



**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
APRIL 22, 2024**

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

Absent: Peggy Swearingen

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.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Pauley called for the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. After the recitation, Chairman Pauley announced Councilwoman Swearingen was out town and would not be able to attend the meeting.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion made by Councilman Gilbert, seconded by Councilwoman Greene to amend the agenda to add Item 6C (Chairman's Recognition). ***The motion carried 6-0.*** Motion made by Councilman Gilbert, seconded by Councilman Robinson to approve the agenda as amended. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

4. INVOCATION

Councilman Clarence Gilbert led the invocation.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Councilman Ruff, seconded by Councilman Gilbert to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting 4/8/24. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

6. PUBLIC PRESENTATION

A. Proclamation Recognizing Public Safety Telecommunications Week

Dr. Roberts read the proclamation in its entirety as well as a statement from Director Jennifer McGriff in her absence. After which, pictures were taken.

B. Hoof & Paw Presentation – Kathy Faulk

Ms. Faulk began with the number of dogs and cats that came in and out of the shelter in 2021 and 2023. She complimented the Animal Shelter Director and staff/volunteers. She thought the proposed ordinance would greatly impact the number of animals entering the shelter and looked forward to Council support. The lack of spay/neuter, the lack of owner responsibility and resources were big problems. They needed a fully staffed department with at least one Class 3 officer and a veterinarian. Hoof n Paw was one of three volunteer organizations that were present in the county. Hoof n Paw donated to spay/neuter services, heartworm treatment and medical emergency assistance. They also donated to Because of Roscoe to assist in their fundraising efforts. Another group brought in a mobile vet unit monthly and their vet saw 30-80 animals with Pets Inc. They needed a new facility but realized fire, emergency care and police were crucial to a safe community and needed to be considered first. In the meantime, they needed to make updates/improvements to the current facility to bring it to a humane level of care, especially regarding proper housing of the animals. She asked Council to allocate \$100,000 into the budget for the shelter. Each year, they came to Council/Administration with serious needs and each year animal welfare was placed on the back burner. She hoped they would be the Council that would help.

C. Chairman's Recognition

Mr. Pauley said sometimes this person's position went unnoticed and was not recognized. He read a letter sent to Council from the South Carolina Clerks to Council Association informing them of Dr. Roberts' completion of the Master Clerk Certification Program. He told her they appreciated all that she did for them. He knew it was hard dealing with seven different personalities, daily emails, phone calls and working with Administration to make sure the meetings went well. They appreciated her and all stood with applause.

- 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.

- Brenda Worthington
- Don Goldbach
- Ann Corrao

- Randy Bright

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

9. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND ORDERS

A. Third & Final Reading Ordinance No. 832: An Ordinance to Amend the Fairfield County Land Management Ordinance No. 596, to Provide for the Zoning Reclassification from R-1 (Single Family Residential District) to RD-1 (Rural Residential District) for 2.39 Acres Owned by John Kern (Applicant), 5994 State HWY 215S, Jenkinsville, South Carolina 29065, Tax Map No. 139-03-01-023-000. Motion made by Mr. Gilbert, seconded by Mr. Ruff. ***The motion carried 5-1 with Councilman Roseborough voting in the negative.***

B. Second Reading Ordinance No. 833: An Ordinance of Adopting the Comprehensive Plan for Fairfield County, South Carolina 2024-2034 and Other Matters Related Thereto. Motion made by Mr. Gilbert, seconded by Mr. Robinson. Mr. Pauley asked Mrs. Williams for an update. Mrs. Williams said the Comprehensive Plan (CP) was drafted and updated with the assistance of the Central Midlands Council of Government (CMCOG). They received input from County staff and the Planning Commission, one-on-one meetings with citizens, public meetings and an online survey. The work to redraft the CP was ongoing for at least two years. The statistics and data in the plan were compiled using information received from the county, US Census Bureau and other verified sources. At the last Council meeting, the decision was made to table the second reading of the CP so the concerns expressed by a resident could be addressed. She, Mr. Killian, Gregory Sprouse (CMCOG), Phil Lindler with Planning, Councilwoman Greene and Randy Kelly (Planning Commission Chair) met virtually with the citizen on April 11th. Per that discussion, the decision was made to adjust the language related to the future land use map to make it clear that the land use classifications were character descriptions. Any densities referenced in the descriptions were not restrictive densities but instead served as a general description of the type of development that might be seen in those areas. The descriptions did not prohibit or hinder other types of development in those areas. They did not set a maximum density for the area nor did they change the current zoning for residents in those areas. Extensive line-by-line comments were on each section of the plan and submitted to Council and Administration on April 18th and 21st. Those comments were forwarded to their partners at CMCOG for review and consideration. While some of the comments were questions, many were statements, editorial requests and recommendations. They would continue to work with their partners at CMCOG on the appropriate response to the information received. Motion made by Mr. Gilbert to table for

further discussion, seconded by Mr. Ruff. Mr. Ruff and Mrs. Greene thanked them for their work on the plan. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

C. First Reading (By Title Only) Ordinance No. 834: An Ordinance to Establish Operating Budgets for the Operation of the County Government of Fairfield County for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2024; to Provide for the Levy of Taxes for Fairfield County for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2024; to Establish Fees and Service Charges for Fairfield County for the Fiscal Year Commencing July 1, 2024; to Provide for the Expenditure of Tax Revenues and Other County Related Funds; and to Provide for Certain Fiscal Matters and Other Matters Related to County Government. Motion made by Mr. Robinson, seconded by Mr. Roseborough. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

10. BOARD AND COMMISSION MINUTES (For information only)

None.

11. BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

A. Library Board – Helen Boulware (D6)

Motion made by Mr. Robinson, seconded by Mr. Gilbert to appoint Helen Boulware to the Library Board. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

12. OLD BUSINESS

None.

13. NEW BUSINESS

None.

14. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

A. Recognition of Volunteer Firefighters & Animal Control Volunteers Week

Mr. Killian read a statement **(PLEASE SEE ATTACHED)**. He also included and acknowledge Hoof N Paw. Pictures were taken with the volunteers present. Mr. Pauley expressed gratitude for their services.

B. CP Development Contractor Agreement – ACTION ITEM

Mr. Killian said the County received a grant from the Office of Rural Health under the Community Paramedic Program for \$54,886.47 and it did not require a match. It would allow them to buy a cardiac monitor. He recommended the Council accept the grant and authorize the purchase of the monitor. The deadline was April 30th, 2024. Motion made by Councilwoman Greene, seconded by Councilman Robinson to approve. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

C. Budget Presentation

Mr. Killian read a letter addressed to Council – each Council person had a copy. **(PLEASE SEE ATTACHED)**. At the end, he said to the Chairman that he respectfully submitted the 2025 budget for their review. Mr. Pauley and Mr. Ruff thanked him and staff for the work that was put into the proposed budget.

15. CLERK TO COUNCIL'S REPORT

None.

16. COUNTY COUNCIL TIME

Mrs. Greene announced Blair Day (a community event) on the forthcoming Saturday at the Willie Lee Robinson Park on Highway 34 in Blair. It was free food, fun and fellowship. She also welcomed Dr. Tony Hemingway, the new Fairfield County School District Superintendent.

Mr. Ruff asked if the next Public Service & Development meeting would be the third Monday next month and Mrs. Williams said yes.

Mr. Pauley thank everyone for attending. He thanked all volunteers for their service to Fairfield County. He announced April 21-27, 2024 as South Carolina Aviation Week and read a statement pertaining to the recognition **(PLEASE SEE ATTACHED)**.

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 regarding the lawsuit *Town of Winnsboro vs. Fairfield County*, C/A No. 2022-CP-20-00105, and other matters covered by the Attorney-Client privilege pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 30-4-70(a)(2).
- B.** Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location or expansion of businesses in the area served by Fairfield County pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 30-4-70(a)(5).

At 7:01pm, motion made by Mr. Ruff, seconded by Mrs. Greene to go into Executive Session. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

At 7:38pm, motion made by Mr. Gilbert, seconded by Mr. Ruff to come out of Executive Session. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

Mr. Pauley stated no action was taken during executive session.

National Volunteer Week Appreciation

This week (April 21st-27) marks the 50 year anniversary of National Volunteer Week. National Volunteer Week was started as a way to recognize the impact of volunteer service and the power of volunteers to tackle society's greatest challenges, to build stronger communities and be a force that transforms the world.

Tonight we are recognizing 2 groups of volunteers that donate their time and compassion to Fairfield County Fire Services and the Fairfield County Animal Shelter.

Fairfield County Fire Services relies heavily on volunteer fire fighters to keep the residents of Fairfield County safe. These amazing volunteers not only put out fires but also provide lifesaving services and fire prevention training. They are there to be the light, for those in their darkest hours. We can't thank them enough for the sacrifices they make, spending time away from their families, to be on guard, if the worst should happen.

Volunteers for the Fairfield County Animal Shelter are an essential part of caring for the animals that are in need in our county. We have a couple of groups that are dedicated volunteers. One group is more

hands on with the shelter which is Friends of Fairfield County SC Animals and Because of Roscoe. These volunteers come to the shelter and clean, organize, walk dogs, interact with cats, make minor repairs, deliver donations, and more importantly support our animals.

The second and equally important is another group, the Animal Shelter Volunteer Pack. They do a great job at fundraising for various shelters through events. We have so many supporters that assist us by networking, donating, and helping us.

It truly takes a village to get everything done and our shelter is blessed with a great group of volunteers in various avenues. Our thanks goes out to each of you.

On behalf of all Fairfield County staff, we want to extend our deepest appreciation to all of the volunteers for everything that you do to enrich the lives of all Fairfield County citizens.

At this time, we ask that all Volunteer Fire Fighters and Animal Shelter Volunteers join County Council in front of the stage to be recognized.



Fairfield County Administration

250 N. Walnut Street
P.O. Drawer 60
Winnsboro, S.C. 29180
(803) 635-1415
Fax: (803) 635-5969

Clay Killian
Interim County Administrator

Synithia Williams
Deputy County Administrator

April 22, 2024

The Honorable Doug Pauley, Chairman &
Honorable Members of Fairfield County Council
250 North Walnut Street
Winnsboro, South Carolina 29180

Chairman Pauley and Members of County Council:

As stipulated by Section 4-9-630 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, the County Administrator is required to prepare and present to the County Council a balanced budget each fiscal year. Presented for your review and consideration is the proposed operating, capital, debt service and special revenue funds budget for Fairfield County government for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. This proposed budget is balanced across all funds at \$44,601,123.

Most revenue sources remain fairly stable, but are not growing sufficiently to keep our expenses from outpacing our available resources. For reference, the County was able to balance the Fiscal Year 2022 budget with the sale of capital assets and funds from a litigation settlement. Fiscal Year 2023 did not have those one-time sources of funds available and ended up over budget reducing the fund balance by a little more than \$1.9 million. The current budget was balanced with a combination of a property tax increase and the projected use of more than \$4 million in the available fund balance. It is unclear at the moment how much, if any, of that amount will be needed to finish the year, but we will do everything possible to minimize the impact.

Unfortunately, the projected budget before you also contemplates the use of reserve funds, but does not include a property tax increase although Council could consider a millage increase to minimize any potential impact to the fund balance. The amount of reserve funds projected for use in this budget is \$2,487,276. The use of reserves and frankly, tax increases, are both unsustainable options in the long term. We will carefully manage all expenditures for the remainder of this year and during the coming year to minimize or eliminate the use of any reserves.

A positive circumstance for the new budget is that the County has made the final \$1,000,000 payment into the escrow account for the emergency room. While the hospital will still receive payments over the next four years, those payments will be disbursed from the escrow account as in the past, but the County does not have to contribute to the fund to keep the required minimum balance any longer. Therefore, the millage for that purpose can be shifted to cover general fund expenditures.

We have scrutinized all operational spending very closely and believe that those expenditures have been kept very lean. However, the costs that we do not control continue to increase. For example, the cost of health insurance for our employees is projected to rise 6.4 percent. The cost of other items being driven by inflation such as fuel, electricity, office supplies, vehicle parts, solid waste disposal fees, etc. continue to rise. In fact, we have been notified by Waste Management that our disposal fee will be increasing by 5.4 percent. There is also some indication that the company may implement an additional increase in the next couple of months, but for this first increase the County's new tipping fee will be \$67 per ton. We have included an additional \$100,000 to cover this cost. The only way to offset those inflationary increases is to use less of the product, which is very difficult to do particularly when you consider critical services such as law enforcement, Emergency Medical Services, road maintenance and other essential services provided by the County.

Another fee to discuss is the cost of the installation of driveway aprons. We currently provide the first access point to residential properties at no cost, which includes up to twenty-four feet of fifteen inch pipe and related material, but are charging \$400 for additional pipe or a second driveway access. Our costs for the materials have increased and we should also cover the cost of the labor, fuel and equipment to install any additional driveway aprons. It is recommended that this fee be set at \$150 per eight foot section of pipe, plus the cost of installation beginning July 1, 2024. Depending on the amount of pipe and materials needed, this could result in a fee range of \$750-\$1,000.

Also, in terms of solid waste disposal, it is recommended the County implement a cardboard trailer pick-up fee of \$100 per trip. We currently provide trailers at a number of locations, mostly commercial establishments, and do not charge a fee. This practice obviously comes at a cost to the County and this fee would recover that cost.

To balance this financial work plan, while minimizing the use of the fund balance, we have not included any capital purchases, new personnel or salary increases for our existing employees. This last element is the most troubling because the recently completed classification and compensation study indicates we are clearly not competitive when it comes to salaries. That leads to difficulty in recruitment and retention of good employees, a situation we are definitely experiencing. As the year progresses, we will continue to look for ways in this budget to provide some increases for employees later in the year.

There are also no increases in the allocations for the outside agencies the County funds nor any for the new requests that were received. While these organizations provide wonderful and important services to our community, and clearly benefit County

government in some fashion, it is recommended that Council closely examine these expenditures to determine if they fit within the core mission of our organization. This is merely a recommendation and is clearly a policy decision of Council, but the current financial situation warrants a review of this practice.

Nobody likes to entertain the notion of a reduction in the services the County provides, but we are recommending a review of one of our operations. Currently, all our solid waste collection and recycling centers are open six days a week, closing only on Wednesday. We are unaware of any private or even municipal disposal organization that provides service more than once or twice a week. It is recommended that Council consider closing all collection centers on Sunday also with all sites staying open on Saturday. Monday through Friday openings and closings can be staggered in such a way that our residents will have some place to dispose of their trash five days per week, just perhaps not at their closest or usual site. We will continue to review all our operations to find more efficient ways to provide services.

Overall, the County's financial condition remains sound, but there are some troubling trends we are facing of which we need to be aware and that need to be addressed before our financial situation worsens. This proposed budget does not address all of the County's needs and will challenge our departments as we continue to provide services to our citizens, but should keep the organization moving forward.

Clearly, we need to diversify and expand our tax base and the regional wastewater treatment plant will be a major tool in assisting in that endeavor. Fairfield County is positioned well for growth along the I-77 corridor, and we need to be prepared to take advantage of every opportunity that is presented. We look forward to working through this budget with Council over the coming weeks.

Respectfully submitted:



J. Clay Killian
Interim County Administrator

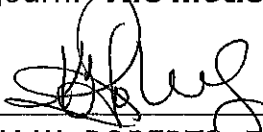
South Carolina Aviation Week

April 21st-27th is South Carolina Aviation Week. South Carolina Aviation Week is an annual, week-long celebration, promoting aviation through events that highlight airports' educational and economic impacts throughout the state. To commemorate this week, the Fairfield County Airport hosted its 6th Annual Senior Airplane Ride event this morning. One Senior student each from Fairfield Central High School, Richard Winn Academy and Midlands STEM Charter School had the opportunity to take exploratory flights around the county thanks to our partnership with S&S Aviation, which runs the flight school at the Fairfield County Airport. These exploratory flights are designed to nurture the interest these young scholars have for a possible career in aviation and avionics.

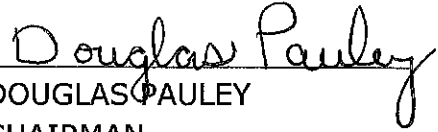
We would like to thank our Fairfield County Airport Director Denise Bryan and the Aeronautics Commission for their hard work and dedication to providing a safe and professional facility for those coming in and out of Fairfield County in the aircraft of their choosing. We would also like to thank S&S Aviation for providing the Senior Rides free of charge.

18. ADJOURN

At 7:38pm, motion made by Councilman Ruff, seconded by Councilman Robinson to adjourn. ***The motion carried 6-0.***



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



DOUGLAS PAULEY
CHAIRMAN