



**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL  
APRIL 24, 2023**

**Present:** Shirley Greene, Dan Ruff, Clarence Gilbert, 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:** None.

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. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Pauley called for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Motion made by Councilwoman Greene, seconded by Councilman Ruff. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

**4. INVOCATION**

Pastor Bartholomew Green (James Chapel AME Church) led the invocation.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion made by Councilman Ruff, seconded by Vice Chair Gilbert to approve the minutes from Council Workshop January 31, 2023 & Regular Meeting April 10, 2023. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

**6. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

None.

- 7. 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

- Randy Bright

## **8. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None.

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

### **A. First Reading (By Title Only) Ordinance No. 811:**

An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of a Revised and Restated Multi-County Industrial Park Agreement Between Fairfield County, South Carolina, and Kershaw County, South Carolina; Ratifying the Existing Park Boundaries; and Other Related Matters. Motion made by Councilman Ruff, seconded by Vice Chair Gilbert. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

### **B. First Reading (By Title Only) Ordinance No. 812:**

An Ordinance To Establish Operating and Capital Budgets for the Operation of the County Government of Fairfield County for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2023; to Provide for the Levy of Taxes for Fairfield County for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2023; to Establish Fees and Service Charges for Fairfield County for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2023; to Provide for the Expenditure of Tax Revenues and Other County Related Funds; and to Provide for Certain Fiscal Matters and Other Matters Related to County Government. Motion made by Vice Chair Gilbert, seconded by Councilwoman Greene. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

### **C. Resolution No. 2023-03:**

A Resolution Affirming Fairfield County's Commitment to Fair Housing. Dr. Roberts read the resolution in its entirety. Motion made by Vice Chair Gilbert, seconded by Councilman Ruff. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

## **10. BOARD AND COMMISSION MINUTES (For information only)**

### **A. Disabilities & Special Needs Board – January 24, 2023 & February 21, 2023**

## **11. BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS**

None.

## **12. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

## **13. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**14. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT****A. SC Department of Commerce, Supplier Outreach Program – Mrs.**

Johnson introduced Tammie Greene, Manager of the Supplier Outreach Program with the SC Department of Commerce (DOC). She provided strategic and innovative leadership for supplier outreach initiatives by giving support to SC companies, large or small, new or existing, with any supplier needs. She was going to talk about the supply initiatives for Scout Motors and how local suppliers could get prepared. Ms. Greene said the DOC was the leading economic development agency for the state and they recruited large industry into the state. She worked with the business services team and they provided service after the sale. They worked closely with the large industries to help them source locally. In the beginning stages, they had an outreach event that helped the company find the suppliers they needed. For an example, she said they worked with Gallo Winery in Chester for over a year to help them find the suppliers they needed. They also provided opportunities for the company to meet with small, medium and large businesses. They sourced for all types of suppliers from janitorial, landscaping, to rolling the product off the assembly line. They sometimes assisted with construction or pre-construction depending on the needs of the company. Their goal was to source locally. She said Scout was a large company and would need to hire within South Carolina. They had not started to identify suppliers yet but as soon as they announced the general contractor, they would be ready to help support. They were hearing some concern regarding small companies and minority companies having a seat at the table and having the opportunity for work. To address that, they were going to start (around June or July) information sessions with local suppliers about certifications needed to do business with Scout. For some very small companies, doing business with Scout might be overwhelming. Scout will have tier ones - medium sized companies that would help support them. Some small business may be too small to do business with Scout or a tier one but might consider collaborating so they will offer training sessions for that. They would offer trainings in Richland, Fairfield, Sumter and Chester. She said the buzz was about Scout Motors but there were lots of companies being recruited into the state with other opportunities for local suppliers to get contracts. They also offer "B2B" – business to business networking. It was where their large OEM's were centralized in one place with small/medium companies having the chance to meet with them for about 15 minutes. It also gave the opportunity for the small/medium companies to network with each other. They realized that they would not have everything Scout would need but they wanted to ensure that whatever South Carolina had would be at their disposal. Mrs. Greene asked if she had an estimated

auxiliary number of people/families that were expected related to Scout Motors. Ms. Tammie Greene said she did not have that answer but would get that information to her. She ended by saying that the small/medium companies that felt they would not have a seat at the table – they would. There were two ways for them to get connected – a portal called “SourceSC” (sourcesc.com) - any SC supplier could register at no charge. When projects came into the state, they initially go to the portal to fulfill requests made by the company. There was also a Scout portal for those interested in being a supplier. It could be found on the SC Department of Commerce website (as well as information about other large projects. She said Director Ann Broadwater had her contact information if needed.

**B. Hospitality & Accommodations Tax Application** – Mrs. Williams said at the last Council meeting they received a draft of the Hospitality/Accommodations Tax application. They did not receive any questions or comments related to the application so the plan was to have the application effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. The application would open September 1 – October 31<sup>st</sup>. Eligible applicants would be non-profit organizations that provided services in Fairfield County and destination marketing organizations that have been in existence for at least one year. All eligibility requirements would be listed on the application. The applications would be reviewed by Administration and the team they designated and recommendations for funding would be made to Council by December 31<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Pauley asked if it would go into next year’s budget. Mrs. Williams said they collected money in advance and would know how much they had available based on what was collected. Based on that amount, they would make recommendations to Council regarding which projects to fund.

**C. Budget Work Session Additional Date (ACTION ITEM)** – Mrs. Williams said Council should have received the recommended budget work session dates. The previously scheduled date of May 4<sup>th</sup> would be removed. The dates requested were May 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. If all meetings were not needed, they would cancel. Mr. Pauley asked if a vote was required. Per Attorney Morgan, it was not necessary due to the circumstances and the fact that public notices would go forth prior to each one but Council could vote if they wanted to. Council agreed not to vote and accepted the dates given.

**D. Audit Update** – Mrs. Johnson said she received information that day that they should receive a draft of their financial statements by the close of business on Friday. Once they received the draft, finance would review the draft and approve it. When the auditor’s received the approval, they would produce the final and hopefully the presentation would be given at the next Council meeting on May 8<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Ruff asked if any funds were being withheld and Mrs. Johnson said yes, since January. She was trying to get an actual

amount but had not received one as of that day. The funds would be released when the State received their audit.

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

### **A. Intergovernmental Meeting – April 26, 2023**

Dr. Roberts verified with Mrs. Johnson that there was not a budget work session scheduled for that night.

## **16. 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

- Sylvia Harrison – Community events
- Don Goldbach – Financial reporting
- Kathy Faulk – Animal cost of care
- Jeff Schaffer – Audit/Budget concerns
- Randy Bright -

## **17. COUNTY COUNCIL TIME**

Mrs. Swearingen said she was in Washington, DC last week attending a conference for co-ops. Keaton Dawson, a lobbyist, asked her if she was a Fairfield County Council member and she said yes. He asked about the wastewater treatment plant. She told him they had not started on it yet and were still getting figures. He told her they did not get Scout because they did not have it and they did not get the Tesla battery plant for the same reason. He said if they could not flush, they would not come. She said the Fairfield Joint Water and Sewer System was formed in 2019 – four years ago. Four year later, they did not have a plant, they did not know where it was going, they did not have a groundbreaking or even a bulldozer. They as a Council had to stay focused on whatever they needed to do to take the County forward. Their population was not growing. In fact, according to the latest census, they were declining. Without new industry to increase their tax revenue, they had three choices: if they built a new wastewater treatment plant, they would bring in new industry, tax dollars, tax revenue, more people, more housing, restaurants, and more businesses – a perfect way to go. Second, they may have to cut funding for some central programs or third, they may have to increase taxes and that was something that no one wanted to talk about. All of them, Council and citizens, needed to work together. They needed to stop



constantly complaining about small things because there was a much bigger problem – County growth. They received a lot of calls and hear public comments about what citizens did not like, what Council was not doing and what they should be doing and how they should do it. Occasionally, they received a positive comment. Their job was not easy – if it was there would be more people trying to do it. She said at least the seven of them had the courage to run for their seats to try to help Fairfield County be a better place. It was their contribution to the County. It was easy to complain and spread rumors. Please research before you repeat. Please research what you say before you repeat it. Fairfield Joint Water and Sewer System was formed four years ago and they had done nothing. They had been in their seats four months and although it might look like they were not working, they were – sometimes until 10pm on the phone trying to get things done. She asked that they all work together as a whole and be unified in trying to move the County forward. Mr. Gilbert said what he was about to say might cause him to lose some friends but if they were truly his friends they would understand where he was coming from. They were in an extremely critical time in Fairfield County. They stood at the doors of either leading Fairfield County to a new day or leading her to a time of destruction. They were not perfect and would make mistakes but some of them were determined to do everything in their power to push the County into a brighter future. He was not sure how much time he had left on earth, but he had come to the realization that they could not please everyone or should they try. When they had people bashing them and doing things to make them fight with each other – he would not be a part of it. Their Council might not agree or vote together on every issue but finally they were talking and speaking with each other. It was a good sign that they could work together. There was a lot of talk about them not doing anything to improve things for their county. Please know that they could not pull a rabbit out a hat and things would be perfect. To those that said “all you gotta do”, all you gotta do does not always work in county government. To those that had answers for every problem/situation that came up, his seat was up in 3 ½ years – that would be the opportunity to make things better in Fairfield County. He would not speak for any of his fellow Council members but some of them were passionate in wanting to see the county achieve everything she deserved. They knew what was needed to make Fairfield County better but until they had their finances in order and the wastewater treatment plant on track to bring in industry, then they could improve their pay scales for all of their services. They were not only county that needed law enforcement officers, EMT’s, firemen and other essential services. They were competing with every other county. To those who said they got paid for the job, they were right but there was no amount of money to cover the 24/7 calls, non-stop meetings working to restore the relationships with their towns, and reaching out to the legislatures and other

state governments to get finances for projects. They could not disclose everything they were doing but in the last four months, they had a mountain to climb. They slipped a few times but got up and began climbing again. Their current Administration had worked countless hours trying to restore the stability of their government and financial situation. All he asked was that they give them a chance – pray for them instead of finding fault. He heard a quote that resonated in his spirit – “Jesus said out of the abundance of heart the mouth speaketh. If you want to know what was in the heart, listen to thereof the words”. There was a saying in the country, “What’s down in the well comes up in the bucket. Harsh words, a harsh heart. An angry word, an angry heart. Negative word, negative heart. Over reactive words (talking all the time), an unsettled heart. Boastful words, and insecure heart. Filthy words, a dirty heart. Critical words, a bitter heart. Encouraging words, a happy heart. A gentle word, a loving heart. Truthful words, an honest heart. If you want to know what was in a heart, listen to the words”. He was sure they were not successful in all of their endeavors. In conclusion, he would not participate or entertain conversations that would not help improve their situation. Remember, their criticism only hurts them but their encouragement built them into a force. He thanked them for listening and to his friends that he may have lost in his message, he said he still loved them and the citizens of Fairfield County. Mrs. Greene thanked her colleagues for their statements. She hoped the citizens were listening. They listen to the citizens when they call and they try to solve their problems. They forward their concerns to Administration because they did not hire people – it was not their job. It was the Administrator’s job. Sometimes people got it wrong and they have seen the results of not being able to produce what was needed for the county. They all suffered – not just the citizens. Their reputation, personal reputations of others who had been involved in finances and other areas of the county. They needed to be able to dig themselves out of the issues they had with the audit and let their Administration handle it. There was nothing they could do at that time to speed up the audit – all of the information was provided. She wanted Administration to know that they trusted them and supported what they were doing to ensure the audit came to a close and that they would be able to make decisions about the future of the county. She heard and believed she could validate that they received \$10 million grant from the South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority. It was a blessing – they needed more than \$45 million to build a wastewater treatment plant. She thought they were on the road to success but it would take time. A wastewater treatment plant was not just an idea that was thrown – engineering and other things and people fighting against Fairfield County. Everyone did not want Fairfield County to have a wastewater treatment plant- it was stopped before and there would be efforts to stop them again. They had to stick to their guns – dilution was the solution. With Scout coming,

there were certain things they had to reconsider – capacity. They were looking at a 4 million gallon plant and they may have to look at a larger one. They were looking at housing, industry, etc. to support Scout. They had to think about the future and have a vision of where Fairfield County wanted to be. There were a number of people sitting around that table who had that vision and they had to work together to accomplish it. She thanked her colleagues again for their statements.

Mr. Ruff thanked Council members for their comments and said he agreed with them 100%. He thought they were trying to work together to move forward. They should not always agree – they had differences in opinions but they were working together. He appreciated all of the staff and Council members for what they were doing. It was the second year in a row that the audit was late. They could not change what had happened but they could make changes going forward. He asked Mrs. Johnson if there were any updates on the acoustics. She said a study was done when they moved into the building. They were getting quotes and preparing to address the issue. He announced that the Public Service & Development Committee would meet on Tuesday, May 9<sup>th</sup> at 5pm. He asked someone to check with Chris Childers and Bob Innis for their availability. He agreed that they needed to move forward with the wastewater treatment plant quickly. They missed opportunities because it was not done. He thanked everyone for being there and for their comments. They listened although they might not always agree.

Mr. Robinson said he had been on Council for a while and he wanted to give a bit of background on the idea of the joint water authority – it was to work together as a county because they needed wastewater at that time. It was prior to the \$45 million they received. They even went at it with the penny sales tax. His fellow Council members hit it on the head. He had been to DC twice – once in 2018 and 2019. The talk then was an electric car company and wastewater. It that was the talk then, then they were trying to get their position ready for those things. Everyone was not privy to that information but when so-called citizens that were for the county bashed them in the paper...he challenged anyone to google Fairfield County and see what happened. He said if they wondered why they could not get anybody it was because they were too busy fighting amongst each other. Scout should have been Fairfield's – he did not care what anybody said. He did not know what the holdup was with the wastewater treatment plant. He was on there two years and Mr. Roseborough came back and took the baton and went on. He did not know what the holdup was but he would like to know because Scout should have been theirs. He believed that deep down in his heart – it was the talk three years ago.

Mr. Pauley thanked the Council for their jobs in working together. It was not easy but he thought they were communicating well and wanted to work together. He appreciated each and every one of them – Administration as well.




For those in the audience and those watching live, he appreciate them as well. They gave them feedback and they did take things into consideration. In previous weeks, statements were made that Fairfield County did not post positions. He had a list of Fairfield County's job postings. They were the County's website, South Carolina Association of Counties, South Carolina Works, South Carolina Firefighter's Association, South Carolina Economic Developers Association, South Carolina Recreation & Parks Association and are periodically shared on Facebook. They did post Fairfield County positions. There were questions about the County Administrator's position. There was an RFQ for an executive recruiting consultant posted on April 18, 2023 and it closed on May 17, 2023 at 10am. Once a recruiter was selected, the recruiting process for the County Administrator could begin. To add to Mrs. Greene comment, they received notification that day that the Rural Infrastructure Authority approved \$10 million for the Winnsboro Sewer System connector project. It was wonderful news for Fairfield County.

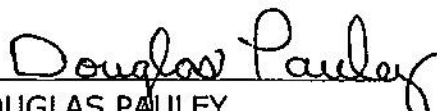
**18. EXECUTIVE SESSION: (The following statement is provided in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act: Subsequent to Executive Session, Council may take action on matters discussed in Executive Session.)**

None.

**19. ADJOURN**

At 7:05pm, motion made by Councilman Ruff, seconded by Councilman Roseborough to adjourn. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

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

  
DOUGLAS PAULEY  
CHAIRMAN