



**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
MARCH 25, 2024**

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

Absent: Cornelius Robinson

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 6:01pm. Mr. Pauley stated Mr. Robinson would not be attending the meeting due to family illness.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

4. INVOCATION

Vice-Chair Gilbert led the invocation.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Councilman Gilbert, seconded by Councilwoman Greene to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting 3/11/24. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

6. PUBLIC PRESENTATION

A. Brandon Henderson – Blair Incorporation

Mr. Henderson said he spoke to different people in the Blair community and they believed incorporation was the best way to proceed with being recognized by the County and the State. He initiated the process and started a feasibility study and it was about 90% completed. He requested a

resolution from the County stating all services that were currently provided by the County to the residents of Blair would continue post incorporation until they had a formal Council to decide if they wanted enhanced services. He would keep the Council informed regarding the process. He did not intend to stop until they were recognized by the State of South Carolina. He thought it would be beneficial to the County pertaining to economic development, cultural development and possibly population growth. Mrs. Swearingen asked what part of the area would be incorporated. He said the process had to be contiguous as far as the census blocks and there was a population density requirement. The Buckhead area of Blair met the criteria. The beginning of the incorporated area would be at the fork in the road just off of Salem Crossroad but it would serve the entire area of western Fairfield. She asked if Dave Jenkins Road would be a part of the incorporation and he said it could be but it was a process. Pertaining to the population density, they could not incorporate all of western Fairfield County but annexation was always on the table if the residents of the area agreed. He felt like once the initial incorporation was in place, other residents would be more inclined to annexation. She asked about the next step and he said it would be a resolution from the County. Mr. Ruff asked how long had he been working on the incorporation and had he encountered any pushback. He said all that he spoke with agreed it was needed. He had been working on it for about 10 years – on and off. He had a letter from Sheriff Montgomery stating services would continue post incorporation and he also spoke with Voter's Registration staff for mapping the area. He hoped by that time next month he would be submitting the application to the Secretary of State. Mr. Ruff and Mrs. Greene commended him for his work.

B. Ann Broadwater – Economic Development Update

Director Broadwater presented Power Point slides (**PLEASE SEE ATTACHED**) and three videos:

<https://vimeo.com/909200840/b18b6b2974>

<https://vimeo.com/909201832/0b26c1c04c>

<https://vimeo.com/909201291/e974f232cf>

- 7. 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.

Mr. Pauley read the following:

Fairfield County Government welcomes public input during appropriate times at County Council meetings. Such input will be allowed in the time, place and manner determined by the Chair of the County Council as the presiding officer. Persons wishing to speak must conduct themselves in the following manner:

Sign up at the appropriate time to speak, refrain from engaging in conduct or speech that seeks to disrupt or disturb the meeting, respect the time limit for the public comment, and refrain from personal attacks or personal statements about any individual(s). Such statements are disruptive because this part of our meeting is not conducive for such exchanges between individuals.

- Kathy Faulk
- Don Goldbach
- Ann Corrao
- Randy Bright

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

9. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND ORDERS

A. First Reading (By Title Only) Ordinance No. 834: An Ordinance to Repeal Ordinance No. 737 and to Adopt and Establish the Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Animal Control in Fairfield County and Revise Chapter 4, Animals, of the Code of Ordinances, Fairfield Field County, South Carolina. Motion made by Councilman Ruff, seconded by Councilwoman Greene to approve. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

10. BOARD AND COMMISSION MINUTES (For information only)

A. Disabilities & Special Needs – 11/17/23, 12/15/23, & 1/19/24

11. BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

None.

12. OLD BUSINESS

A. Gateway Signage – ACTION ITEM

Mr. Killian said in December 2023, proposals were solicited for the design work for the gateway signage (for I-77 and wayfaring). They chose the proposal from Sky Design for \$32,250 - \$50,000 was approved from the Rural Stabilization Fund so this request was under budget. Administration recommended accepting the proposal. Mrs. Swearingen asked if it was for one sign. He said it would include a sign on the northbound and southbound sides of I-77 and some wayfaring signage as well. Motion made by Mr. Gilbert, seconded by Mrs. Greene to approve. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

13. NEW BUSINESS

None.

14. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

A. Animal Ordinance Update –

Mr. Killian said they made some changes per recommendations from the committee and there were some other clarifying language changes that they thought needed to be made. They recommended going back to the committee once more (not to slow things down) to present those recommendations to them so they could approve and forward them to full Council for consideration. They would schedule the meeting as soon as possible.

B. Museum Grant – ACTION ITEM

Mr. Killian said they received a grant from the State Historic Preservation for an amount up to \$127,370 for window upgrades and it required a match up to \$31,000. There were funds available in the grant match funds that could be used for the project. Their recommendations was to accept the grant – the most the county would spend was \$31,842.50. Motion made by Councilman Ruff, seconded by Councilwoman Greene to approve. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

C. Schneider Geospatial Agreement - ACTION ITEM

Mr. Killian said it was a proposal to upgrade the system at the Assessor's and Treasurer's Office to give them better access to information for the citizens. The funding was available in the current budget but would require a change in the budget moving forward. For next year's budget, it would require a little over \$13,000, which included the one-time fee and the first year's maintenance. After that, the annual maintenance fee would be about \$6,800. It would be an improvement for their public information and land management records. Motion made by Mr. Gilbert, seconded by Councilwoman Greene to approve. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

15. CLERK TO COUNCIL'S REPORT

None.

16. COUNTY COUNCIL TIME

Mr. Gilbert said that past Monday, he attended the bi-monthly MUSC board meeting of which he and Dr. J.R. Green were members. Dr. Green asked about the status of the Fairfield ER. It was stated that the ER was a little under projection and to see good the ER needed to see at least 25 patients per day. It presently saw a little under 21 per day. Mr. Gilbert told them that the wait time and the time the doctor actually saw a patient was extremely long. A lot of people bypassed the ER due to the service and wait time. It was stated they

were aware of the problem and had taken steps to improve it. They made changes in the medical staff, which may have caused a lot of the delays. They were aggressively working to improve the wait time and services. He had a conversation with the COO, Mr. Medley, after the meeting and explained that the facilities were extremely nice but due to the wait time and the rude conduct of one of the medical staff, some preferred not to go there. He assured Mr. Gilbert that that staff person was no longer there and he wanted to know of any future complaints. He also assured him that they would keep working to do what it took to make the ER a better place to receive medical treatment. They both would meet with the medical staff in the near future. He said if anyone had any complaints or concerns to please contact him.

Mrs. Greene congratulated the Board of Disabilities and Special Needs on the talent show they had on the past Friday night for their consumers. It was quite a tearjerker and an excellent event. They were very fortunate to have their Board of Disabilities and Special Needs so active in serving the people in Fairfield County.

Mrs. Swearingen thanked Mr. Henderson for his hard work for Blair. She announced a new restaurant in Blair – Stoney's Feed & Seed Restaurant on Highway 34. She shared the menu items on her Facebook page and encouraged everyone to visit.

Mr. Pauley said last week, several Council members attended the ribbon cutting for the new Chamber of Commerce office. He congratulated Mr. Pullen and all involved and said he liked how all of the Fairfield municipalities were highlighted. He knew it was a step up from their previous office and he looked forward to great things for the County. He announced that all County office would be closed on March 29th in observance of Good Friday.

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.)

- A.** Receipt of Legal Advice and Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Contractual Arrangements with the Fairfield Joint Water and Sewer System Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 30-4-70(a)(2).

Before the vote, Mr. Ruff said when he served previously, Council voted to have the recycling centers closed on Easter Sunday. Mr. Pauley said he thought that would be a decision made by Administration and would not require a decision by Council. Mr. Ruff said he thought the decision made by former Council would stand. Mr. Morgan said since it was not on the agenda and there was not a vote to amend the agenda, it would not be

appropriate for Council to vote. He agreed with Mr. Pauley that it would be a decision made by Administration. He thought it might be an issue where it would need to be brought before each new Council – every two years. Mr. Killian agreed to follow up.

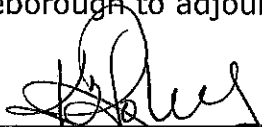
At 7:03pm, motion made by Mr. Ruff, seconded by Councilman Roseborough to go into executive session. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

At 7:31pm, motion made by Mr. Gilbert, seconded by Councilman Roseborough to come out of executive session. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

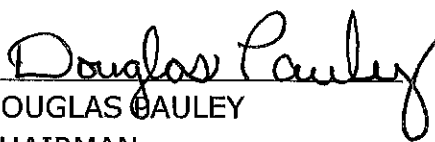
Mr. Pauley said there was no action taken during executive session.

18. ADJOURN

At 7:31pm, motion made by Councilman Ruff, seconded by Councilman Roseborough to adjourn. ***The motion carried 6-0.***



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



DOUGLAS PAULEY
CHAIRMAN



FAIRFIELD

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Program of Work





FAIRFIELD

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Fairfield County Economic Development aims to increase economic opportunities for its residents and enhance the quality of life within its communities.

The goal of Fairfield County's economic development efforts is to create skilled, well-paying jobs. The county will achieve that goal by investing in industrial development, education and training, infrastructure, marketing, and housing. By making strategic public investments, Fairfield County will attract new, expanding, and startup businesses, tourists, and new residents that will provide new tax revenue for future investments in amenities and placemaking.

Economic Development Program of Work

- **Business Attraction**
- **Business Retention and Expansion**
- **Product Development**
- **Marketing and Promotion**

Target Industries



**Automotive &
Heavy
Equipment**



**Advanced
Manufacturing**



**Distribution &
Logistics**



**Light
Manufacturing &
Assembly**

Fairfield County Economic Development is a full-service economic development organization, providing existing industry support and site and building selection assistance for new and expanding industries. Additionally, the office provides demographic and labor statistics, wage and benefits surveys, and relocation support.

Goal: Quality Sites and Buildings to Attract and Retain Businesses

Strategy: Create an Ongoing Funding Source for Product Development

Action Steps:

- Develop a policy to re-invest proceeds from spec building sales in new spec buildings and/or site development.
- Explore using one cent sales tax funds to support priority economic development projects such as site preparation, infrastructure to sites, and spec building development.
- Develop a list of priority capital improvement projects to guide future budgeting.
- Support applications and grant matches for site development funding programs.

Strategy: Invest in Industrial Site Development

Action Steps:

- Create and implement a site development plan that includes a phased approach to control, assess, and prepare sites.
- Develop updated plan for the mega site and implement to make the site competitive and strengthen partnerships to facilitate development.
- Explore public-private partnerships for development in Fairfield Commerce Center.
- Close on Peach Road site and prepare the site.
- Conduct a site identification study to identify land for future industrial development and include identifying rail sites in the study.
- Preserve industrial zoned land and ensure the highest and best use of industrial sites, especially rail sites.
- Complete bridge repair and road improvement projects that will enhance industrial locations.

Strategy: Support Retail, Commercial, and Mixed-Use Developments

Action Step:

- Complete the Palmetto Sites Program for Exit 32 and bring those recommendations to County Council for action.

Goal: Retain and Support the Expansion of Existing Businesses

Strategy: Implement a Proactive BRE Program

Action Steps:

- Conduct regular business visits to identify barriers to growth and assess expansion potential.
- Organize networking events for existing businesses to connect.
- Complete a resource guide for existing businesses.
- Evaluate county finance and incentive programs to ensure they support existing businesses.

Goal: Develop a Strong Talent Pipeline

Strategy: Connect Business and Education to Collaborate on Education and Training

Action Steps:

- Conduct a feasibility study for a training/career center and/or center of industry excellence in Fairfield Commerce Center.

- Promote the “teacher’s village” as a significant investment in talent attraction and development.
- Incorporate the skills needed by new regional employers (e.g., Scout Motors) in career pathways.
- Participate in regional efforts to plan and secure funding for training initiatives.

Goal: Raise Awareness of Fairfield County as a Choice Business Location

Strategy: Market and Promote Fairfield County to Attract Investment

Action Steps:

- Implement the newly developed comprehensive marketing plan.
- Continue to participate in regional and state business attraction programs, events, missions, and sales trips.
- Maintain up-to-date marketing collaterals – website, social media platforms, available properties flyers, e-communications, etc.
- Implement an internal communications strategy to socialize the “Fairfield County story” creating local ambassadors.

Strategy: Invest in Amenities and Placemaking Assets

Action Steps:

- Issue a Request for Proposals for gateway and wayfinding signage design.
 - Fund implementation of the resulting recommendations for gateway and wayfinding signage.
 - Make Exits 32 and 42 a priority in implementation.
 - Explore corporate partnerships to design, fund, and install gateway and wayfinding signage.
- Create a uniform sign code to improve appearance.
- Update penalties for code enforcement to improve appearance.
- Continue to seek partners to develop an urgent care facility and other health care services that will close access gaps.
- Seek out best practices in blight reduction from similar communities.

Goal: An Innovative Economic Development Organization

Strategy: Invest for Success

Action Steps:

- Continue to explore the feasibility of a public-private nonprofit economic development organization to engage the private sector, be more responsive to business, and raise additional funds for economic development.
- Upfit the economic development office with marketing visuals.

Strategy: Strengthen Partnerships

Action Step:

- Increase participation in regional economic development alliances and leverage their marketing outreach and support services.
- Strengthen connections with municipalities, adjoining counties, the region, and state to advance Fairfield County’s economic development goals.

Fairfield County Economic Development Implementation Priorities

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Priorities

- Mega Site Plan and Implementation
- Site Infrastructure
- Product Development Funding
- Issue RFP for Signage Design

2

Priorities

- Complete Housing Study
- Zoning Updates for Housing
- Public-Private Partnership for Economic Development
- Health Care Partnerships

3

Priorities

- Explore Exit 32 Plan
- Training Center Feasibility Study

Additional Priorities of Fairfield County

Beyond the Economic Development Program of Work, there are county priorities that support economic development.

Affordable Housing

- Complete the housing needs analysis.
- Invest in water and sewer and wastewater treatment plant.
- Make updates to the zoning ordinance to support housing development (e.g., density, accessory dwelling units, etc.).

Downtown Development

- Support Wi-Fi throughout downtowns.
- Utilize CDBG funds to assist downtown development.
- Implement the Recreation Economies for Rural Communities strategic plan.
- Invest in appearance and landscaping to improve areas connecting to downtowns.

Broadband

- Expand Wi-Fi to cover all county buildings.
- Review the map of broadband needs to identify service gaps, customer needs, and funding opportunities.