



**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL  
MAY 9, 2022**

**Present:** Moses Bell, Shirley Greene, Cornelius Robinson, Mikel Trapp, Timothy Roseborough, Clarence Gilbert, Doug Pauley (Council Members); Malik Whitaker (County Administrator), Charles Boykin (County Attorney).

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

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion made by Councilman Trapp, seconded by Councilwoman Greene, to approve the agenda. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

**3. INVOCATION**

Councilman Pauley led the invocation.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion made by Councilman Trapp, seconded by Councilwoman Greene to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting of April 25, 2022. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

**5. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

National Public Works Week May 15-21, 2022

Emergency Medical Services Week May 15-21, 2022

Deputy Administrator Williams read the proclamations in their entirety and acknowledged the presence of Public Works Director, Jonathan Burroughs and EMS Director, Mike Tanner at the meeting. Mr. Bell asked Mr. Burroughs to stand and thanked him and his staff for their work. He asked him to post the proclamation in his department so that his staff would know how much they were appreciated. Mr. Gilbert said every time he had called on him for assistance he was always "johnny on the spot" and he wanted him to know

how much he appreciated it and the hard work he did. His staff seemed to enjoy working for him. It was important that the leader of a department had a standard that his staff would want to follow. After the reading of the EMS proclamation, Mr. Bell asked Director Mike Tanner, to stand and thanked him and his staff for their service and he asked him to post the proclamation in his department to show the staff how much they were appreciated. Mr. Bell recalled working with a man who cut his thumb off. They were able to find the thumb and they took it to the Midford EMS station. It was transported to Richland and to that day, he still had his thumb. He thanked him again.

**6. 1<sup>ST</sup> PUBLIC COMMENT (3 MINUTES): INPUT MUST PERTAIN TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA, FOR WHICH NO PUBLIC HEARING IS REQUIRED OR HAS BEEN SCHEDULED. THE TOTAL TIME ALLOCATED TO THIS PUBLIC COMMENT SEGMENT IS 30 MINUTES.**

Dr. Roberts read the following statement:

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.

As stated, speakers are expected to express themselves within the time, place and manner previously described. Any violation will result in a warning from the Chair of County Council or the presiding officer. Any failure to heed the warning of the Chair or presiding officer will result in the violating speaker forfeiting their opportunity to finish speaking or to speak during the remainder of the meeting. Council welcomes the comments from members of the public and ask for the cooperation of everyone to allow for the orderly conduct of the people's business.

- Jeff Schaffer
- Randy Bright – Employee Survey

**7. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

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, 2022; to Provide for the Levy of Taxes for Fairfield County for the Fiscal

Year Commencing July 1, 2022; to Establish Fees and Service Charges for Fairfield County for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2022; to Provide for the Expenditure of Tax Revenues and Other County Related Funds; to Provide for Other County Purposes; to Provide for Certain Fiscal and Other Matters Relating to County Government and Other Matters Related Thereto. Mr. Bell opened the public hearing at 6:16pm. One person signed up to speak – Randy Bright. Mr. Bell closed the public hearing at 6:20pm.

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

**A.** First Reading (By Title Only) Ordinance No. 794: An Ordinance to Establish the Millage Rate for Fairfield County for the Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2022. Motion made by Councilman Trapp, seconded by Councilman Roseborough. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

**B.** Second Reading Ordinance No. 793: To Establish Operating and Capital Budgets for the Operation of the County Government of Fairfield County for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2022; to Provide for the Levy of Taxes for Fairfield County for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2022; to Establish Fees and Service Charges for Fairfield County for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2022; to Provide for the Expenditure of Tax Revenues and Other County Related Funds; to Provide for Other County Purposes; to Provide for Certain Fiscal and Other Matters Relating to County Government and Other Matters Related Thereto. Motion made by Councilman Trapp, seconded by Vice Chair Greene. Mr. Bell said that he spoke to Mr. Whitaker and it appeared that a mistake was made with the Sheriff's budget. It went up versus all of the other ones. Mr. Whitaker said they would review it. There were two account items that went up – the equipment maintenance agreement and the software maintenance agreement. They were going to research that to find out why they went up. ***The motion carried 5-2 with Councilmen Gilbert and Pauley voting in the negative.***

## **9. BOARD AND COMMISSION MINUTES – (information only)**

Aeronautics Commission – April 19, 2022

Disabilities & Special Needs – March 18, 2022

## **10. BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS**

Disabilities & Special Needs – Diane Willis, District 1. Motion made by Councilwoman Greene, seconded by Councilman Trapp. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

## **11. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**12. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**13. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

**A. Employee Engagement and Productivity Survey** – Mr. Whitaker said good strategic plans use data on current activity to plan and develop goals and actions for improvement. In support of their future, he was seeking the support of County Council to purchase an employee engagement survey from TalentKeepers – he referenced the materials placed in front of them. He said they were looking to purchase the Foundational Plan, which had three categories and would cost \$3,730. He said their tag line was “the trusted name in employee engagement and retention solutions since 2000”. The rationale for the survey was because Fairfield County government had a staff of 311 people. The leadership believed that engaging staff (listening and learning from them about their experiences as staff members) at all levels was critical to improving employee retention, supporting increase in productivity and improving job satisfaction. As a group, they were seeking to become high functioning and organizationally healthy. Such governments engaged all levels of staff to understand why people join, stay and leave. Fairfield County was in need of meaningful data to help them understand why talented employees chose to join, stay and leave. Meaningful data about why talented employees chose to join, stay and leave could be collected through an employee engagement survey system. They settled on this quote as the most economical to meet their data needs. That day, he received an end-user license agreement and purchase agreement that he would review and he was seeking support (Council’s up or down vote) to purchase the employee survey. Mr. Bell asked if it would measure training needs. Mr. Whitaker said it would measure the needs and challenges. Mr. Bell asked if it would address how to increase productivity and Mr. Whitaker said yes. Mr. Gilbert asked if the expense could be taken from HR. Mr. Whitaker said after talking to the HR Director, it could be taken from the general operating or the HR. Mr. Gilbert asked why it needed to be voted on. Mr. Whitaker said it was not as much a vote but support because the request originated from Council. Mr. Bell said they would vote on it. Mr. Gilbert asked why they needed to vote on it when they did not vote on the poll workers. It was something that was needed. Mr. Bell said they would vote. Mr. Gilbert asked why. Mr. Bell said because he said they were going to vote. He said you (Gilbert) asked the question and he was going to get what he wanted - what was his problem. Mr. Gilbert said his problem was his (Bell) response. He asked why did they have to vote on it. Mr. Bell said because they needed to see how Council would respond – it was a Council decision. Mr. Gilbert said it was a Council

decision on the poll workers too but he (Bell) made the decision to do it. Mr. Bell said he talked to him (Gilbert) about the poll workers (since he wanted to bring it up). He said he told Mr. Gilbert that Mr. Pauley might not agree with it and asked him where he stood. At that point, someone from the audience said – excuse me, you all said we could not argue with each other and they (Council) should not argue with each other. Mr. Gilbert said he was not arguing with him. Mr. Bell asked if there were any other questions from Council. Mr. Pauley asked Mr. Whitaker who would conduct the survey and where would the results go. Mr. Whitaker said it was all software based and would go to the vendor. Mr. Bell asked Mr. Whitaker if he would get the results of the survey and if it would be handled by him and he said yes – he and the HR department and the results would be shared with Council. Motion made by Councilman Pauley, seconded by Vice Chair Greene to approve. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

Mrs. Williams stated the SC Highways Committee voted to recommend that South Carolina Scenic Byway designation be bestowed on three sections in Fairfield County: Section 1 begins at the intersection of SC 34 and Coleman Highway near the Ridgeway town limits and proceeds along Dogwood Street, turns east on Ruff Street and then north on Palmer, ending at the intersection of Palmer and Thomas Street. Section 2 begins at the intersection of Palmer and Thomas Street and continues 15 miles north US 21, ending at the intersection with Camp Welfare Road. Section 3 was a 10-mile section that formed the northern route of the byway. It began at the intersection of Camp Welfare Road and US 21 and traveled West across I-77 and SC 200 where it became Mobley Highway. The recommendation would be forwarded to the SC General Assembly for final designation. After final designation, these sections and various locations along the byways could be promoted as tourists attractions for the County. It would be another tool to promote tourism in Fairfield County. Mr. Bell asked if there were any questions. He said it was a good deal for Fairfield County, especially the Ridgeway area.

Mrs. Williams stated over the next six months, she and Mr. Whitaker would work with the departments to develop a strategic plan for the County. The goal was to guide the direction for the County by developing the right goals regarding decisions related to updating policies, procedures, and selecting projects going into the next budget and calendar year. Starting in June and July, they would meet with department leaders individually to discuss their strategic goals. They would focus on what each department was trying to achieve, gather data that qualifies if the goals had been achieved, review current programs and services and measure the performance of those programs/services. The process would not only include identifying these things with department heads but also updating the County's website to



reflect current and accurate information and streamlining how they communicated. They would like to include a strategic planning session with County Council after July 1, once the budget was adopted, to identify what was important to Council as they finalized the plan. They would like to know their goals and the direction they would like to see the County go in. They wanted to combine the department goals with the Council goals to develop a plan to move forward. They were not looking at a 10-15 year plan – they were looking at immediate needs, steps that needed to be taken in the next 1-2 years and look at long-range plans afterwards. They would come back to Council after the budget process for dates to hold the strategic planning session. They already requested the monthly progress reports from the departments to identify what they do, how they do it, how they become more transparent, how to streamline processes/procedures and update old policies. Mrs. Greene asked if the public would be included. Mrs. Williams said they were currently looking at the results from the Comprehensive Plan, which included good input from the public but if it was the will of Council to have public meetings as a part of the strategic plan then they would add that to the planning process. Mrs. Greene said she thought once they received goals from the department heads and Council, they needed input from the public as well – to give them a chance to look at them and prioritize them to ensure inclusivity. Mrs. Williams said she agreed. Mr. Bell said they were trying to make sure Council and everyone else received information to make decisions based on what was actual versus what one might hear. As it was being developed, they should have more knowledge going forward. Mr. Gilbert wanted to know if he could ask the Economic Director some questions regarding projects. Mr. Whitaker said he was going to make a statement and then Mr. Davenport would follow up.

Mr. Whitaker referred to the handout given to Council regarding the new County Government Complex, Courthouse and the MLK Monument. The government complex was at 50% completion. The handout displayed the status and complexity levels of the project. He said about 25 of 80 employees had moved into the new building. They had not yet reached the halfway mark of getting everyone into the building. He said some of the highly complex subprojects included the Recreation relocation, 911 Call Center relocation, Sheriff relocation, new complex uplift, emergency management of the new campus (to ensure the safety of everyone), and security and safety improvements. He said the handout showed where all of those projects were in the stage of development and he pointed out that there were 33 current ongoing projects. He wanted to give an update regarding the move and said staff was settling in but there was still a lot of work to be done. Mr. Bell asked if the Council would have their first meeting in the new building at the second meeting in June. Mr. Whitaker said they

were meeting with the AV team that day and were looking to have everything tested and ready by the June 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Mr. Whitaker said he wanted to give an update about the wastewater treatment plant before speaking about economic development. He said Fairfield County had prepared and submitted to the Town of Winnsboro a Letter of Intent describing what the County sought and needed to enter into a Project Participation Agreement for a wastewater treatment plant. They were currently waiting on the Town's response to the letter. Over the last couple of weeks, their attorneys met with the attorneys from the Joint System and Winnsboro to discuss the status of their Letter of Intent and as well, the potential to get ARPA funds to construct the sewer line connecting Commerce Park to the existing Winnsboro wastewater treatment plant. This sewer line was important to bring the start-up effluent to the Joint System's plant once it was constructed. Through their legal Council, Walt Cartin, they learned that Winnsboro's attorney was on board with the plan to seek ARPA funds but needed to confirm with his client, the Town of Winnsboro. Once they received the "thumbs up" from Winnsboro, they could start the process of designing the sewer line and drafting the grant request. Everyone agreed that a short agreement was needed to handle the issues of ownership, which would be with the Joint System, and operations, which would initially be Winnsboro but would shift to the Joint System once the Joint System's plant was completed. The Letter of Intent addressed what they (Fairfield County) needed to enter into an agreement to build a wastewater treatment plant. They asked the Winnsboro attorney when they would receive a copy of their comments and revisions and they were told he was working on it and would get it to them as soon as possible. Mr. Whitaker asked if there were any questions and there were none.

Mr. Whitaker said Mr. Davenport informed him that the last 30 days had been very active for the Economic Development department - both for the number of formal requests for information and the size of the projects. He had nothing concrete to share but wanted them to know that the staff was working hard to build their economic development capacity. Mr. Gilbert asked with the interest in Fairfield County could they accommodate any companies now since they did not have a sewer agreement with the Town of Winnsboro yet. After clarifying the question, Mr. Davenport said they did have the capacity to take care of some of them but not all of them and that had been their issue all along. They (Fairfield) basically got cut on paper because once other companies saw the sewer capacity, they move on to the next community. They could handle some of the companies that had smaller requirements. The excitement about connecting to Winnsboro was that it would give them 500,000 gallons of new capacity, which was not huge but would give more than what they currently had. Another benefit

to push forward as quickly as possible was the connection to Winnsboro's system was two years or less, according to engineers. In order for a larger company that would build a larger facility, it would take them two years to build their facility. If someone were to come along today and we were already in design of the new connection to Winnsboro, they could meet their requirement. If they waited and someone came along today, they would be passed over. They had the opportunity – they just needed to press on with action. Mr. Gilbert asked if he was at liberty to say how many companies were looking at Fairfield. Mr. Davenport said last year they had 21 requests for information and in the last 14 days they had eight RFI's (requests for information) - one of them was 450 questions. Several of the RFI's were some of the largest projects that he had seen in his career and they could meet their needs if they could get connected. It was a very interesting time in economic development. There was a wave of activity that was unprecedented. Mrs. Greene asked how much excess was their sewer capacity. He said slightly over 100,000 gallons. Mr. Bell said they had been working tirelessly on the wastewater treatment facility – talking about the extra line going from Winnsboro. They had been meeting and talking – trying to see how to build the infrastructure out. He believed, based on what the County had done previously, when you look at the work they had done lately, it probably exceeded any work that was previously done. The reason they needed to build the infrastructure out was to prepare for the future. There was infrastructure money coming to them – they met with the Rural Infrastructure authority to make sure the County was in position to take advantage of every opportunity that came their way. That was what they were doing today. People could talk all of the stuff they wanted but they could not say they were not working to get these things done. These were man hours they were putting in to make sure it happened. The pad that they just had the groundbreaking for (he and Mrs. Greene attended), the work to get the spec building done (had not had one since 2013-2014) – they were getting requests of information on a daily basis and that was the work they were doing. He was proud of the work. Mr. Gilbert said full Council should know the progress because their constituents ask about their economic development and when you do not know you do not know. He knew they could not be told everything but they should be kept abreast of what was going on. That was his reason for contacting him (Davenport) last week because some his constituents asked him. Mr. Davenport said he knew it appeared to have been a lull in economic development effort but they had five available buildings at one time and now they did not have any. With the economy the way it was, people want to get in and get started as quickly as they could and the first thing they looked for was an existing building and they did not have one.



There were a lot of counties in the same boat. Getting the spec building built was a critical next step. They not only had high activity but there were funds available to extend the connection line to the Winnsboro system with ARPA. If they went after it, they would more than likely get it and that had not been available since the 70's. He said it was a critical time and they needed to press forward and press hard. Mr. Bell said oftentimes people ask questions and you want to be able to tell them what was going on economically. However, sometimes he took the abuse of not knowing what was going on because if you gave the information and it went beyond what was necessary, people could walk away from projects - that was the piece that people needed to understand. People would walk away from a project if information goes forth before they wanted it to. That was why they kept information close to the vest and (Davenport and Whitaker) they planned to continue doing that because they had too much at stake not to.

Mr. Pauley asked Mr. Whitaker if he was notified that there were several lights out at Drawdy Park and he said yes. Mr. Pauley asked how long ago had it been since he was notified. Mr. Whitaker said they started meeting with the then Acting Recreation Director several months ago. He thought it was on their project list when he arrived. Mr. Pauley said it was not directed towards him but if he arrived in December and was notified that lights were out at Drawdy Park, there had not been any action plan to come before them (Council) to vote on any money to replace these lights. There were ball games going on and Drawdy Park was the most concentrated recreation place with the most kids in Fairfield County. He did not understand why the recreation had to reschedule games (they had over 300 kids) and it had not come before Council. It was \$30,000 when it was told that it needed to come before Council and now the price was \$50,000. It blew his mind that the place in Fairfield County where the most kids play cannot get lights to play in the evening. It was not brought before Council and he did not know who told him not to bring it before Council. Mr. Whitaker said it was not brought to him as a Council action, it was presented as a capital project. Mr. Bell told Mr. Whitaker that he did not have to take that. Mr. Pauley said it amazed him that they were spending dollars everywhere else in Fairfield County but where the most kids were, they could not get lights. Mr. Bell said Mr. Whitaker and Mrs. Williams talked to him last week about how to get the lights for the park. He said the reason it was not on that agenda was due to the fact they did not have a bid. They were already making plans to get the lights at Drawdy Park. They were looking at how to get a State contract. He said this was just brought up to start some stuff. They had the information and were making plans to do the work at Drawdy Park. Mr. Pauley said the season would be over by the time they got the work done. He said they were building a \$2.5 million

recreation center and could not spend \$30,000 at Drawdy Park. Mr. Bell asked who could not spend it. It was not \$30,000, it was \$51,000 – the last quote they received. Mr. Pauley said it was \$30,000 when it first started. Mr. Bell said no one told him about \$30,000 but he was aware of the \$51,000 and they were going to get it done. Mr. Pauley said also since they were preparing to move into the new administration building, he wanted to know if they found a usage for the former building. Mr. Whitaker said they put together a decommission team. They cleaned up the building to make it look better and he thanked the staff for their work. He did not know the first meeting of the team but they would discuss the next steps regarding the building. Mr. Bell asked (going back to Mr. Pauley's question) how long had the lights been out. Mr. Whitaker said the way it was communicated to him a storm happened but he did not remember when. Mr. Bell asked if it had been over a year or two years ago. He said he did not remember but it was on a project list. Mr. Bell asked if it was on a project list when he came and he said yes. Mr. Bell said that meant that the lights were out prior to that. Mr. Whitaker said yes. Mr. Bell said so now it was an issue. Mr. Pauley said that made it even worse. Mr. Bell said the point was here they were, having to fix it and they would fix it. They were looking for the money (State contracts) to see how to get it done before the end of the budget year - June 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Whitaker said that was the plan. Mr. Pauley said his next question was about the Molly Creek access area at Lake Wateree. He received word that it was being trashed, the bathrooms were terrible. He wanted to know who was responsible for cleaning that area. Mr. Whitaker said it was a great question. Mrs. Greene said Duke Energy was responsible for Molly Creek Park – every bit of it, from concessions, to bathrooms and the cleaning. It was her understanding that in the upcoming weekend they were going to open the beach. If they were trashing the beach, she was sure they could call them to take care of that. Mrs. Greene asked if Mr. Bell said they were waiting on bids for Drawdy Park lights. Mrs. Williams said she learned about Drawdy Park about a month after she started. There were no capital funds assigned to replace the lights – it was not in the current budget year. There were some funds from the operational account that could go towards replacing the lights. The original quote received was just one quote from one contractor. It did not go through the County's procurement process - it was not properly advertised. The one quote of about \$31,000 had to be accompanied by at least two others or be advertised. The thought was to go back and look at State contracts because when they asked if that \$31,000 quote was still good, the contractor came back with a higher amount of \$51,000, which meant they now had to put it out through advertising for the procurement bidding process. They went through State contract and were trying to

coordinate to see if there were any electricians who could do the work under State contract. The challenge was because capital funds were the only funds that rollover. These were operational funds so the work would have to be completed within this budget year. They were time restricted with getting the quotes in and having a contractor to complete the work within this budget year because those funds would not automatically rollover like capital funds would. Mr. Pauley asked if it originally started at \$31,000. Mr. Whitaker said that was just one contractor. Mrs. Williams said it was just one contractor's quote and when they asked if that quote was still good, they came back with a higher amount. If they could find someone on State contract, they would avoid going through the formal advertising through procurement. The second challenge would be if they could complete the work within this budget year. Mr. Pauley said for the record, he apologized to Mr. Whitaker if it seemed to be directed at him. It was just upsetting that it had gone on that long with no action taken. Mr. Bell thanked them for their work to correct a lot of things that had fallen through the cracks and they were trying to get it done today. He thanked them for their diligence to get the work done as they should have all along. They were going to try to get Drawdy Park done by June 30<sup>th</sup>.

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

None.

#### **15. COUNTY COUNCIL TIME**

Mrs. Greene said she attended a ceremony at M Lily earlier that day where they donated mattresses to the Sheriff's department and EMS. She thanked M Lily for their donation of 31 mattresses. They were becoming very good community partners and their donation was appreciated. The Sheriff, EMS and Fire offices were very happy to receive the donations.

Mr. Bell thanked Mrs. Greene for attending the ceremony and he thanked M Lily for the work they did and how they helped them in the County - not only by employing people but also being good citizens.

Mr. Pauley said the Airport and the Chamber of Commerce held a "Wings and Wheels" festival. He was able to attend and it was a great event. He thanked them (the Chamber and Denise, the Airport Director and all involved) for a successful event.

Mr. Bell thanked Mr. Pauley and said it was a great event. He thanked Ms. Bryan for her work.


#### **16. EXECUTIVE SESSION: (The following statement is provided in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act:**

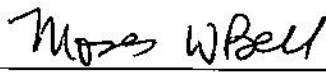
**Subsequent to Executive Session, Council may take action on matters discussed in Executive Session.)**

None.

**ADJOURN**

At 7:03 p.m., motion made by Councilman Trapp, seconded by Councilwoman Greene, to adjourn. ***The motion carried 7-0.***

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

  
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MOSES BELL  
CHAIRMAN