



**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 8, 2021**

Present: Moses Bell, Shirley Greene, Mikel Trapp, Timothy Roseborough, Doug Pauley, Cornelius Robinson, Clarence Gilbert, Council Members; Jason Taylor, County Administrator; Laura Johnson, Assistant County Administrator; Patti L. Davis, Clerk to Council.

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 Bell called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Bell called for approval of the agenda. Council Member Pauley stated he has a motion. Chairman Bell again requested approval of the agenda. Council Member Pauley stated he had a motion before approval of the agenda. Chairman Bell stated Council Member Pauley is not recognized and again called for approval of the agenda. Council Pauley stated he feels it is important that the business of the County is conducted in accordance with the law, and considering that no members are attorneys and the fact that we do not have a County Attorney present . . . Chairman Bell again attempted to call down Council Member Pauley several times. Council Member Pauley continued stating the County Attorney is not present tonight due to actions of certain Council Members, and Council should adjourn the meeting. He reminded Council that motions to adjourn upon receiving a second according to the By-Laws is not debatable and must go immediately to a vote. Council Member Gilbert and Council Member Robinson seconded the motion. Chairman Bell stated it has been moved and seconded and then called for the vote. Council Member Trapp inquired of Council Member Pauley to state what Council is voting on. Council Member Pauley stated the motion is to adjourn the meeting. ***The motion failed by vote of 3-4 with Council Members Roseborough and Trapp, Chairman Bell and Vice Chair Greene voting nay.*** Chairman Bell stated this was a first. It was then moved by Council Member Trapp, seconded by Vice Chair Greene, to approve the agenda as stated. Council Member Robinson made a motion to amend

the agenda by adding an executive session for tonight to discuss an employee contractual matter. ***The motion to amend failed 3-4 with Council Members Trapp and Roseborough, Chairman Bell and Vice Chair Greene voting nay.*** Chairman Bell called for the vote on the motion to approve the agenda. ***The motion passed 4-3 with Council Members Pauley, Robinson and Gilbert voting nay.***

3. INVOCATION

Council Member Trapp led the invocation.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Council Member Trapp, seconded by Vice Chair Greene, to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting of January 25, 2021. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

5. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

- A. Proclamation Declaring February as Black History Month. Chairman Bell requested for the Clerk to read the first two paragraphs of the Proclamation. Chairman Bell stated Council proclaims February as Black History Month for the County of Fairfield, State of South Carolina.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

- A. An Ordinance to Amend the Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2020, and Ending June 30, 2021, and Authorizing the Supplemental Appropriation of Funds for Increased Fire Services. Chairman Bell opened the public hearing at 6:06 p.m. No one contacted the Clerk to speak; therefore, Chairman Bell closed the public hearing at 6:06 p.m.

7. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND ORDERS

- A. Second Reading Ordinance No. 763: An Ordinance to Amend the Fairfield County Land Management Ordinance (No. 599) to Provide for the Zoning Reclassification from R-1 (Single Family Residential District) to R-2 (Inclusive Residential District) of 1.16 Acres Owned by Russell and Marilyn McDonald (Applicants). This is Tax Map No. 134-04-02-019-000. Property is Located at 1616 Antioch Cemetery Road, Ridgeway, SC 29130. Motion made by Council Member Trapp, seconded by Vice Chair Greene, to approve Second Reading of Ordinance No. 763. Per Mr. Taylor, Mr. Chris Clauson is present to discuss the details of this request. This has been properly noticed, posted and has gone before the Planning Commission with recommendation for approval. Per Mr. Clauson, the request is being made

by Mr. and Mrs. McDonald. This was heard by the Planning Commission last week, and they did approve unanimously. This is 1.16 acres that was zoned R-1 which would not allow for mobile homes. It is near the lake but is not on the lake. The land management ordinance would allow for this rezoning to R-2, which would allow for the mobile home to be placed in this area. There were no public comments at the Planning Commission's hearing. It has been posted that the public hearing before Council will be held on February 22. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

- B.** Third and Final Reading Ordinance No. 761: An Ordinance to Amend the Budget Ordinance for Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2020, and Ending June 30, 2021, and Authorizing the Supplemental Appropriation of Funds for Increased Fire Services. Motion made by Council Member Trapp, seconded by Vice Chair Greene, to approve Third and Final Reading of Ordinance No. 761. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

- C.** Emergency Ordinance No. 764: An Emergency Ordinance to Declare a Local State of Emergency in Fairfield County and Providing for Conducting Electronic Meetings for Fairfield County Council and All Fairfield County Boards and Commissions. Motion made by Council Member Trapp, seconded by Council Member Roseborough, to approve Emergency Ordinance No. 764. Council Member Gilbert states he understands the current environment with the COVID pandemic, but he has received more concerned citizen phone calls and complaints in the past three weeks than he has during his full tenure on Council. He feels we need to find a safe way for citizens to attend the meetings and share their concerns with the full Council in person. Council Member Gilbert then moved that this item be tabled for further consideration and have staff determine a safe way for citizens to attend and provide public comments at the meetings. Council Member Pauley seconded the motion to table. Council Member Trapp does not see how this is possible since there are Council Members present tonight without a mask who are talking and spreading germs. Council Member Pauley stated he is 6 feet away from Council Member Trapp, but Council Member Trapp stated he is still in the building. Council Member Pauley inquired of Mr. Taylor if he and the Clerk could figure out a way to provide a safe environment for the citizens. Per Mr. Taylor, this would have to be looked at to see how we can accomplish this. It may have to be done through electronic means initially. This has been preliminarily looked into knowing this would happen, but a plan is not in place at this moment. Council Member Trapp inquired of the protocol for masks for employees in the building. Per Mr. Taylor, masks are highly encouraged. The County was advised previously that it could not require masks, but we do think this

is important. Even though it cannot be required, action could be taken in the personnel records if an employee was not considerate of others. Council Member Gilbert stated if a safe study is done allowing the public to come in to comment, everyone would have to follow the rules. Mr. Taylor stated we can reach out to see what is working for other counties. Chairman Bell inquired of Mr. Taylor what is the procedure concerning a motion to table and if this can be discussed. It has been some time since Mr. Taylor has looked into the parliamentary procedures and would hate to be the final authority on this. Chairman Bell will allow the continued discussion. Vice Chair Green feels we have heard a lot from our healthcare professionals in the Country knowing the facts of COVID-19. It has subsided some, but we now have more virulent forms of the virus. She would not want to put people at risk any more than they already are. There are members of Council who have had COVID-19, and if she listens to what they have told her, they would not wish it on anyone else, and we all want to be safe. Having an environment where people come in and not knowing their families or contacts would force us to accept a large risk. She does think, however, zoom meetings or anything else that could facilitate public comment should be tried because she thinks it is very important that the public has a voice. Council Member Robinson stated the City is holding their meetings at the Old Armory which makes them able to space out the citizens, so maybe we could explore something such as this. Also, for information, everything is able to be discussed except adjournment. Council Member Trapp agrees with Vice Chair Greene in that we should follow the route we have been following until things lighten up some. If we as elected officials cannot conduct ourselves in a safe manner, who are we to tell citizens to come in and not wear a mask. Council Member Gilbert stated if it is done electronically, it should not be a problem. Chairman Bell called for the vote on the motion to table. ***The motion failed 3-4 with Council Members Roseborough and Trapp, Vice Chair Greene and Chairman Bell voting nay.*** Chairman Bell then called for the vote on the original motion to approve the Emergency Ordinance. He also questioned how many Emergency Ordinances have been passed. Per Mr. Taylor and the Clerk, it would be five or six as they are each in effect for 60 days. Motion to approve again made by Council Member Trapp and seconded by Council Member Roseborough. ***The motion carried 4-3 with Council Members Pauley, Robinson and Gilbert voting nay. (Note: After further research following closure of the meeting, the vote on Emergency Ordinance No. 764 failed because the vote had to be at least 2/3 majority.)***

8. BOARD AND COMMISSION MINUTES - Received as Information

- A. Disabilities and Special Needs
- B. Chamber of Commerce

9. BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

None.

10. OLD BUSINESS

None.

11. NEW BUSINESS

None.

12. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- A.** Create Opportunity Columbia Presentation by Beth Ruffin and Stan Gray, Managing Directors, and Ben Rex, Director - Economic and Community Development Initiative. Per Mr. Taylor, this is an opportunity coming to us through the Economic Development office, and they are also working with the School District. This is a program that would allow the County to perform some workforce development in order to train citizens to be able to move into higher paying jobs. An assessment would be performed to see if the citizen has an aptitude for computer programming. Mr. Taylor asked for Sam Hodges to give further information and introduce the speakers. Mr. Hodges introduced the speakers and stated questions could be answered at the end of the presentation. Mr. Taylor also stated this is for information only tonight and will not be an item requiring a vote. However, if Council feels positively about this program, it is possible a vote will be needed for funding in the future. Mr. Rex began the presentation, stating he is a resident of the Midlands and appreciates the opportunity to present the information to possibly partner with the County and the School District to advance opportunities for the residents of Fairfield County. Mr. Rex started a software company halfway through his graduate year. Over the course of the last 20 years, he has been fortunate for the business to grow; however, one of the challenges the company faces is finding talented, trained software engineers in the region. He has been working on this issue for many years, and it is not because the talent is not here. It is instead because the region has not figured out how to activate our talent, how to identify, train and pull our talent through. He feels talent is equally distributed but opportunity is not. He wants to work to bring this career progression to Fairfield County over the course of 2021 in ways that create career opportunities. The goal is to dramatically

increase the supply of high demand software engineers in the Midlands of South Carolina over the coming couple of years. To do this, a company has been brought in who has pioneered a screening and training model by creating software engineer populations at scale in markets such as Baltimore, Denver, Chicago and Portland. They have been partnered with Midlands Technical College, and the College takes a screened participant through a six month intensive training program that readies them for a state registered apprenticeship that is salaried for two years with benefits with a major employer who will prepare these folks to be in long term constructive local employ. There is no technical background required, and over the course of 18 years, it has been shown that there is no difference in performance based on gender, race geography or socioeconomics. The only application criteria to begin the screening is that you have a GED or a high school diploma. To begin with, the participant would take a 90 minute web-based screening, and on completing and passing that screening, would be offered a six month intensive training that is full-time, 9-5, five days a week at Midlands Technical College at no cost to the trainee. Mr. Rex and his team are working hard to eliminate barriers to this career. The participant is then paired with a major employer, like Colonial Life or Diesel Laptops, for a two year salaried apprenticeship, and the outcome is that over the course of the last 18 years, inflation adjusted, the average participant before training was making \$12 per hour with no benefits, and the average graduate at the five year point is making more than \$80,000 per annum with health and retirement benefits. This outcome has been achieved with more than 1,000 trained software engineers. Software engineering is a wonderful career fiscally but is also the second highest rated career in U.S. News and Reports, both in terms of demand from individuals and demand from employers. There is a deficit of about 300 software engineers in the Midlands region at present. There is documented success with bringing folks through software engineering careers into management and corporate leadership rolls, and Mr. Rex and his partners want to bring this to the Midlands of South Carolina. In Fairfield County, they are looking to train folks to support existing businesses and to attract new businesses to the region from an economic and community development perspective, which would build the income base so that the tax base in the County is strengthened. It is also important to build opportunity at an individual level providing a career ladder for those whom this historically was not possible. Mr. Rex stated he is looking for Fairfield County's help in encouraging the residents to take this screening. The first full scale program is beginning at Midlands Technical College on February 27. Every 10 weeks, between

15 and 20 new software engineers will be trained in this program. It would be nice for a representative number of those to come from Fairfield County. This initiative serves Richland, Lexington and Fairfield Counties. They would also like the County's help in identifying employers in Fairfield County who would benefit from employing strong software engineers that are home grown here in the Midlands region. Finally, financial support is being sought to provide a grant to the program in the amount of \$10,000 and future support of residents of the County who participate in the program and move forward on this career ladder. Mr. Rex also introduced Beth Ruffin and Stan Gray. Mrs. Ruffin stated she is happy to be a part of the team and gave a synopsis of her background. Mr. Gray also gave a synopsis of his background and stated he is excited for the potential to collaborate with the County. Mr. Rex stated he is very appreciative of Council's time and opened the floor for any questions. Council Member Robinson inquired if WIN scores are required. Per Mr. Rex, these are not required. Vice Chair Greene inquired if there is an age limit. Per Mr. Rex, there is no age limit. There is an age minimum of 18, and the oldest participant that he is aware of is 71-years-old. Per Mr. Taylor, Council would be requested to provide \$10,000 initially toward this program. This came to our attention because we are always looking for something to give us an edge when it comes to economic development. Work force development is something the County needs to invest in, whether it is the Promise Program or this program. It could be used when the County is trying to market itself to industry. Per Mr. Hodges, this program has been deployed in five different cities with extreme success. From a recruitment standpoint with economic development, this will be very attractive to incoming technology users. Mr. Taylor inquired if there is also funding per person. Per Mr. Rex, consideration would be appreciated for funding for every Fairfield County resident who comes through the program. There are other groups offering support between \$3,000 to \$6,000 per student. Mr. Hodges inquired what would be a good number of participants in the program per year. Mr. Rex would love to see a minimum of a half dozen folks coming from Fairfield County. Training will be provided to 80 people per year, and hopefully this will include 11 to 12 folks from Fairfield County per year. Chairman Bell inquired concerning the salary after training. Per Mr. Rex, the average person coming into the program typically has a service job making \$10 or \$12 per hour. When they finish their training program, they begin their employment with a salary of \$40,000 plus benefits with a major employer, and their salary ladders up over the coming years. The employer commits in year 3 to have them at a market salary for a

mid-level software chain. This translates to somewhere between \$70,000 and \$80,000. Council Member Pauley inquired how long the training would last. Per Mr. Rex, the training lasts for six months and is a full-time 40 hour week program. The apprenticeship that follows is a two year salaried commitment. Council Member Pauley inquired if the payment from the County would occur once the training is completed or at the beginning, because he is concerned if someone started the program and then decided not to finish. Per Mr. Rex, this would be to support the cost of training for Fairfield County residents, so it would be before the training. However, this is something that can be talked through in terms of how the payment flow would work. Vice Chair Greene inquired how it would be handled for those coming through as high school graduates with a diploma or a GED and they may already be eligible for the Promise Program. Mr. Rex will defer to Dr. Rhames and the County staff on this. Council Member Robinson stated the program sounds great, but he is concerned there may be duplication of services. Midlands Tech has scholarships for Quick Jobs and WIOA has federal grants for free training. Mr. Taylor stated this was questioned initially, and his thoughts were that this should go through the school system or another existing program. This may be what happens in the end, and it might also be able to be paired with the Promise Program if there is money left over that is not being used that could then be put toward this program. There is much more to look at in working out the details. Our thoughts were to bring this to Council to see if there was interest in pursuing. If Council was not interested, the thought was not to waste staff time or the presenters' time pursuing and developing to the point where it could brought to Council for a full vote. Mr. Rex has discussed these possibilities and does not want to tap the same funding sources as programs that are already in place. Chairman Bell instructed Mr. Taylor this is worth looking into. He then thanked the group for the presentation.

- B. Association of Counties Presentation.** Mr. Taylor introduced Mr. Josh Rhodes, Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel for the Association who will be speaking on the Council/Administrator form of government and answer any questions Council may have. Mr. Rhodes stated it is his pleasure to present to Council tonight. A request was made for him to go through the Council/Administrator form of government, and he will spend a little time before this going through some general powers and roles of county government. The county forms of government are set out in Title 4 Chapter 9, 4-9-10, after the passage of the Home Rule Act in 1975. This section sets out all the

different forms of county governments. Many of the forms have changed over the last 45 years, but Fairfield is one that has not changed. Fairfield has been the Council/Administrator form of government since the inception of the Home Rule Act. This is the most popular form of government in that about 36 to 38 of the 46 counties operate under the Council/Administrator form of government. Section 4-9-25 sets out the general powers and the police powers, and this is the catch-all stating County Council has any authority, but is not restricted from doing so, by the state law or constitution for the health, safety or general welfare of the county. Things such as the Emergency Ordinance which passed tonight are covered in some different sections, but it was originally contemplated by this section. Section 4-9-30 lists the specific powers, covering about 17 different powers from purchasing real property, assessing property taxes, developing boards and commissions, developing land use plans, etc. Sections 4-9-40 and 41 have to do with working with the city to provide joint services. Section 4-9-110 provides for the Council to select a Chair, a Vice Chair and the Clerk to Council. In the Council-Administrator form of government, two employees work directly for the County Council, including the County Administrator and the Clerk to Council. Mr. Rhodes reiterated that he is here tonight to speak strictly on what is provided for by State law. General Council powers are covered in 4-9-610 which sets out what the Council does and what the Administrator does. Section 4-9-620 provides that the Council shall employ an administrator. The term and salary of this employment are determined by Council as a whole, which means a majority. Council can also determine a definite term, and this will be done by entering into a contract with the County Administrator. The section also provides for the event if the Council wanted to change administrators. Section 4-9-620 sets out the powers of the administrator. Mr. Rhodes stated his way of looking at the Council-Administrator form of government is like a private corporation. The County Council is the Board of Directors, and the County Administrator is the CEO. This means Council is the legislative body and will come up with the policies of the County. The County Administrator is the executive branch. He carries out the daily things that need to be done to carry out the policies established by the Council. Mr. Rhodes then listed some of the duties of the Administrator, including that the Administrator works for Council and everyone else works for the County Administrator. This is what makes the system hum and work so well. According to Section 4-9-660, except for the purposes of inquiries and investigations, the Council shall deal with County officers and employees who are subject to the direction and supervision of the County

Administrator, meaning non-elected official employees, solely through the Administrator. Neither the Council nor its membership can give orders or instructions concerning any such officers or employees, meaning if it is not the Administrator or the Clerk to Council, in general, Council should not be intervening. The Administrator works for Council, and Council should be going through the Administrator. Council Member Pauley wished to ask a question and inquired if Mr. Rhodes had completed his presentation. Mr. Rhodes was going to have a discussion concerning the County Attorney. Chairman Bell inquired if Council wants something done, they are to communicate this to the Administrator, and questioned if they can ask to do just about anything. Per Mr. Rhodes, they can certainly communicate anything to the Administrator, and the Administrator works for the Council as a whole. Chairman Bell inquired concerning an example given to him by Mr. Rhodes, concerning the Economic Development Department. Per Mr. Rhodes, a county was not happy with a certain department head. Council went to the Administrator and said they wanted a new department head in that area. The Administrator pushed back a little bit, and Council then said if it was not done, they would be going in a different direction with the Administrator. The Administrator relented and did as the Council wished. Another example is that of an Administrator who was hired by a County and started getting rid of some of the department heads that the Council did not want him to get rid of. The Administrator failed to do as Council wished, and he is no longer employed with that County. Council Member Pauley inquired if Council can instruct the County Administrator to fire a County employee. Per Mr. Rhodes, pursuant to State law, he feels Council could do this. Council Member Pauley questioned this if Council is not supposed to get involved in the day to day operations. Per Mr. Rhodes, Council cannot go to that County employee and state they are fired, and any interaction with County employees is problematic. Pursuant to the State law, Mr. Rhodes does not see any prohibition for Council to do anything through the County Administrator. Mr. Rhodes is stating what legally can be done, but Council needs to decide if it is right or wrong. Council Member Pauley questioned if the Chairman has the authority to tell the County Administrator, when it comes to a County employee, who to hire based on gender, race or any other qualification. Mr. Rhodes does not think this is prevented by State law, but again, the Administrator works for the Council, not any individual. Any individual member can speak with the Administrator about anything they want, but the Administrator works for the whole Council. In his opinion, the discussion is headed toward more of a right versus wrong debate than what is provided in

the Statute. Council Member Gilbert questioned and also stated that a decision to get rid of a County employee should not be the decision of just one Council Member. Per Mr. Rhodes, this is correct, and Council should work as a whole. If the votes are there, one member could convey to the Administrator what Council requires for him to do. Council Member Gilbert inquired if the Administrator has the privilege to request the opinion of the full board. Mr. Rhodes stated this is an appropriate request. According to State law, the Administrator serves at the pleasure of County Council. The Administrator may have a contract, and there may also be local rules that would come into these decisions. Council Member Pauley inquired concerning vendors such as the County Attorney and newspapers and if this would also be a majority of Council or the decision of the County Administrator. Per Mr. Rhodes, this would depend on the local rules and the procurement policy. He would look at this as day to day operations which would be under the Administrator's purview. Many counties have stipulations if it is above a certain amount, certain type or certain length of contract, the Council has to approve. The County Attorney is a little different. It contemplates the only two employees that work for the County Council are the Clerk to Council and the Administrator. That being said, the last time this was surveyed, about 75% to 80% of the counties with the County Administrator form, the County Council hired the County Attorney. Mr. Rhodes feels there are reasons both ways. Obviously, the Statute contemplates everyone other than the Clerk to Council and the Administrator themselves working for the Council, but a lot of the County Attorney's role is to advise Council, sit in the Council meetings, etc. A lot of times the Council wants their own County Attorney, and they will hire their own attorney. There is an example where the County Administrator hired the County Attorney, and the County Attorney was acting like the Administrator's personal attorney with decisions that were not necessarily for the benefit of the whole Council. Mr. Rhodes is not saying that is what is going on here, and instead is simply giving an example. He feels Council can put this as an item for Executive Session and then vote on it. He opined this generally goes unchallenged. Council Member Pauley inquired if Mr. Rhodes feels it is best to bring in numerous attorneys to interview before hiring. Mr. Rhodes feels this would be necessary. With no further questions, Chairman Bell thanked Mr. Rhodes for the presentation.

- C.** Discussion Concerning Public Works Recycling Schedule. Per Mr. Taylor, Mr. Jonathan Burroughs brought this before Council a little while back and requested closure on Sundays and Wednesdays. This was based

on the fact that people were coming into Fairfield County from other counties because those counties were not open as much as Fairfield County. Other counties are open typically 50 hours a week whereas Fairfield County was open 70+ hours a week. This change was partially done in the hopes to deter this and also the department needed time to manage the recycling itself. There were, however, a lot of complaints about the Sunday closure. It is now being brought back to Council with the thought to open back up on Sunday but remain closed on Wednesday. Again, the County would have the ability on Wednesdays to manage the recycling. Right now, others are coming to pick it up. Last year, the County received \$24,000 for the metal. In the one month the department has been closed, the County has received almost \$7,000. The department is looking to more than triple the amount it has coming in on what is recaptured on recycling the metals alone. Again, the department would like to be closed on Wednesday. Also being noticed is an immediate savings on the yearly cost going over to waste management. In one month, there was a decrease of \$13,000 because more could be diverted to the recycling program. Some of this is also attributed to the fact that the sticker program is up and running again. Council Member Robinson inquired if this will be an item to revisit and revote on it. Per Mr. Taylor, last time this came before Council, it was being presented for information only; however, Council did vote on it. He does not, however, think it needed a vote as this would be considered day to day operations. Council Member Robinson stated it is definitely day to day, and he would be willing to wait and see if everybody can get used to it, and secondly, according to parliamentary procedures, only the prevailing side could bring it up. Chairman Bell stated he checked with the parliamentarian along with Mrs. Davis, and it does not need someone from the prevailing side. Council Member Robinson stated he would like this in writing. Council Member Pauley inquired of Mr. Taylor if this is the way it has always been done, that the prevailing side would have to bring an issue back up. Mr. Taylor said he thinks this is the way it has been done in the past. Again, this is one of those things that if Council feels it needs a vote, he can have an attorney check on this because it was voted on the first time. If no vote is needed, he would immediately open back up on Sundays if that would be acceptable with Council. Council Member Robinson made a motion to table this item until we seek the opinion of an attorney, and Council Member Pauley seconded this motion. He further stated he believes this is a County Administrator decision; however, once it came up for a vote, we need to consult with an attorney to make sure it is being done the correct way. Mr. Taylor stated this would be the pleasure

of Council, and he can check with an attorney. If a vote is needed, it can come back before Council, but if no vote is needed, he can immediately reopen on Sundays. Council Member Pauley would agree with this. Chairman Bell stated there is a motion on the floor to table and called for the vote. ***Motion failed 3-4 with Chairman Bell, Vice Chair Greene and Council Members Roseborough and Trapp voting nay.*** Council Member Trapp made a motion to approve reopening on Sundays, seconded by Council Member Roseborough. ***The motion passed 4-3 with Council Members Robinson, Pauley and Gilbert voting nay.*** Council Member Pauley requested the record to reflect that he is not opposed to Sunday, and just wanted to make sure it was procedurally done the correct way. Council Member Gilbert agreed with this statement.

- D.** Brad Douglas, Director of Emergency Management – COVID Testing and Vaccine Discussion. Per Mr. Douglas, today there were 1,593 cases reported, 5 of which were in Fairfield County. Everyone is aware of the spike we had after Christmas that went across the whole State. This hit around the week of January 13. The week of January 6, the State had an average of 3,682 per day with Fairfield County having 9 per day. The week after this is when the spike hit. South Carolina went up to 4,121 cases per day over a 7-day period with Fairfield County jumping dramatically to over 18 cases per day. Since this time, our numbers have returned to before spike numbers. Over the last two weeks, Mr. Douglas has monitored all the surrounding counties, including Richland, Newberry, Chester, Union, Kershaw and Lancaster. All the numbers from these counties have dropped for these two weeks, and he feels this is a good thing. He is hoping they will all drop again this week. The State has had two cases of the African strain and one case of the UK strain. Per DHEC, these are more contagious, but the symptoms are believed to be no more severe. The vaccines should also be just as effective against those as they are for the original strain. Chairman Bell inquired concerning the UK strain and the belief that this might be the dominant strain with it multiplying more rapidly than the other strains. Mr. Douglas stated he is not a medical doctor or a medical person, but based on what he has read, these strains do multiply quicker. There are other strains that no one talks about because we have not encountered them yet. He stated Chairman Bell is correct. As an overview to the South Carolina vaccine plan, each state is given an allotment of vaccines, and each state is responsible for developing its own vaccine plan. DHEC was tasked with the job of developing the plan. Originally the plan had 3 phases. This has now morphed to Phase 1,

which has subsets of Phase 1A, 1B and 1C and now just Phase 2. Phase 1A is the phase we are in right now. This was set to address the medical first responders, folks who deal with hospitals and other frontline workers. The population estimate of Phase 1A in South Carolina is a little under 1.3M people. Before going to Phase 1B, the hope is to get 70% of that population in Phase 1A. This number would be roughly 900,000 vaccinations. Right now, we are at just under 450,000. In the past several weeks, age 70 years and older has been added, and now 65 and older has been added. More people are being added to Phase 1A, which will push the implementation of Phase 1B a little. Phase 1B is estimated to begin in early spring, and its criteria has not been finalized yet. It will be frontline essential workers, first responders not covered in Phase 1A, corrections and teachers, but there has not been a finalization of that. Also, a lot of Fairfield's first responders fell in Phase 1A, and most who wanted the vaccine have now received it. Phase 1C would be everyone else not meeting 1A or 1B criteria but possibly have some healthcare issues. This is hopeful for late spring. Phase 2 will be everyone else who does not fall under the previous phases. The Pfizer vaccine is the one the first responders and hospitals are getting. The Moderna vaccine is being handled directly by the Federal Government to get these to CVS and Walgreens to make sure it is received by the long-term care facilities. The latest projection for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine is to push this out in April. Moderna and Pfizer are two-dose vaccines, and the Johnson & Johnson will be a one dose vaccine. To date, South Carolina has received 779,200 doses. They have administered 483,506 doses. The total vaccines administered or scheduled to be administered are 882,958. We expect to receive 16% more vaccines within the next three weeks. Larger weekly allocations are expected by March, and then by April, expectation is for a larger influx because of Moderna and Pfizer still producing and then Johnson & Johnson starting to produce. Council Member Pauley inquired if there will be an increase in vaccination sites in Fairfield County. Mr. Douglas stated this was actually his next point. Every vaccine site in the State is listed on the DHEC website. Fairfield right now is showing four vaccine sites. That means they have been approved as vaccinators. On the map, these vaccine sites are either red or green. If they are green, that means they have vaccines and are accepting appointments. If they are red, this means either they do not have vaccines and/or they are not accepting appointments. The only one green in the County right now is the Health Department. Fairfield Medical Associates, Lake Monticello Family Practice and Ridgeway Family Practice are the other three in the County, but they are showing

up red each time. A couple of weeks ago, Fairfield Medical had a vaccine site set up, but this was not done by Fairfield Medical. It was a one day event handled by DHEC and supported by the National Guard. Mr. Douglas has met with MUSC out of Lancaster along with the White Oak Conference Center representatives. We have been given permission to use this facility, and MUSC is willing to set up a seven day a week vaccination site. Everything is contingent upon a number of things, and the best case scenario would be set up in early March. DHEC has stated they will not be authorizing anymore vaccination sites until more vaccines become available. Council Member Pauley inquired if Fairfield County has had a problem with not having enough refrigerators to keep the vaccinations. Per Mr. Douglas, a lot of doctors have these; however, very few people had the ultra-cold ability. This would normally be found in the larger hospitals in the larger counties. Most counties have their hospital designated as their vaccinator. Fairfield County was not able to do this. Most of our first responders obtained their vaccine at Lexington Medical Center. The capability is needed to be able to freeze the vaccine for five days, which requires a certain thermometer. Council Member Robinson inquired if there are any legal ramifications concerning the County distributing the shots. Mr. Douglas stated this has not been discussed, but he will certainly raise this question. Council Member Gilbert stated some of the sites are taking appointments and not having the vaccine. Per Mr. Douglas, he has not heard this but has heard that some of the sites that are red have been giving vaccinations, such as the Jenkinsville site. They have been getting vaccines and distributing, but on the DHEC site, they are still listed as red. Mr. Taylor inquired as to the County allocation. Mr. Douglas stated there has only been mention of the allocation to the State, not the individual counties. People can also go anywhere to get the vaccines, even outside of their county. Mr. Douglas is attempting to assist MUSC as much as he can and will also ask for support from the National Guard. Mr. Douglas has also had a meeting with Mrs. White of Transit, concerning helping those citizens who fall in 1A, 65+ and who do not have transportation. This is difficult in that appointment times at the Health Department are difficult to get because when appointments are full on one day, they are also full three weeks later for the second doses. Chester County is open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and DHEC suggested maybe reaching out to them. However, they are also booked. So, Mr. Douglas and Mrs. White are attempting to search out where the vaccines are more abundant, and put a plan in place to get the citizens to the vaccine. Once White Oak is up and running, this will be a fairly easy shuttle service. Something will be sent out through social media soon

concerning a Tuesday shuttle to Lexington Medical Center for vaccinations. Chairman Bell inquired if the County Facebook has the notification for age 65 and over being eligible. Mr. Taylor stated he will get this on the page. Vice Chair Greene inquired if Mr. Douglas has discussed possibly using nurses to administer the vaccine to those who may be homebound or disabled and not easily transported. Mr. Douglas stated this is a conversation that is happening now concerning homebound citizens. This is a priority topic right now. A plan has not been finalized, but this is a topic of conversation right now. Mr. Taylor thanked Mr. Douglas for presenting this information tonight.

E. Update on Census Data. Per Mr. Taylor, he did expect to have this information tonight, but he was informed the information will not be released until tomorrow. This will be forwarded to Council through email once it is received.

F. Pharmacy-Lite Grand Opening February 18, 2021, at 11:00 a.m. Per Mr. Taylor, the Chamber is putting this event together and will be something very similar to the Sea-Pro grand opening.

13. CLERK TO COUNCIL'S REPORT

None.

14. COUNTY COUNCIL TIME

Gilbert - Council Member Gilbert would like to make a recommendation to Council to revisit Mr. Taylor's contract and suggests this to be a minimum of one year with a maximum of two years, due to the fact that this Council cannot impede on the future Council's decision. The prospect of a five month extension was not discussed with the full Council. Council Member Gilbert stated he, Mr. Robinson and Mr. Pauley were totally unaware of the idea before this motion was made. Anything that will affect the welfare of the County in such a great way should be discussed with the full Council, not just among four members. He questioned if Mr. Taylor was given a review before the decision was made to give the five month extension? He also questioned how he is supposed to know what area he needs to improve on. Council Member Gilbert, Mr. Robinson and Mr. Pauley were not informed of such a review with this new Board. He further wished to say to Mr. Taylor that he is a visionary, a professional, a great listener, an extremely easy person to work with, and he hopes Mr. Taylor knows the feelings of a few is not the consensus of many of the citizens of Fairfield County. He has received nonstop phone calls and emails from citizens who are concerned and in support of Mr. Taylor. He has

been a blessing to Fairfield County, and Council Member Gilbert cannot understand how or why someone would want to give a five month extension and pretend that the only motivation is so they can get a chance to further evaluate him. He has not encountered a single person who believes that is true. Council Member Gilbert hates the thought that there may be another reason so wrong that those who believe it are afraid to say it publically. He does, however, believe this to be the case. One other issue is how can a freshman member of Council chair committees without any training or experience with Council business, a freshman member over other members with two or more years of experience with Council in every single case. Now, our County Attorney has been forced out, and we have a ton of legal issues that he and Mr. Taylor were working on for the County. "What will we do now? I guess the fab 4 will handle it, and that is not good." Finally, this County consists of seven districts that are to be represented by Council. Council Member Gilbert would like to see that all discussion that may affect the County be discussed with all seven representatives, not just four. A couple of members may not have gotten their way on everything in the past, but nothing was ever hidden from all members before it was voted on. The same respect should be recognized now. "You may not like our take on some issues, but all Fairfield citizens must be represented in decisions this Council makes. Remember, the shoe one day will be on the other foot."

Trapp - Council Member Trapp stated he agrees with Mr. Gilbert, sometimes the shoe does get on the other foot.

Robinson - Council Member Robinson stated coming in tonight was a first for him seeing such a show of love for the Administrator. He is not sure about the other Council Members, but he has received more calls and emails and door knocks the past three weeks than he has received the last four years he has been on Council. Everyone is worried. The question is should our Administrator be worried? A five month contract does say pack your stuff and get ready.

Bell - Chairman Bell began with a story, true current correlations. The presidential election was held on November 3, 2020, and by November 7, 2020, the election was called for Joseph R. Biden as President, our 46th President. After a few weeks and many court cases, including the Supreme Court, everyone knew that Mr. Biden had won the election. Instead of accepting the election as it was, the former President decided that he would spread falsehoods and try to stir up his base with lies and rumors. He knew he had lost, more importantly, those around him knew he had lost, too. Yet, Mr. Trump was able to stir up people with his lies and rumors because those who knew the truth failed to speak the truth and instead supported the lies,

even though they knew the truth. This failure allowed the President to incite an insurrection on the Capital of the United States of America causing six people to be killed to include a police officer and over 140 injured Capital police. Why bring this up during Council time? Look around and see what folks are doing. The sad piece, we too have them in the ranks when they know better, but it fits their agenda, and politically they think it plays to their base and/or to those persons who they want to accept them. Now, look at the person with their vicious writings who has literally tried to destroy and to discredit all leaders who have the interest of their communities for whom they cannot control. Just see the tactics to incite. Let's go further, dig deeper. A person posted on their Facebook page the prejudice of the new County Council. Yet this is what they wrote prior to making that statement, "Look what the black volunteers did for Fairfield High School, restored it to its old glory days with no tax dollars. Great job to this group of volunteers." He further writes, "look what a group of whites did to fight city hall to save Mt. Zion. Now it will be our County headquarters. Thanks to them for their hard work to save a part of our history." He decided to gloat. Blacks, according to him, paid their own money, but whites got the tax dollars for their history. So then, is it about the administration building or about this person's history? Later that same person wrote, "if you want to help keep Jason Taylor as our manager, please join the team effort and let's get rotten fish out of Council Chambers and do what is best for our County." He knew what the connotation meant. Chairman Bell explained, "when the Africans came to America and they were packed in the bottom of ships like sardines, their manhood robbed and then their lives. When they died in the bottom of that ship, they laid them on others in the stench, and when the captain of the ship could not stand the odor any longer, he said get rid of those rotten fish." The person who thinks this way with the audacity to write it so others could see it, this is the same person many of you have chosen as your leader to carry your banners to follow. How sad. We have gotten hate mail, bully mailing, called the swamp, racist, scandalized on social media, making statements like "we are going to get y'all", causing my family to worry about me when coming to the meeting tonight, and much more. For the very people who have called us this, the condition is called psychological projection. Research on social projection supports the existence of false consensus affect whereby humans have a broad tendency to believe that others are similar to themselves and thus project their personal traits onto others. Whenever a narcissistic person feels threatened, they will call you the thing that they themselves are afraid that others see them as, and then they will try to stalk you, slander you or discredit you. They will try to sabotage and destroy you. They will start a smear campaign in attempts at character assassination. In their mind, frighteningly, you have become their mortal enemy. They also have no problem doing all of it pre-emptively and calling it

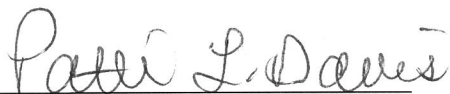
defense, pretending and trying to insinuate we are that, but they themselves are the culprits. Now imagine how the folks felt in the dome of democracy, our nation's capital, at the insurrection on January 6, 2021. It happened because lies, rumors and an incitement in chief. Citizens of Fairfield, let's not go there. Chairman Bell further stated a simple inquiry was made of why the County is spending all the money for advertisement with The Voice newspaper and none with The Chronicle and the Post of Fairfield Central. Trying to answer that question, he was given an opinion from the attorney. On the last page of the document, it noted the opinion due in part to the Procurement Manual being amended on August 1, 2019. So, Chairman Bell requested the minutes, since he could not remember the Procurement Manual coming before Council. In the search, there were no minutes because there was no amendment. The attorney apologized for the mistake. However, it appears to Chairman Bell that the opinion he concluded was based on a mistake. It may not have been but could have been. He questioned if the attacks on members of Council from The Voice are because of this inquiry. However, Chairman Bell stated we will work through the administration to determine fairness and equity for all concerning this matter. Chairman Bell stated he will not give up his values, his integrity nor his manhood to be liked, praised or accepted by people who care nothing for him nor his community or their values as was evident by all during his previous two years on Council. He believes Council has the wisdom, knowledge, strength and courage to move this County forward inclusively while receiving some benefits. He asked for help but will not accept disrespect in the process. There is a saying in the civil rights movement that Chairman Bell holds true today, "I too am a man". He thanks and looks forward for Council to work together to improve the quality of life for the citizens.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSION (SUBSEQUENT TO EXECUTIVE SESSION, COUNCIL MAY TAKE ACTION ON MATTERS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION).

None.

16. ADJOURN

At 7:37 p.m., it was moved by Council Member Trapp, seconded by Vice Chair Greene, to adjourn. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***



PATTI L. DAVIS
CLERK TO COUNCIL



MOSES BELL
CHAIRMAN