ruff asked how they compared per capita funding and per warrant funding to other counties. Mr. Newman said he did not list all of the counties on the handout and there were some that were lower than they were. He said they were above some counties but far below the state average. He agreed to email the full list.


TRANSITIONS

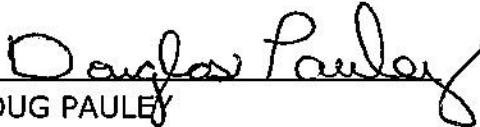
Craig Curry, President and CEO said Transitions was a 260-bed facility that housed males and females 18 years and older. They also had a day center. Their goal was to provide permanent housing, jobs, mental health/addiction counseling, etc. Last year they had 27 Fairfield County residents come to Transitions and 17 were provided beds. They were asking for \$5,000 – utilities, maintenance, inflation (food costs doubled). The 17 individuals that were housed last year for a month or so, the cost was more than three times their request. He verified for Mr. Robinson that they housed 17 Fairfield County residents last year. Mr. Robinson asked if they coordinated with the Good Samaritan House and he said no.

Mrs. Mozie thanked the agencies for their attendance, their presentations and their work. She said at that time there were no further items to cover. Vice Chair Gilbert said on behalf of the Chair and the Council, he thanked the agencies for their presentations and they would take their requests into serious consideration. It was a tasking job and they could not make any promises but but they would do their best to fulfill their obligations to them.

V. ADJOURN

At 7:56 p.m., motion made by Councilman Robinson, seconded by Councilman Roseborough, to adjourn. ***The motion carried 6-0.***


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


 DOUG PAULEY
 CHAIRMAN