



**MINUTES
SPECIAL CALL MEETING
JANUARY 17, 2024
6:00PM**

Present: Cornelius Robinson, Timothy Roseborough, Douglas Pauley, Clarence Gilbert, Shirley Greene, Peggy Swearingen, Dan Ruff (Council Members); 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.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Pauley called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion made by Councilman Gilbert, seconded by Councilman Ruff to approve the agenda. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

3. INVOCATION

Councilman Robinson led the invocation.

4. HIRING NEW ADMINISTRATOR – ACTION TEM

Motion made by Mr. Gilbert, seconded by Mr. Ruff to hire Laura Johnson as the new Administrator with the Chair working out a contract.

Mr. Robinson made a substitute motion, seconded by Mrs. Swearingen to hire Matthew DeWitt as the new Administrator. Those in favor (by show of hands) were Roseborough, Ruff and Swearingen. Those opposed (by show of hands) were Robinson, Gilbert and Pauley – Greene abstained. Mrs. Swearingen said only in Fairfield County would County Council even consider hiring an Administrator whose husband bashed her employer on Facebook using such vulgar, unnecessary language saying how dumb they were. What kind of example was it setting for their school children, who would be the County's future leaders? What she knew was what she heard about complaints from employees. They had to trust what their attorney told them about what was right for the county and not just their administration. The Administrator would be the County's representative at the state level with economic development possibilities, wastewater treatment plant meetings and anything to make the county grow. They had no updates on the wastewater plant. They had one cement plant that was coming that year. They no longer had a

strong economic development program and she did not want to forget the continuing Farmer's Market saga. As an FYI, she said to not forget about their finances. Their balance as of 12/31/23 was \$12.8 million. She asked the Treasurer to explain. Their general fund balance as of that day was -\$1.73 million. Their part of the Dominion money was \$13.1 million. Their general fund balance was \$15.2 million. The only way they would get more money in the general fund would be if the \$7 million of uncollected taxes came in. She asked if those actions gave the green light for their county employees to bash their supervisors with no action being taken. Was that what Fairfield County had lowered itself to? Was that what they really wanted for their leadership? What was posted on Facebook may not have been illegal but it was threatening and certainly unprofessional. A marriage made a person one so was the husband speaking for his wife also when he posted that vulgar material? Only in Fairfield.

Mrs. Greene said it was very important to select a Fairfield County Administrator that they were comfortable with and had shown some leadership. A lot of discussion was had about information being shared. She certainly would not want anyone threatened and she apologized to those who were threatened because she did not think it was proper or acceptable. She thought they had needs in the county and the longer they prolonged it, the longer it would take for them to address what they needed. She said she abstained because she thought they should start over. She thought they should hire a firm to help them find an Administrator. There was too much misinformation and other things happening. If they listened to what was said that day, they had \$15 million and the money that came in from Dominion. With the cost of employees, materials and everything else that went with running a business, there would be times when the revenue was not complete. If they were a million dollars behind last week and they were \$14 million ahead that week, they knew it would probably last them until the end of the year. Everyone was concerned about the fact that they were not informed about the IRS statements. They were all legitimate concerns. She looked at the paperwork and it was what they all needed to do. When they elected her, they asked her to represent them. She would have to make some difficult decisions but it was okay because she did not believe in passing the buck. She believed in stating exactly what she thought and she thought they should start over, hire a firm and not let someone else run the county that was not in those seats. They had to make decisions and she stood by the fact that she would abstain.

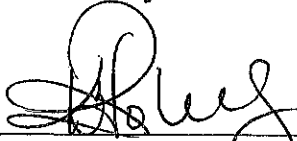
Mr. Ruff asked if an abstaining vote was considered a "yes" vote. Mr. Pauley said yes but unless he amended Mr. Gilbert's motion, they had to take a vote on his motion first. Mr. Ruff said he thought the substitute motion was voted on first. Mr. Robinson said they may need to take a recess for legal advice. At 6:11pm, Mr. Pauley said they would recess while he reached out to the County Attorney.

At 6:17pm, Mr. Pauley came out of recess after talking to the County Attorney. He said Mr. Ruff made a motion to substitute/change the name Laura Johnson to Matthew DeWitt. They had three in favor of Mr. DeWitt and Mrs. Greene's abstaining was considered a "no" vote. They were then back to

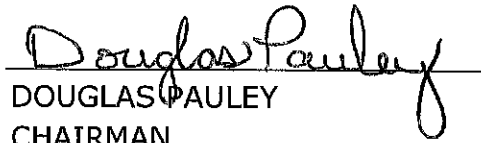
the original motion from Mr. Gilbert. Mrs. Swearingen asked if she could make another substitute motion and Mr. Pauley said no ma'am. Those in favor (by show of hands) were Gilbert, Robinson, and Pauley. Those opposed (by show of hands) were Roseborough, Ruff, and Swearingen. Mrs. Greene abstained. Mr. Pauley said that vote failed as well.

5. ADJOURN

At 6:19pm, motion made by Councilman Gilbert, seconded by Councilman Ruff to adjourn the meeting. ***The motion carried 7-0.***



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



DOUGLAS PAULEY
CHAIRMAN