



**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
MARCH 13, 2023**

Present: Shirley Greene, Dan Ruff, Tim Roseborough, Doug Pauley, Peggy Swearingen, Cornelius Robinson (Council Members); Laura Johnson (Interim County Administrator); Synithia Williams (Deputy County Administrator), Tommy Morgan (County Attorney); Dr. Kimberly Roberts (Clerk to Council)

Absent: Clarence Gilbert

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

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion made by Mrs. Swearingen to amend the agenda for Item 10B to be carried over to the next meeting due to Vice Chairman Gilbert was not present at the meeting because he was representing the County at another meeting, seconded by Mr. Ruff. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

Motion made by Mr. Ruff to approve the agenda including the amendment, seconded by Mr. Roseborough. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

Mr. Pauley stated for the record that Mr. Gilbert was at Doko Manor in Blythewood representing the County at a meeting with Scout, a new industry coming to Blythewood.

3. INVOCATION

Sr. Pastor Steve Elkins (First United Methodist Church) led the invocation.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Mrs. Greene, seconded by Mr. Ruff to approve the minutes from Regular Meeting February 27, 2023. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

5. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

None.

- 6. 1st PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION:** 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 Schaffer
- Randy Bright

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. Third & Final Reading Ordinance No. 809:** An Ordinance of Fairfield County Council Developing a Multi-County Park with Richland County; Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of an Agreement Governing the Multi-County Park; Authorizing the Inclusion of Certain Property Located in Richland County in the Multi-County Park; and Other Related Matters. Mr. Pauley opened the public hearing at 6:10pm. Randy Bright signed up to speak. Mr. Pauley closed the public hearing at 6:14pm.

8. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND ORDERS

- A. Third & Final Reading Ordinance No. 809:** An Ordinance of Fairfield County Council Developing a Multi-County Park with Richland County; Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of an Agreement Governing the Multi-County Park; Authorizing the Inclusion of Certain Property Located in Richland County in the Multi-County Park; and Other Related Matters. Motion made Mr. Robinson, seconded by Mrs. Greene. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

9. BOARD AND COMMISSION MINUTES (For information only)

Library Board – November 9, 2021; July 25, 2022; December 29, 2022

10. BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

- A. Planning Commission – William Gray (District 1)**
Motion made by Mr. Ruff, seconded by Mrs. Swearingen to re-appoint Mr. Gray to the Planning Commission. ***The motion carried 6-0.***
- B. Council of Governments – Councilman Clarence Gilbert & Todd Warren**
(Per amendment, moved to next Council meeting)

11. OLD BUSINESS

None.

12. NEW BUSINESS

None.

13. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- A. Palmetto Pride Award** – Mrs. Johnson introduced Sara Lyles (Palmetto Pride: Keep South Carolina Beautiful) and Jonathan Burroughs (Fairfield County Director of Public Works). Mr. Burroughs said they planned to use the funds in-house. He had staff (3-4 people) that were willing to work on weekends. They just completed their fourth Saturday of litter pick up and since they started, they picked up 136 bags of trash – tires, wheelchairs, tv's, etc. They moved throughout different areas – hitting the hot spots first. It gave his staff the opportunity to make extra money. He said hopefully within a couple of weeks, they would bring in some trustees to increase productivity. They had enough to run the rest of the year, depending on the weather. Mrs. Greene thought it was a great idea and thanked him for working with Palmetto Pride. Mr. Burroughs said there were a couple of people who were doing community clean up events – Lake Wateree State Park. They picked up their supplies the week before. The Sheriff's Office adopted from the fork on 321 North Bypass and Business to Wilson Chevrolet and they did that a couple of times per year. Mrs. Swearingen asked if the trustees would start picking up and he said once all the details were worked out, they would bring in some trustees, which would increase staff to about 4-6 per Saturday. Mr. Ruff said it was great because the County needed to be cleaned up. They needed to keep it clean so people would be drawn to the County. It needed to get beautiful and stay beautiful. Mr. Burroughs said if Council had areas that needed to be addressed, they could send them to Administration and they would prioritize them. Mr. Pauley said he appreciated what he and his department did. He asked if any citizen/community wanted to participate, could they see him for supplies. Mr. Burroughs said although he had filled supply requests before (for Lake Wateree), the easiest way was to send the request to Palmetto Pride and he could send the link. They had to be sure to turn in what they collected because he had to submit a monthly report to Palmetto Pride. If it was a larger scale, they could go through Code Enforcement for a roll off to be placed in a central location. Ms. Lyles said Fairfield County was one of the strongest programs they had in the past two years. Last year they had about 20 recipients and Fairfield was the strongest and they have used it as a model. She said Mr. Burroughs was doing a great job and had been very helpful with other clean ups. She encouraged law enforcement to work with Palmetto Pride to get cameras in place to catch illegal dumpers – it would help to prevent litter. She said Mr. Burroughs and his team had been great

to work with. Mrs. Greene announced that Lake Wateree Presbyterian Church had a clean-up scheduled for March 25th and the Peabridge Community Masons on April 1st. Mrs. Johnson said the maintenance department assembled a litter crew and if Council had any particular areas to be addressed to let Administration know. Mrs. Swearingen asked the amount of the fine for littering. Ms. Lyles said the State fine ranged from \$25-\$1,000 but she did not know their local code ordinances.

- B. TASC Award** – Mrs. Johnson said the Transportation Association of South Carolina held an annual conference and rodeo each year. It was a nonprofit organization that promoted public transportation in SC. The 2023 conference and rodeo was held earlier in the month. Fairfield County was represented by their own transit department and was awarded the following by the SC Department of Transportation: 1st place in the van division – Mr. Colin Feaster. He would attend the National Community Transportation Rodeo in Oklahoma in May (paid with grant funds). The 2023 Operator of the Year for Demand Response – awarded to Fairfield County Transit for Outstanding Transit Services to the General Public – Mr. Joel Glenn Rice. The Transit Employee of the Year Award – Director Diana White, for her outstanding service to Fairfield County. Ms. White thanked all for allowing them to service the citizens. Mrs. Greene thanked Ms. White and said she was not sure if the public was aware of all of the services provided by the transportation department. Services could be requested (similar to Uber) and she asked her to briefly talk about the changes within the department. Ms. White said when she started they were serving about 9-10% public transits and currently they were serving about 65-70%. They provided services to medical appointments, jobs, grocery stores locally and to Killian Road. The citizens relied heavily on public transportation and her passion was to provide those needed services in Fairfield County. Mrs. Johnson thanked Ms. White and her staff for representing the County so well.
- C. Courthouse Renovations** – Mrs. Williams introduced John Hendrix and Eric Sosa from GMK Associates, Inc. She said they were hired by Fairfield County in 2020 to provide services for the planning, study and assessment of the existing conditions and the renovation of the County's historic Courthouse. The Courthouse renovation project was broken down into three phases. Phase 1 was complete, which included interior updates to make the bathrooms ADA accessible – it cost about \$592,400. Phase 2 was currently under construction and was budgeted at about \$2.4 million. It included the construction of an addition to the existing building. Phase 3 would be renovations to the interior of the existing building. The estimated cost was about \$2.7 million, with \$1.5 million already allocated from the County's second ARPA allotment (for HVAC and electrical upgrades). Phase 3 will begin upon completion of Phase 2. At that point, they billed out about \$1.2

million of Phase 2. Mr. Sosa presented the following power point presentation regarding the construction update.

Agenda

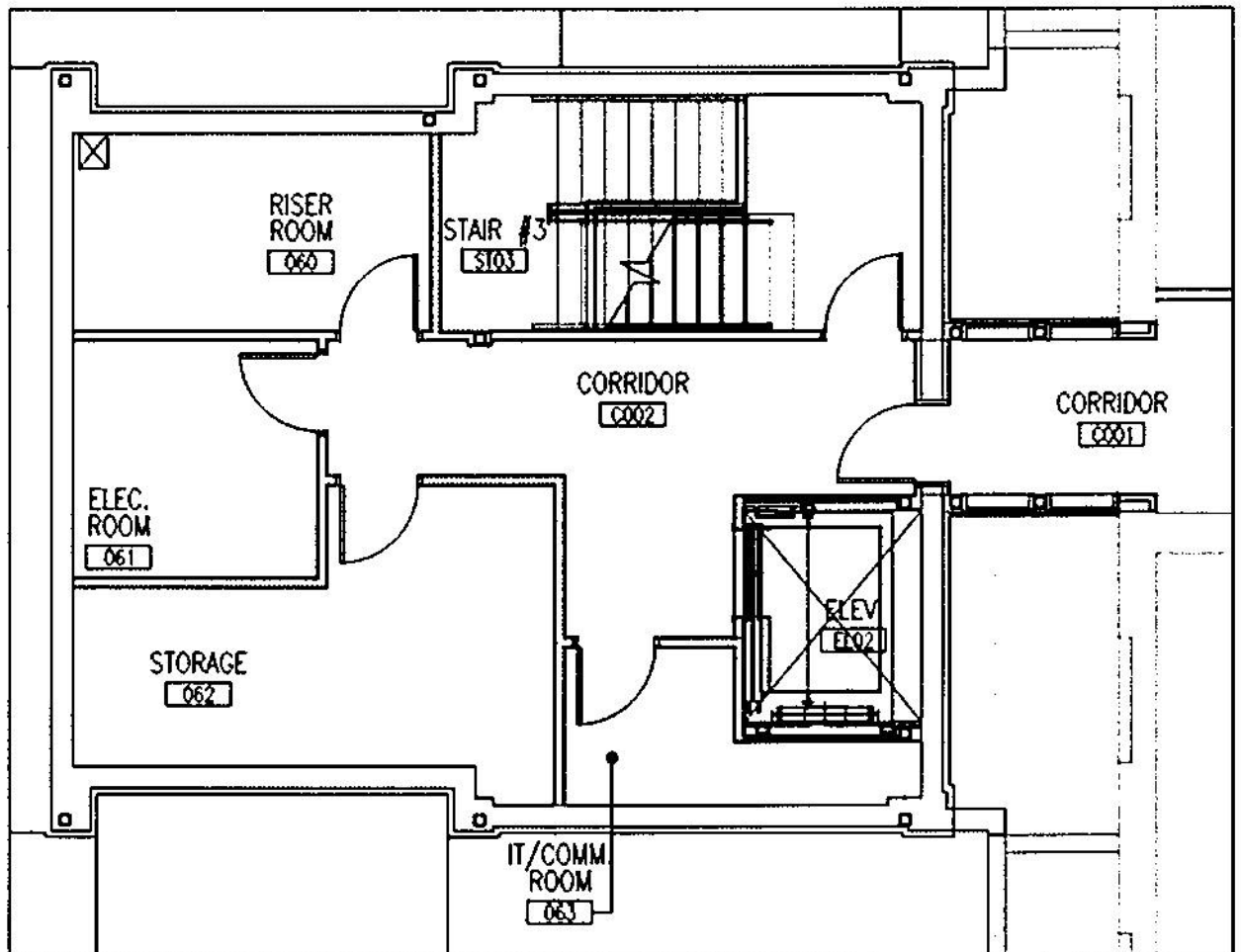
- **Scope of Work Overview (Phase II Addition)**
- **Construction Activities**
- **Critical and Key Activities**
- **Schedule**

Fairfield County Courthouse Addition

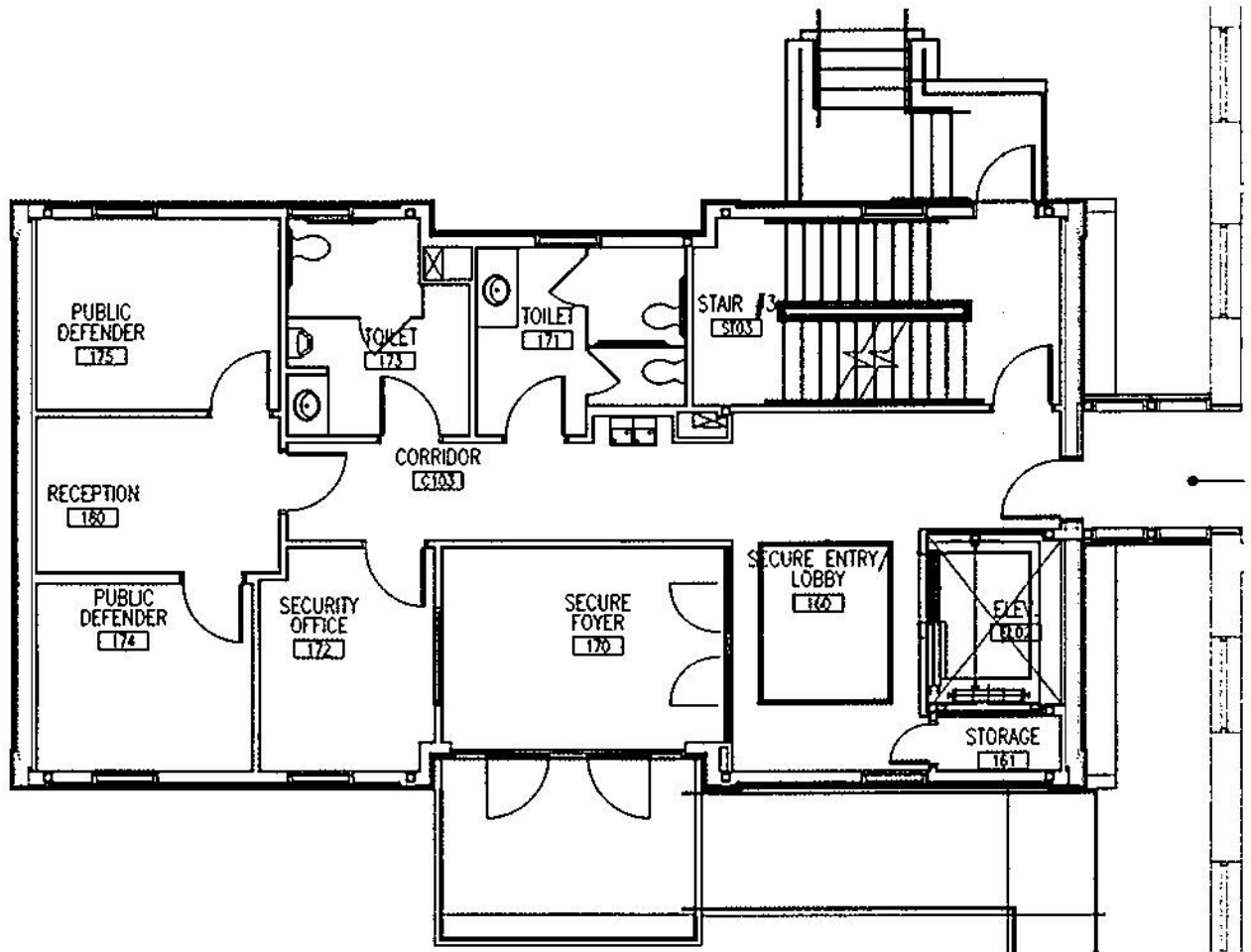




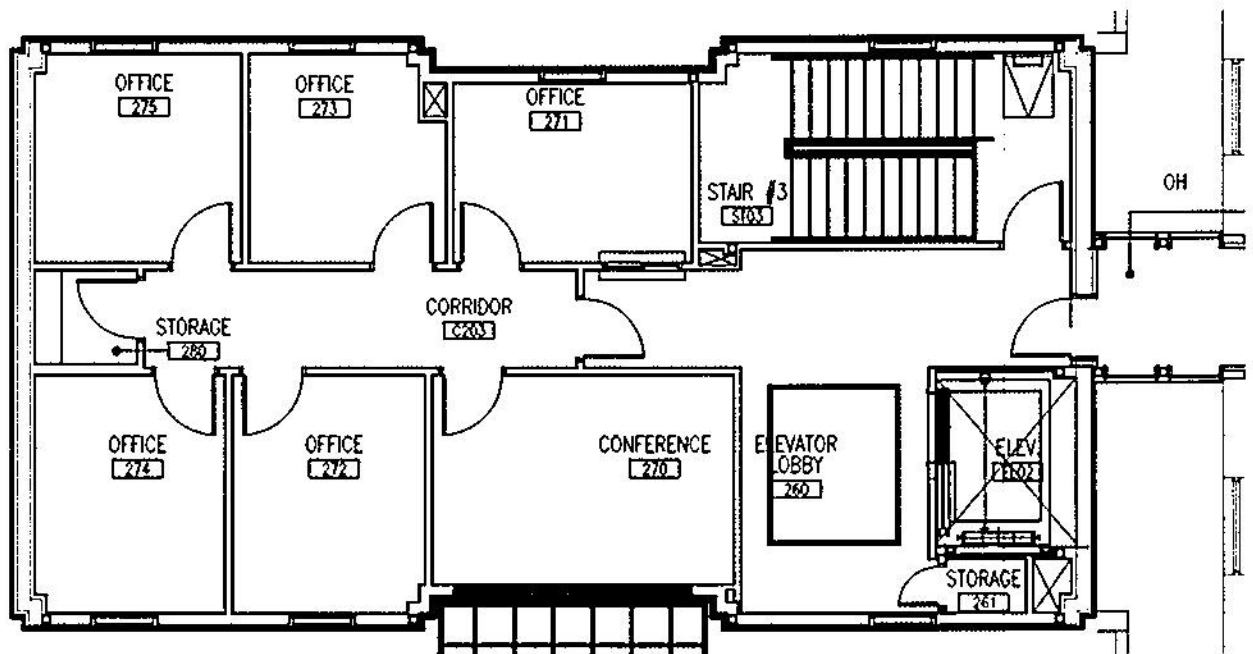
Lower Level Plan



Main Level Plan



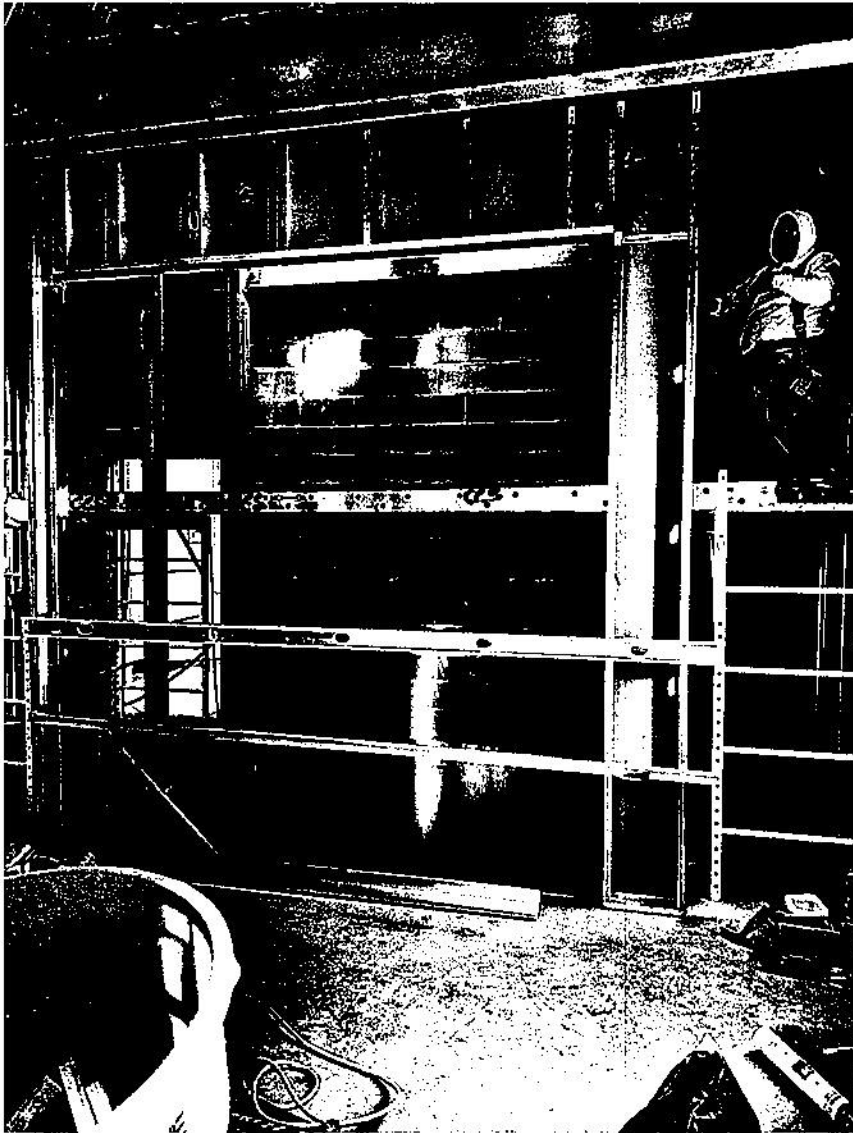
Upper Level Plan



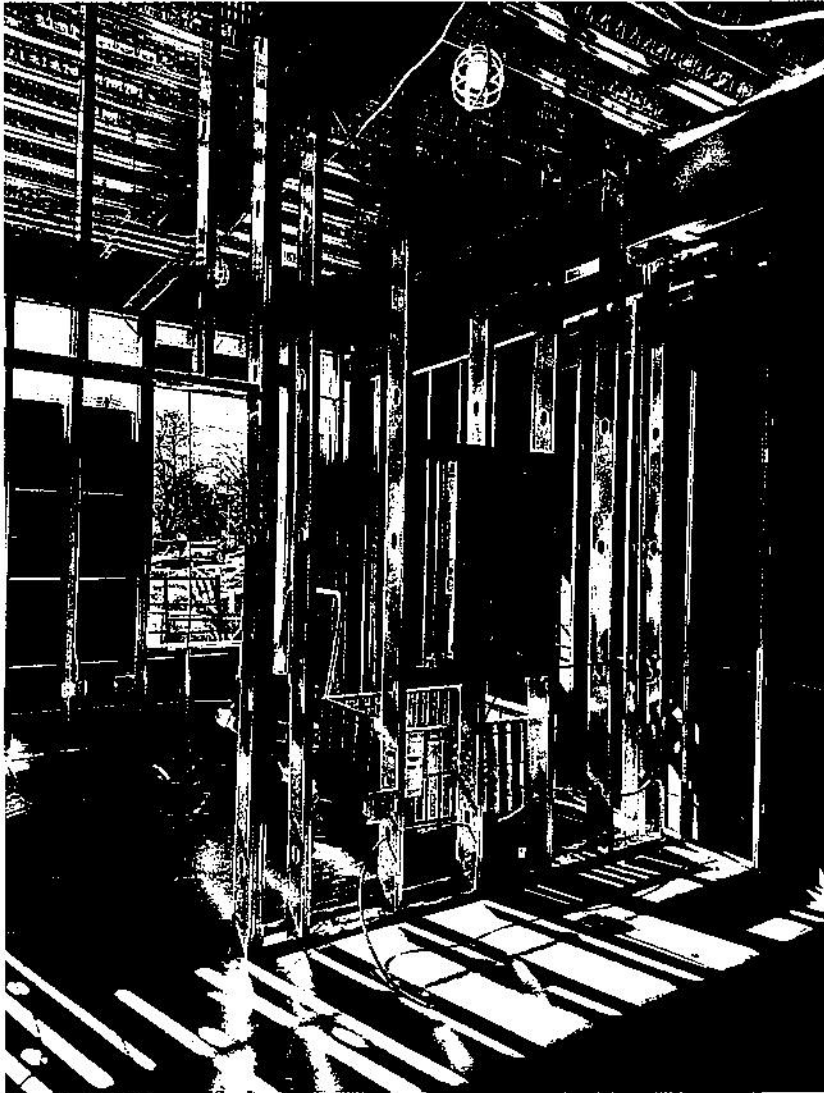
Scope of Work

- **Phase I – Bathroom Renovations - COMPLETE**
- **Phase II – Courthouse Addition - UNDERWAY**
 - Constructs a 5,000 SF Addition to the Courthouse
 - Adds ADA compliant access to the facility
 - Public Defender Offices and Reception
 - Conference Room
 - Additional Office Space
 - Accessible Elevator Access to all three levels
 - Storage Space
- **Phase III – Existing Courthouse Reno/ Utility Upgrades**
 - Ready to start as Phase II nears completion
 - Planned for future utility infrastructure tie-ins in Phase II construction

Construction Activities









Construction Activities

- **One Month Look Ahead**
 - **Roofing**
 - **Waterproofing and Stucco**
 - **Windows and Curtain Wall/Glazing**
- **Critical and Key Activities**
 - **Dry in the Building before hanging Sheetrock and installing Elevator**
 - **Permanent Power & HVAC before Carpet & Tile**
- **Schedule**
 - **On track for a late Summer 2023 Completion Date**

- D. Fairfield Joint Water & Sewer System Update** – Mrs. Johnson said there had been a lot questions and comments made regarding the status of the wastewater treatment plant and she wanted to give some background. She had been on the commission since January. She said on March 5, 2019, the Fairfield Joint Water and Sewer System was formed and incorporated. At that time, it included the County and the Town of Winnsboro. On August 5, 2022, the Town of Ridgeway joined as a member. The sole purpose of the Commission was to plan, finance, develop, construct, acquire, improve, enlarge, etc. in order to provide services within the service area of the joint system. The current members were Mayor John McMeekin and Town Manager Jason Taylor from the Town of Winnsboro, Interim Administrator Laura Johnson and Chairman Douglas Pauley from the County of Fairfield, Robert Arndt (Utilities Department) and Donald Prioleau (Mayor Pro Tem) from the Town of Ridgeway and Kyle Crager (citizen representative). The meetings were held at the Fairfield Midlands Tech campus once per month at 6pm. The next meeting was scheduled was March 28, 2023. In 2019, two resolutions were passed by the Commission and could be obtained via the Commission's FOIA process. One resolution was to adopt a procurement policy and the other to adopt a FOIA policy. In 2020, resolutions were adopted to support certain amendments to the 208 water quality management plan, to adopt a public hearing and presentation policy, to approve an engineering scope to provide professional services related to the amendment of the 208 plan (incorporating Thomas and Hutton PER as it related to the Cedar Creek location), the engagement of an attorney, and a cost sharing agreement between the joint water system, the county and town. In 2021, resolutions were adopted to approve an application to the COG for certain amendments to the 208 Water Quality Management Plan and to approve additional engineering scope of work to include proposed locations and routes for a plan (regarding a Broad River location). In 2022, a resolution was adopted to amend and restate bylaws. Currently, they were reviewing the draft of the participation agreement to determine whether the plant would be a wholesale service, a retail service, or a hybrid, which was a combination of wholesale and retail. She said at the next Council meeting, she would like to have a representative attend to talk about the differences and pro's and con's because she did not know. The Commission needed to complete the Professional Engineering Report (PER) to determine the best location for the plant and the cost. The participation agreement and the PER needed to be completed and the information from those documents needed to be included in the amendments of the 208 Water Quality Management Plan that would be submitted to the COG. In order to allow for the construction of a wastewater treatment plant, the 208 had to be amended to include the Joint Water System. She would not pretend to know the inner

workings of a 208 plan or what needed to be included in the amendment. The Commission had engineers for that purpose. She said the County and the Towns of Winnsboro and Ridgeway were working well together and had a common goal to get the project completed and to grow the County. Mrs. Greene asked if there were plans to complete a rate study. Mrs. Johnson said did not know as she was new to the Commission and still learning. Mrs. Greene said they wanted to ensure that the taxpayers were protected in terms of once the plant was completed that they had enough revenue to operate and maintain the system. Mr. Robinson asked if there was a 2021 application status for the 208 plan. Mrs. Johnson said they needed to resolve the participation agreement and PER in order for them to be included in the 208 plan to be forwarded to the COG. Mr. Roseborough asked if the engineers did a study to determine the cost estimate. She said she believed the County received a cost estimate but not the Commission. She thought there was one in a file in 2022 that gave an estimate but any estimate would need updating from that date. He asked for a copy and she agreed.

- E. Audit Update** – Mrs. Johnson introduced Grant Davis, a partner at Mauldin & Jenkins to provide a FY-2022 audit update. He said he would give a timeline of how things started and where they were currently and then answer questions. He said they began discussions with finance staff in May of 2022. Three of their team members, including himself, met staff to lay out a plan for audit fieldwork. It was a substantial effort in the audit – the timing of that relative to the year-end of the County and ultimately how everything would be delivered by the State deadline (December 31st). As a result of the meeting, they left with an action item list that they asked new clients to help with in order to gain an understanding of the entity. He noted that it was their first year performing Fairfield County's audit. They provided the templates to be filled out to drive their efforts when they showed up for field work. They scheduled the initial fieldwork visit for late September (he thought). He requested the visit be moved up a week or two (he could not remember the exact dates). The finance staff agreed but noted that there would be some items that would not be completed. They had a number of clients that did not have certain elements of the audit completed during field -work and in those cases they focused on the items that were finished and address those incomplete items at a later date (however much time the client needed for completion). One of the most fundamental parts of the audit process was the trial balance – a listing of all of the accounts of the County for all of the funds and their balances. They audited the trial balance, which gave the details of the cash, receivables, revenues, expenses, etc. The trial balance they received in September changed about a week later. They received a new trial balance and had to re-import that

into their system and start a new audit process. It was not a huge deal at that point – they had only lost one week. They worked for another two weeks and stopped fieldwork to return to their offices and give the County time to finish those incomplete items. They returned in late November (he believed) only to find out that the second trial balance they were provided needed to be changed again. The result of those changes was about \$12 million of adjustments from different types of accounts – not just concentrated in one area. Those adjustments were provided to them in early December. He said their workload was not conducive to stop everything they were working on to re-audit something in December. Since that time, they adjusted all of the numbers for the \$12 million adjustments and his group was onsite that day working on the audit. He said it was their third shot at field work that year for the 2022 audit – their third try to get it right. It was a positive visit that day and off to a good start. The County's audit should require about 400 hours (both on and off site) and they had 460 hours so far and that did not include the 20 hours that would be logged in that day. They were trying and putting the forth the effort. He understood the State's requirement to have it completed by December 31st – Fairfield County was not alone and such could be found on the treasurer's website regarding the counties that were delinquent (about 10). As far as the list, rural counties were those who predominantly made it up. There were significant challenges for rural counties and he personally advocated with the Comptroller General's office about allowing extensions. Over the last two or three years, the state had gotten very stringent in the enforcement of the December 31st deadline with the withholding of funds. He had advocated for those counties that may have had one finance person but had not gotten any relief from the State so far. He said governmental accounting was not getting any less complex. There were new accounting standards required to be adopted each year. That year the new standard was named GASBY 87, which changed the way leases were accounted for – the county was using a software company to account for that. Mr. Ruff asked for the anticipated completion of the audit. Mr. Davis said they would do everything they could to have it completed by month's end. Mr. Ruff asked why they changed audit companies – was there a bid. Mrs. Johnson said yes it was a bid process. Mr. Ruff asked when it was done and Mrs. Johnson said two years ago. Mr. Davis said the State statute required that the audit be bid out a year before it was needed. The previous firm completed the audit in 2021 and they proposed in 2020. Mrs. Swearingen asked where the \$12 million came from. Mr. Davis said it was the reconciliation process or the financial close. For governmental agencies, they had what they called period 13. There were 12 months in a year and the 13th month was the time to make accruals, reconcile cash balances (which should be done monthly), etc. Period 13

usually had a lot of activity in it. It was a process of closing out the books and recording things on a gap basis. He said in some way, those adjustments were not picked up in the initial part of the financial close process on the County's side. They were provided a trial balance. They did not find the issue and say it was wrong by \$12 million. Finance management determined that there were additional adjustments that needed to be made and it was determined in December. Mrs. Swearingen asked if they were additional expenditures and Mr. Davis said it was a wide range – revenues, expenditures, assets, liabilities. It was not focused on one particular element. Mrs. Swearingen asked if that meant that at the end of the year they spent \$12 million that they had not spent. Mr. Davis said no ma'am he did not think so. He said the County recorded its transactions on a cash basis – money in, money out, revenues and receipts. Money in was revenue and money out were expenses. The year-end close process changed from a cash basis to an accrual basis – reporting receivables, payables, capital asset activity, etc. He would not characterize it as the County spent \$12 million in the interim that was not previously picked up. There were issues with the reconciliation and recording process throughout the year and probably in the financial close process that did not pick up those transactions and it was determined that they had to be adjusted. Mrs. Swearingen asked how it could have been that much from September to December. Mr. Davis said those funds did not pertain to the period of September to December – their fiscal year was from July to June. Those transactions should have been picked up during that period that were determined sometime between September and December. The actual activity did not happen in September to December – they were just identified during that period and needed to be recorded back to the fiscal year 2022. Mrs. Swearingen asked if it started in July of that year and he said in July 2021 thru June of 2022. Mr. Robinson asked what he meant by "identified". Mr. Davis said in the financial close process was the cash basis books with monthly cash balances, recording revenues as receipts, expenses as disbursements, etc. In the closed process, receivables were recorded for things that were revenue items that were not received until after the year-end but were earned during the fiscal year. Payables would be recorded for expenses that were incurred during the fiscal year but were not paid until after. A lot of the process at the close was to pick up the accruals. It was a waiting game – waiting to see what invoices and receipts came in. To some extent, it should be known from year to year. Mr. Robinson apologized for cutting him off and said he understood that part but his question was why they were there currently. Mr. Davis said the only thing he could say was that his staff was given \$12 million in adjustments in December in their third trial balance. He said they had been trying to audit a moving target since

September. Mrs. Greene asked how this information would affect the budget schedule. Mrs. Johnson said it would affect it – trying to prepare a budget without an audit report was taxing. She did not have an audit report or any additional adjustments the auditors might make and therefore, she did not know the true fund balance in any accounts. She found some additional discrepancies that she would have to give Mr. Davis. For example, the sewer plant settlement of \$45.7 million had not been recorded in their general ledger. The bank interest and the fees associated with those funds had not been recorded in the general ledger. She already started preparing some journal entries for each month – the interest and fees could not be lumped together and recorded as one. In addition, a \$7.5 million disbursement for bond refinancing that was in the Dominion settlement, the money was recorded as received but wired back out to Regions Bank and it had not been posted. Accommodations and Hospitality tax monies received were required to be placed in a separate bank account and those monies were sitting in the general fund. If she were to run a report on the general fund, those monies would be in the fund balance of the general fund and not separated out. Since then, the two separate bank accounts were opened but journal entries needed to be prepared for that to move those monies out of the general fund. Those were some of the things they ran across within the last two weeks and some last week. The reason the journal entries had not been sent to the auditor was due to them not having the additional documentation on file, especially interest and fees, in order to record them. They finally received the last few statements that day and they would be prepared the next day – they would then transmit them to the auditor. Their goal with the items just discussed, was to get them to the auditor by Wednesday morning. Mr. Pauley asked if the information just shared by the Interim Administrator would change their targeted completion date of the end of March. Mr. Davis said it would depend on the propriety of the adjustments. For example, the settlement money was in an escrow account and would not be difficult to audit or record. For them, it would be getting the information and the support for it. It might push the audit date back – he could not commit one way or the other. They had people assigned currently to work on it but they did not sit around on call to immediately jump over and drop everything else they were doing but they would try their best to get as far forward as they could. If there were additional items that came to light, they would have to re-group and do it again. He said he wanted it done as fast as they did. Mr. Pauley said he appreciated them working with the County to get it done. He asked if the change in the trial balance three times was common. Mr. Davis said the opinion in the audit reports (financial statements) states the financial statements were free from material misstatements. The trial balance builds the financial statements so

it was their expectation that the trial balance be free of material misstatement when they receive it – except in situations like mentioned earlier when he asked to move fieldwork up to an earlier date. To begin testing under the assumption that everything that was communicated was right only to find out they were not was what he called auditing a moving target. In that manner, there would be internal control deficiencies, recommendations for improvement, etc. – those were the things that were supposed to be right when they got them. It was not their job to adjust things to what they should be – they were supposed to audit things that were already right. If they were not, they made adjustments or proposed adjustments for correction. They always operated under the assumption that everything was right. Mr. Roseborough asked if they still had close-out dates for departments via procurement. Mrs. Johnson said yes it was – normally procurement would send an email to all departments with a cut-off date (maybe April) for miscellaneous items that should have been purchased earlier. If there was a major item that needed purchasing it would go through budgeted items. It helped with invoices coming in after June so there would not be a lot of payables coming through. From July to June, they closed out in the 13th month (July). Anything that came in in July but was expected in June was a receivable or payable, an adjustment would be needed. That was the purpose of the 13th month – to make any necessary adjustments. It was not uncommon for something to be missed when the auditor received the trial balance but it was not common for the auditors to re-audit several different funds or accounts. Mr. Ruff asked if they would have to change their budget work sessions (the first one scheduled March 29th) – to wait and see or postpone. Mr. Pauley said yes sir. Mrs. Johnson said if Council wanted to, they could take the budget piece by piece, looking at the departments and their operational requests but certainly not looking at the capital because over \$5 million had been requested. It was a Council decision but the alternative could be more confusing – having the whole budget book versus getting it in pieces. Mrs. Swearingen asked if there was a normal percentage that the trial balance would not balance – should the whole thing balance. Mr. Davis said it should. He had certain instances where clients were late on their finished reporting and their trial balance did not balance and they had to help them adjust but it should balance. He said they should not have to wait for the audit to know the fund balance. Some of the larger counties in the State that had a good finance operation and reported regularly to Council knew what their fund balance was monthly. He was always a bit surprised when they had clients that were surprised at what their fund balance was at the end of the audit. If he had to make an informal recommendation it would be to know their fund balance (or pretty close) every month. Mrs. Swearingen asked would that be a monthly or

quarterly financial report. Mr. Davis said they made recommendations (and most governments) to receive a financial report at least quarterly. He would say monthly and it could be as simple as these were our revenues and these were our expenditures and it could roll forward. In that manner, decisions could be made in real time. It was not universally adopted. They were at about 650 governments in the Southeast – 19 counties in the State and it was their recommendation that all governments receive a financial report at least quarterly. Mrs. Swearingen asked if they could implement a monthly or quarterly financial statement and Mrs. Johnson said yes ma'am. Mr. Davis said he and Mrs. Johnson had a few phone calls after hours and he felt she had the background and capability to turn everything around. They were excited to work with her and to continue to serve the County and to complete the audit. They would make formal recommendations that they saw from their industry perspective.

14. CLERK TO COUNCIL'S REPORT

None.

- 15. 2nd PUBLIC COMMENT SESSION:** 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.

- John Jones
- Jeff Schaffer
- Randy Bright

16. COUNTY COUNCIL TIME

Mrs. Greene thanked Mrs. Johnson for helping to get the audit on track and helping to move forward with the budgeting process. She also mentioned preparing for growth. They all heard about the Scout investment of \$2 billion (maybe more) in the Richland County area. They attended a conference in the past week and the feeling of many was that Fairfield County would reap many of the benefits from the auxiliary companies that would come in as a part of Scout's investment. It meant that they had to prepare – they had to start talking and bring in their intergovernmental partners and take a look at how they moved forward as a County. They knew that wastewater was a major, major (she could not overstate that) issue for them if they were to benefit from investments that were coming. They had to plan for growth. They had to make

sure that their ordinances and planning/zoning, etc. were done so they were able to decide where a lot of the various things might go and make housing a priority as well. She was talking about economic development in the broadest sense in terms of investment of companies and being able to guide their growth. They needed to ensure housing and other important elements because they were talking about 4,000 employees and that was a huge opportunity. They also needed to make sure their schools were on board and public services. They needed to have time set aside for planning and it needed to start very soon (Mr. Chair).

Mr. Robinson said they needed to look back into their intergovernmental meetings. He thought the City was supposed to host the last one prior to COVID. He asked Administration if they would check into that. He also said that in light of the upcoming budget season, he wanted to put in on Council's mind that he wanted to do something for their volunteers at the Rec.

Mr. Ruff thanked Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Williams and Administration for their work on the audit. He knew Mrs. Johnson came in late and was an expert on the subject and had a lot of work to do. He thanked Mrs. Greene for setting up the wastewater plant tour for the upcoming Monday. It was major for them to bring industry to the County. If they had been ready, they might have been able to get Scout but they needed to be ready and get the ball rolling.

Mrs. Swearingen thanked Mrs. Johnson and her team and she agreed with Mrs. Greene that they needed to be ready for the people coming in. They needed to concentrate on fire, EMS and police protection. They could not even protect the ones living there and if they had an influx of people they would be in worse shape than what they were currently in. She asked if they had a litter ordinance. Mrs. Johnson said she would look but she did not think they did.

Mrs. Swearingen said it was mentioned that the State had an ordinance and if people kept dumping in the same places with no fine as a result then it would keep happening despite the possibility of installing cameras. Mr. Robinson said it was reinforced by the Sheriff's Office if he was not mistaken. She said okay and wanted to know if they were getting any interest on their money (as Mr. Bright mentioned). Mrs. Johnson said yes ma'am they did get interest on some of the money. She did not have the information in front of her but State law did include how the treasurer should invest monies. She said it was very specific and she would get it to her. Mrs. Swearingen asked if the \$45 million could be invested and Mrs. Johnson said it was in an escrow account. She could not tell her the amount of interest but it was a nice chunk. Mrs. Swearingen said it was not just sitting there and Mrs. Johnson said no ma'am, it was earning interest. Mrs. Swearingen said she would like to see the Pledge of Allegiance added to the agenda and hoped that the Chair would do so. She thanked Administration for their work.


Mr. Pauley said on Tuesday, March 21st, everyone was invited to the dedication ceremony of the Herman W. Young Detention Center. He thanked Mrs. Johnson and her staff. He knew they were working very hard on getting the audit completed – late nights, weekends (he thought Mrs. Johnson was in the office on Saturday's and Sunday's). Lastly, he agreed with Mrs. Greene and the rest of Council. They had to get prepared for the new industry coming to Blythewood. He spoke with Mr. Morgan that day and hopefully, in the next couple of weeks, they could get the engineer responsible for the wastewater treatment plant to do a presentation of the research he had done so far and bring other Council members who had not been on Council (Swearingen and Ruff) up to speed on what was going on with the wastewater treatment plant, possible locations for the plant and the information he had gathered.

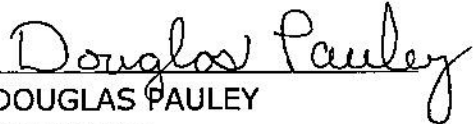
17. EXECUTIVE SESSION: (The following statement is provided in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act: Subsequent to Executive Session, Council may take action on matters discussed in Executive Session.)

None.

18. ADJOURN

At 7:35pm, motion made by Councilman Ruff, seconded by Councilman Robinson to adjourn. ***The motion carried 6-0.***


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


DOUGLAS PAULEY
CHAIRMAN