

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE FLORENCE COUNTY COUNCIL,  
THURSDAY, JULY 18, 2013, 9:00 A.M., COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
ROOM 803, CITY-COUNTY COMPLEX, 180 N. IRBY STREET,  
FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA**

**PRESENT:**

James T. Schofield, Chairman  
Alphonso Bradley, Vice Chairman  
Waymon Mumford, Secretary-Chaplain  
Mitchell Kirby, Council Member  
Russell W. Culberson, Council Member  
Roger M. Poston, Council Member  
Kent C. Caudle, Council Member  
Willard Dorriety, Jr., Council Member  
Jason M. Springs, Council Member  
K. G. Rusty Smith, Jr., County Administrator  
D. Malloy McEachin, Jr., County Attorney  
Connie Y. Haselden, Clerk to Council

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Suzanne S. King, Administrative Services Director  
Kevin V. Yokim, Finance Director  
Bonnita Andrews, Human Resources Director  
Ryon Watkins, EMS Director  
Jonathan B. Graham, III, Planning Director  
Andrew Stout, Museum Director  
Patrick Fletcher, Procurement Director  
Dorothy Crosby, Interim Library Director  
Dale Rauch, Facilities Manager  
Jack Newsome, Tax Assessor  
David Alford, Voter Registration/Elections Director  
Sam Brockington, Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator  
Coroner Keith vonLutcken  
Chief Deputy Glen Kirby, Sheriff's Office  
Lindsay Buchanan, Morning News  
Ken Baker, WMBF News  
Tonya Brown, WPDE News  
Patricia Burkett, WBTW News

A notice of the regular meeting of the Florence County Council appeared in the July 17, 2013 edition of the **MORNING NEWS**. In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, copies of the Meeting Agenda and Proposed Additions to the Agenda were provided to members of the media, members of the public requesting copies, posted in the lobby of the City-County Complex, provided for posting at the Doctors Bruce and Lee Foundation Public Library, all branch libraries, and on the County's website ([www.florenceco.org](http://www.florenceco.org)).

Chairman Schofield called the meeting to order. Secretary-Chaplain Mumford provided the invocation and Vice Chairman Bradley led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Chairman Schofield welcomed everyone attending the meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Councilman Caudle made a motion Council Approve The Minutes Of The June 20, 2013 Regular Meeting Of County Council. Councilman Mumford seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

The Clerk Published The Title And Chairman Schofield Opened The Public Hearing For The Following:

**ORDINANCE NO. 37-2012/13**

An Ordinance Confirming The Inclusion Of Certain Property Of Angus-Palm LLC In A Joint County Industrial And Business Park With Marion County; Providing For An Extension Thereof; And Addressing Other Matters Related Thereto.

**APPEARANCES:**

There were no appearances requested or scheduled.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE**

Chairman Schofield Stated That This Report Would Be Provided Later In The Meeting.

**RESOLUTIONS/PROCLAMATIONS:**

**RESOLUTION NO. 30-2012/13 (Deferred)**

The Chairman stated Resolution No. 30-2012/13 would be deferred: A Resolution In Support Of The Issuance By The South Carolina Jobs – Economic Development Authority Of Its Economic Development Refunding Revenue Bonds (FMU Student Housing, LLC – Francis Marion University Project) Series 2013 In One Or More Series And In An Aggregate Principal Amount Not To Exceed \$14,085,000 Pursuant To The Provisions Of Title 41, Chapter 43, Code Of Laws Of South Carolina 1976, As Amended.

**RESOLUTION NO. 01-2013/14**

The Clerk published the title of Resolution No. 01-2013/14: A Resolution to Authorize The Addition Of A Vehicle To The County Fleet For The Florence County Museum. Councilman Mumford made a motion Council approve the Resolution as presented. Councilman Dorriety seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**RESOLUTION NO. 02-2013/14**

The Clerk published the title of Resolution No. 02-2013/14: A Resolution To Approve The Florence County Stormwater Design Manual; And Other Matters Related Thereto. Councilman Caudle made a motion Council approve the Resolution as presented. Councilman Mumford seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 03-2013/14**

The Clerk published the title of Resolution No. 03-2013/14: A Resolution To Amend Section 4 Of Resolution No. 5-2009/10 In Order To Authorize The Inclusion Of Additional Participants In The South Carolina Procurement Card Program And To Increase One Daily And Monthly Limit. Councilman Springs made a motion Council approve the Resolution as presented. Councilman Mumford seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. At the request of Councilman Caudle, County Administrator Rusty Smith provided a brief overview of the program. The Finance Department was trying to be fiscally responsible in handling credit. Many businesses no longer allowed open/charge accounts. This request was for the Sheriff's Department – Fiscal Technician would have an increase in the amount, the Procurement Department and GIS Department would also have increased amounts.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 04-2013/14**

The Clerk published the title of Resolution No. 04-2013/14: A Resolution For Establishing A Moratorium On Non-Emergency Ambulance Franchises For Up To One (1) Year While County Council Studies The Application Process And Fees For Non-Emergency Ambulance Franchises. Councilman Poston made a motion Council approve the Resolution as presented. Councilman Bradley seconded the motion. Councilman Springs made a motion to Amend The Motion To Change The Time Frame To Sixty (60) Days Rather Than One (1) Year. Councilman Kirby seconded the motion. Councilman Caudle stated that if the County didn't have any regulations in place he didn't understand why the three applicants would be held and impede the wheels of commerce. Couldn't a regulation be put in place in the sixty days and approve the applications already received if they met the qualifications? Chairman Schofield stated it was his intent to move the issue to the Administration & Finance Committee and hold a public meeting to discuss it and work up a plan with staff for a recommendation at the next regular meeting of Council. He stated he did not think it would negatively impact the three current applicants. Councilman Caudle made a motion to table the motion for that period of time. There was no second to the motion. Council unanimously approved the motion to amend. The Resolution as Amended was approved with an eight (8) to one (1) vote. Voting in the affirmative were Chairman Schofield, Councilmen Culberson, Poston, Kirby, Bradley, Mumford, Dorriety and Springs. Voting 'No' was Councilman Caudle.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 05-2013/14**

The Clerk published the title of Resolution No. 05-2013/14: A Resolution Authorizing The Execution And Delivery Of A Modification To That Certain Inducement And Millage Rate Agreement By And Among Florence County, South Carolina, Monster Worldwide South Carolina, Inc., And Pee Dee Red Rock, LLC And That Certain Memorandum Of Understanding By And Among Florence County, South Carolina, Monster Worldwide South Carolina, Inc., Pee Dee Red Rock, LLC And The South Carolina Department Of Commerce, Each Dated As Of June 26, 2008. The Clerk stated Pee Dee Red Rock, LLC should actually read Red Rock Pee Dee, LLC. Councilman Mumford made a motion Council approve the Resolution as presented. Councilman Caudle seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

There being no signatures on the sign-in sheet for Public Hearing, Chairman Schofield closed the Public Hearing.

## **ORDINANCES IN POSITION:**

### **ORDINANCE NO. 17-2012/13 – THIRD READING DEFERRED**

Chairman Schofield stated third reading of Ordinance No. 17-2012/13 would be deferred: An Ordinance To Authorize The Execution And Delivery Of Various Documents In Order To Fund A Portion Of The Costs Associated With Soil Remediation Of The Lake City Park Project; To Authorize The Execution And Delivery Of These Documents In Connection Therewith; And Other Matters Relating Thereto.

### **ORDINANCE NO. 31-2012/13 – THIRD READING**

The Clerk published the title of Ordinance No. 31-2012/13: An Ordinance To Zone Properties Owned By Ladonna M. Beylotte, Cephus & Maxine Peterson Jr., Bessie Wilks, Erik T. & Sarah L. Knotts, Vanona M. Dubose Morris, Ryan J. Johnson, McArthur & Yvonne F. Lynch, James T. Hurst And Located At 227, 233, 237, 241, 243, 247, 249, And 251 Mill Street, Town Of Scranton, As Shown On Florence County Tax Map No. 00194, Block 31, Parcels 25, 077 And 104; And A Portion Of 021, 022, 023, 024 And 111; Consisting Of Approximately 3.16 Acres From Unzoned, To R-1, Single-Family Residential District; And Other Matters Related Thereto. Councilman Springs made a motion Council approve third reading of the Ordinance. Councilman Mumford seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

### **ORDINANCE NO. 32-2012/13 – THIRD READING**

The Clerk published the title of Ordinance No. 32-2012/13: An Ordinance To Rezone Property Owned By Judy H. Thomas And Debra A. Holloway Located At 2005 Hazelwood Lane, Florence, As Shown On Florence County Tax Map No. 00127, Block 01, Parcel 008; Consisting Of Approximately 8.709 Acres From R-3, Single-Family Residential District, To RU-1, Rural Community District, Limited; And Other Matters Related Thereto. Councilman Caudle made a motion Council approve third reading of the Ordinance. Councilman Dorriety seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

### **ORDINANCE NO. 33-2012/13 – THIRD READING**

The Clerk published the title of Ordinance No. 33-2012/13: An Ordinance To Amend The Florence County Code, Chapter 7 – Building Regulations, Article II – Standards For Construction, Installations And Maintenance, Division 1 – Generally, Section 7-11 – International Building Code; And Other Matters Related Thereto. Councilman Caudle made a motion Council approve third reading of the Ordinance. Councilman Springs seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

### **ORDINANCE NO. 34-2012/13 – THIRD READING**

The Clerk published the title of Ordinance No. 34-2012/13: An Ordinance To Amend The Florence County Code, Chapter 9.5, Drainage And Stormwater Management; And Other Matters Related Thereto. Councilman Caudle made a motion Council approve third reading of the Ordinance. Councilman Dorriety seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**ORDINANCE NO. 35-2012/13 – THIRD READING**

The Clerk published the title of Ordinance No. 35-2012/13: An Ordinance To Amend The Florence County Code, Chapter 28.6 – Land Development And Subdivision Ordinance, Article VI. – Subdivision Improvements And Guarantees, Section 6.98. Acceptance Techniques In Lieu Of Completion Of All Improvements, Section 28.6-100 – Reduction Of Guarantee, And Section 28.6-101. – Release Of Guarantee; And Other Matters Related Thereto. Councilman Mumford made a motion Council approve third reading of the Ordinance. Councilman Culberson seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**ORDINANCE NO. 37-2012/13 – SECOND READING**

The Clerk published the title of Ordinance No. 37-2012/13: An Ordinance Confirming The Inclusion Of Certain Property Of Angus-Palm LLC In A Joint County Industrial And Business Park With Marion County; Providing For An Extension Thereof; And Addressing Other Matters Related Thereto. Councilman Mumford made a motion Council approve second reading of the Ordinance. Councilman Caudle seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**ORDINANCE NO. 02-2013/14 – INTRODUCED**

The Clerk published the title of Ordinance No. 02-2013/14 and the Chairman declared the Ordinance introduced: An Ordinance To Rezone Property Owned By Myiona L. Driggers Located At 1819 Bozy Road, Scranton, As Shown On Florence County Tax Map No. 01942, Block 31, Parcel 055; Consisting Of Approximately 0.739 Acres From R-1, Single-Family Residential District To B-3, General Commercial District; And Other Matters Related Thereto.

**ORDINANCE NO. 03-2013/14 – INTRODUCED**

The Clerk published the title of Ordinance No. 03-2013/14 and the Chairman declared the Ordinance introduced: An Ordinance To Rezone Property On Behalf Of Robert H. Powell, Executor, Estate Of Gregg Located At E. Ashby Road, Quinby, As Shown On Florence County Tax Map No. 00175, Block 01, Parcel 212; Consisting Of Approximately 2.199 Acres From RU-1, Rural Community District To B-3, General Commercial District; And Other Matters Related Thereto.

**ORDINANCE NO. 04-2013/14 – INTRODUCED**

The Clerk published the title of Ordinance No. 04-2013/14 and the Chairman declared the Ordinance introduced: An Ordinance To Impose A One Percent Sales Tax, Subject To A Referendum, Within Florence County Pursuant To The Capital Project Sales Tax Act; To Define The Specific Purposes And Designate The Projects For Which The Proceeds Of The Tax May Be Used; To Provide The Maximum Time For Which The Tax May Be Imposed; To Provide The Maximum Cost Of The Projects Or Facilities Funded From The Proceeds To Be Raised By The Tax; To Provide For A County-Wide Referendum And To Concur In The Contents Of The Ballot Question In Such Referendum; To Establish The Priority In Which The Proceeds Of The Tax Are To Be Expended; To Authorize The Issuance Of General Obligation Bonds Of Florence County, Subject To Such Referendum, To Defray Costs Of Projects And Issuance Costs; To Provide For The Conduct Of Such Referendum; To Provide For The Administration Of The Tax; To

Provide For The Payment Of The Tax; And To Provide For Other Matters Relating Thereto.

Chairman Schofield stated that normally at introduction there were no comments of an Ordinance, but because this Ordinance was of such critical importance to the citizens and received a lot of press, he felt it was imperative he make a few comments.

“The Capital Project Sales Tax in Florence County that will be decided upon by the people in this County is one issue and one issue only. It is whether the people will get to decide - and for me and this Council, we think the people should decide this issue. We need to invest in our community and the Capital Project Sales Tax is the best way to do that. It allows us to pay for many needed capital projects at 2/3 of the cost that would have come from other methods of financing. If we pay for them with taxes, you will pay completely the cost of the project. With the Capital Project Sales Tax, because people from outside the County pay those taxes, about 1/3 of the cost of any of these projects will be paid by people visiting our County. As the tornado a few weeks ago demonstrated, we must be ready. We had two different mobile home parks with multiple homes destroyed. We almost had an Amtrak derailment because of a tree across the main line by the storm and we had several tractor trailers overturn on I-95 leaking diesel fuel. All at the same time; all within the Windy Hill Fire District. I would like to commend the District on their efforts at containing those situations. I was there; they did an exemplary job. I would also like to publicly thank the City of Florence Fire Department for its assistance in responding to this disaster. When a disaster like this hit, it shows you why you have to support uniform first response services throughout the County. We do not have that yet in Florence County. Our rural departments, while some have very good equipment, few have adequate buildings, they all have very dedicated volunteers who risk their life for you and me, but they lack dramatically the equipment and resources to bring an effective response. They are the ones that we all depend on, including the people that live in the City of Florence. That tornado a couple of weeks ago ran a pretty straight line; did a lot of damage. If it had run Jeffries Creek like it did in Hurricane Hugo, it could wipe out three City fire stations, which would almost completely eliminate the City’s response. People asked me ‘why should the people in the City be concerned?’ Because if the City has a major disaster, the rural fire services in Florence County are going to be the ones we are looking to help us. This is of critical importance to everyone in this County.

We have a radio system that is 20 plus years old that every fire and law enforcement, EMS responders are dependent on. Mandated by the FCC to be replaced in two years and no longer has the support from Motorola to fix it – no parts available. A few weeks ago, it failed and it endangered the lives of some of our law enforcement officers. Suppose it failed during one of these tornados or other types of disasters. It could go down tomorrow and we couldn’t get it fixed in a reasonable amount of time. The radio system must be replaced and it’s a choice of how to pay for it. Its \$15 million. Do we want to pay \$10 from the taxpayers of Florence County with a penny or do we want to pay \$15 million with property tax. I think the answer to that question is pretty apparent.

County Council, not the Legislature, has the ultimate responsibility to be sure that Florence County is ready to handle these types of emergencies. In my opinion, we are not ready at this time for a major disaster. Our citizens deserve better than we can provide at

this time and it is up to this Council to give the people the opportunity to decide and that is what we are doing. We can not make this happen. Only with the public support can these many worthwhile, necessary projects be accomplished. The people of Florence County have lived up to their obligation on the previous referendum as of March 31, 2013 and have collected \$116,865,000. This tax has collected in many quarters in excess of \$5 million per quarter, and from that you can see, that as of June 30<sup>th</sup>, which has already come and gone, we should have right at \$122 million collected on the previous tax. When the September 30<sup>th</sup> quarter ends, this County will have fully satisfied its obligation of \$125 million to the State Infrastructure Bank in order to qualify for the \$250 million match. This is not even including the over \$8 million worth of interest that has been earned to the benefit of Florence County taxpayers in the Infrastructure Bank, and it is sitting in the Infrastructure Bank in Columbia. Some people talk about the \$148 million contained in the previous ballot question, but that's simply an amount required by State law for the tax to end or it must end at seven years, which it appears it will do so. There is no requirement that that amount of revenue be raised. However, it is apparent from the numbers that I just gave you that, including the interest, even this amount will be exceeded in available funds to complete these six road projects by the time the tax ends next April 30<sup>th</sup>. The people of this County have lived up to all of its obligations to this point required under that referendum. It is time for the State of South Carolina to live up to its obligation to complete these road projects as timely as possible, using the funds collected, as they have promised to the people of our County on many occasion.

Our passing of this Ordinance, which allows the re-imposition of the tax, is about letting the people decide. The projects that they spoke about at the many of public hearings are worth their support. This penny will be controlled by the local people, controlled by the local level, not the State, expended on local projects that will happen very quickly because of the use of bond financing. This bond financing should protect the public from the increase in cost of construction that many of us expect to occur during the time this tax will be collected. This bond amount will be set at an amount that is significantly below what the tax is expected to raise so that the people of this County are assured that there will never be any effect on their property taxes to pay off this bond. The projects will be built simultaneously, providing critical infrastructure needs as fast as possible. Much different than the current project schedule.

What does the referendum contain? \$18 million for the fire departments (if somebody checks me on these numbers I did this real hurriedly this morning about 6 a.m.), \$15 million for the new radio system, a new veterans' affairs office at the National Cemetery, new water tanks in Lake City, Pamplico and Coward, new water lines, \$18 million worth of water and sewer, \$20 million worth of roads in the City of Florence, \$12 million in dirt roads, paving as requested by the citizens at the public hearings, \$4 million in paving, which in my mind is for new jobs. We are talking about investing in infrastructure to bring new industry to Florence County and bring jobs and tax base so that we don't have to raise your taxes. We have an already approved industrial mega-site in Florence County that needs roads; one that rivals in size and amenities anything that BMW or Boeing or the other large industries that have come to our State were built on. We have another industrial site that also needs additional access for it to develop. We need to invest in our future. That is not going to happen with paving farm-to-market roads. \$40 million of road

paving in the nine Council districts. So, a total of almost \$76 million (almost half of the funds) in this capital project request would go to pave roads. Let the people decide.

The Attorney General argued in his letter to us that if you let the people vote in this referendum that it would frustrate the will of the voters in the last referendum. Have you ever heard a more illogical argument in your life? No, Mr. Deputy Attorney General, what is frustrating the will of the voters in the other referendum is the delay. The fact that the State leaders have not produced in building these roads any faster than they have. We understand why; the EPA, The Corp of Engineers, there are legitimate reasons, but they're still not built. The money's in the bank and we know they will be built, but the people are frustrated and they vented that frustration at the public hearings. This has a negative impact on this referendum and may cause them to vote it down, because they are so frustrated. I hope not. The will of the voters cannot possibly be frustrated by letting people vote in the referendum which is their's to decide and their's only. It is not for the politicians to decide. Not the Attorney General. Not the Department of Revenue. Not any one person. Let the people of Florence County speak unimpeded by outside influence. Let the will of the people decide whether they will have more adequate fire department facilities and equipment, extended water lines, water tanks, over 150 new fire hydrants on the City of Florence water system alone. Let the people decide if they want lower fire insurance rates because of this. Let them decide if they want dirt roads paved that have been promised for years and the repaving of roads in every district in this County. Let the people decide. That is how you don't frustrate the will of the voters.

It has been mentioned in the Morning News that potentially the State would institute a lawsuit against the people of Florence County to try and prevent them from voting in a referendum. Talk about frustrating the will of the voters! The Department of Revenue and those in power in Columbia did not frustrate the will of the voters in York, Aiken, Sumter, Marion counties just to name a few, they let the people decide. The people of Aiken continued their tax in January of this year and they are still completing the projects from the previous year, which ran for seven years. No lawsuit was filed against them. They have not finished all of their projects but the Attorney General says we must. Why are the citizens of Florence County any different?

People might vote against it. I understand. We have incredible odds. But isn't it about letting the people decide or is it about any of us politicians NOT letting you decide? Does that make any sense? I don't believe so. This is about going to the public in the next 90 days and explaining to them what this independent Sales Tax Commission has decided after listening to the people. Going to every area of this County explaining what is happening with the last referendum and how this one is so much different. That the money will be kept here in Florence. That the Treasurer of Florence will make sure that all funds expended are for the projects as outlined in the question. These projects will be done very timely because they will be done with bond financing. We are going to show the people of this County that County government knows how to get things done, as long as the people will vote for this referendum. I can understand how people may be inclined to vote against it with all the extraneous noise that has been raised, but I believe the issue is so important to the well-being of our citizens we must ask them at this time. I hope the people will look at the issue clearly and that their safety will be increased with fire



protection facilities. That new and expanded water facilities will affect the fire insurance rates, which will likely off-set the tax implications for those who receive these new water lines. And all of that will take precedence to any complaints they have over the previous referendum and its completion timeline.

The way to keep our taxes low in the future is to invest in our community and it is time to invest in this community. It is up to our community of how we want to invest, not the politicians. Only County Council can give you the right to vote. We have had the public hearings, to listen to what the citizens say they want and many said they want something in addition to roads. On the other hand, we can vote this down and do nothing, as one of the politicians has suggested. On the other hand, we can invest in our first responders and be prepared to protect our citizens. Which do you want to invest in? My fellow citizens, unless the State of South Carolina interferes with this, it is going to be your choice. I hope you get that choice in November and I pray that we make the right choice. Those of us who daily watch the ability of our County to respond to your needs and emergencies know this is critical to Florence County. To protect our citizens, to increase our tax base and provide new jobs, and to protect us from additional taxes in the future. This Council supports letting the citizens decide. THEY, not any politician, will decide what is best for Florence County. We intend to go across this County and every member of this Council will be working hard to ensure the passage of the referendum. Because you can believe me, all of us up here understand that for our fire departments, for EMS, for our roads, for everything contained in here for our municipalities that need water tanks, that this is a critical time in Florence County and we need this to pass. As I said, it's unusual to speak about a matter that is up for introduction, but this matter is of critical importance to Florence County."

#### **ORDINANCE NO. 05-2013/14 – INTRODUCED**

The Clerk published the title of Ordinance No. 05-2013/14 and the Chairman declared the Ordinance introduced: An Ordinance To Provide For The Creation Of Advisory Committees To The Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator; And Other Matters Related Thereto.

#### **APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:**

##### **JOHNSONVILLE RURAL FIRE DISTRICT**

Council Unanimously Approved The Recommendation Of The Johnsonville Rural Fire District Board For The Re-Appointment Of Vernon M. Tanner and William Prosser To Serve On The Johnsonville Rural Fire District Board, With Appropriate Expiration Terms.

##### **COMMISSION ON ALCOHOL & DRUG ABUSE**

Council Unanimously Approved The Re-Appointment Of Bishop Oscar Hardman To Serve On The Commission On Alcohol And Drug Abuse, Representing Council District 1, With Appropriate Expiration Term.

## **BOARD OF ASSESSMENT APPEALS**

Council Unanimously Approved The Re-Appointment Of Ted Walter To Serve On The Board Of Assessment Appeals, Representing Council District 1, With Appropriate Expiration Term.

## **MUSEUM BOARD**

Council Unanimously Approved The Appointment Of Jenny Levine To Serve On The Florence County Museum Board, Representing Council District 4, With Appropriate Expiration Term.

## **REPORTS TO COUNCIL:**

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS**

Monthly Financial Reports Were Provided To Council For Fiscal Year 2013 Through May 31, 2013 As An Item For The Record.

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING & FACILITY PROGRAMMING PRESENTATION**

Ashby Gressette – Stevens And Wilkinson Architects And Mike Thomas – Justice Planning Associates Presented The Findings Of The Strategic Planning And Facility Programming For The Administration And Judicial Facilities. The first phase was the Strategic Planning Phase. Mr. Thomas stated that when they began the project they set goals and a process to achieve those goals. One goal was to attempt to develop a long-term strategic vision on how the Complex should operate, how the court should operate (whether in the Complex or a separate building), and what the urban implications would be. Then a short-term goal to try to effectively re-use the space vacated by the City. The Project Methodology consisted of 1) Needs Assessment, 2) Resource Evaluation, and 3) Strategic Plan. The forecast indicated that population growth in Florence County would reach about 170,000 in 2040. The progress growth pattern exerts a demand for services.

According to the study, the facilities in the Complex were among the most over-crowded and operationally ineffective that they had seen in the United States. In the late 1960s this building seemed like a good idea. The problem was that while the concept of everything under one roof was a good one, it didn't adequately provide for any one of the services. The courts have not been effective since shortly after the building was built, partly due to the inability to provide the right means of separating parties and providing security in this building. The six (6) foot public corridors in the Complex prevent the ability to provide a safe, secure, appropriate court environment. The minimum standard for public corridors was fourteen (14) feet to allow separation of parties involved in the court process. The configuration of the building would not accommodate for restricted circulation for the Judges, jury, victims, staff, etc. Mr. Thomas stated the court functions would never work effectively in the Complex.

There were forty years worth of accumulated problems in the building. The recommendation was for the construction of a new courthouse. He stated that the clock was ticking before something really serious occurred in the Complex. They offered six scenarios for a new courthouse. Mr. Thomas stated he recommended Scenario #4 for Florence County, which involved the construction of six courts with the ability to expand to eight courts in the future and would include Juvenile Justice and Probation. The projected cost for Scenario #4 was in excess of \$36 million.

Mr. Thomas said the Complex desperately needed a fire suppression system. Another issue in the building was asbestos. He recommended removal as opposed to abatement. The current wheelchair ramps did not meet ADA compliance, they were too narrow. The estimated cost for preliminary renovation and very modest upfit was \$17 million.

Mr. Thomas provided an overview of the recommendation for the most cost effective short-term expansion with little to no cost. He stated the third floor would never be usable space for anything but storage. Just to rip out the steel that was on the third floor could cost as much as half a million dollars. In order to undergo a comprehensive renovation of the usable space in the building, including asbestos abatement, it would be difficult to accommodate the offices on the first floor, particularly the Treasurer's office. The County would potentially need to consider relocating those offices temporarily until the asbestos could be abated. He suggested doing the renovations right, do it once, wait until you could get it right, then the Complex would last another 30 to 40 years. (Copies of the handouts provided to Council are attached and incorporated by reference.)

Mr. Gressette displayed a model of the downtown area which depicted a new courthouse being built on property across Irby Street. The model was a three-story structure. Another longer range plan was the construction of a parking garage behind the existing Complex. The thought was that the parking garage could be put off for approximately 20 years.

Chairman Schofield thanked Mr. Gressette, Mr. Thomas and their staff for the work they had already completed on the project. He stated that even if the County had funding in place (which they don't) that it would take five years to build the courthouse. He stated with the City moving out the Council felt it was the appropriate time to address the issue. One of the recommendations that the County was already moving on was the moving of the Veterans Affairs Office across the street to make it more accessible for disabled American veterans.

## **FINANCE/FLORENCE MUSEUM**

### **AWARD BID NO. 19-12/13**

Councilman Dorriety made a motion Council Award Bid No. 19-12/13 For The Construction Of Exhibit Structure, Casework, Graphics, And Audio Visual Components For The New Florence County Museum To Capital Exhibit Services Of Manassas, VA In The Amount Of \$1,093,428.00. Councilman Mumford seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

## **FIRE/RESCUE SERVICES**

### **UPDATE ON FIRE/RESCUE SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Smith stated that before Mr. Brockington provided his presentation, he wanted to announce that Sam Brockington had been inducted into the South Carolina Fire Fighter's Hall of Fame. Councilman Springs presented Mr. Brockington with the plaque from the South Carolina Fire Fighter's Association and provided the background on the award. Mr. Brockington taught seminars across the Carolinas regarding rural water supply, then developed the same curriculum for the State Fire Academy, which was still being taught. He has served for 13 years on the State Fire Commission and served as the Chairman on the State's Training and Education Committee for the Fire Academy and was instrumental in the development of the Fire Academy. He has a total of 44 years in fire service, with 25 years as Chief of South Lynches Fire Department; one of the first eight rural departments in the nation to receive its ISO rating without regard to fire hydrants. (The current ISO rating for South Lynches is 4.) Councilman Springs stated he anticipated with Chief Brockington serving as the Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator for Florence County, each department within the County would reap the benefits and rewards of his service. Due to his contributions to the fire services in South Carolina, fire services were now better trained and would operate much safer. Mr. Brockington expressed his appreciation for the recognition and stated Chief Kerry Tanner from Johnsonville had also been a recipient of the same award.

Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator Sam Brockington Provided A Brief Update On The Fire/Rescue Services Department. One of the issues facing the majority of the fire departments under Council's control was the lack of tax base to adequately fund operations for endeavors to meet National standards such as National Fire Protection Association and OSHA Safety Standards. There was also a desire for better control over the millions of dollars being spent on fire protection in Florence County.

A comprehensive study was conducted on fire services in Florence. The creation of the Fire/Rescue Services Coordinator was one of the results of that study, in order to work with seven independent fire districts to establish a workable solution for fire service in Florence County. He stated Florence County was fortunate to have the quality of fire service providers it currently held. He stated all the departments were performing more with less and did an excellent job of managing funds. He stated one of the items needed to move forward was the Ordinance Council introduced earlier on the Agenda for the establishment of advisory boards to develop a strategic plan by using these two advisory committees for operational and capital budgeting purposes. The goal was to have an ordinance for Council to vote on in December so that it could be completed by March, with the opportunity to contract with the seven departments with a performance based contract to set the standards to accomplish the mission for implementation in 2014. He said they were all working together to develop the best possible fire protection for Florence County. He said what he needed from Council more than anything was support; the biggest asset the County had was its people, and we needed to take care of them.

At the request of Councilman Mumford, he introduced the fire chiefs present at the meeting: John DeLung-Windy Hill, Monty Tedder-Hannah-Salem-Friendfield, Larue Hendrix-West Florence, and Kerry Tanner-Johnsonville. Councilman Mumford commended Mr. Brockington for his efforts. Councilman Kirby stated he had already seen a change in the attitude of the fire service providers and expressed his appreciation for the fire departments working together. Councilman Springs stated that as a volunteer firefighter of 22 years, he had the utmost respect for what Mr. Brockington had done for South Lynchess and held him to a higher standard and was anxious to see what he was going to do for Florence County. Chairman Schofield commented that you could see on the Capital Project Sales Tax that the number one item on the list was fire. It also included water and fire hydrants as well as roads for the trucks to travel.

## **PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE/HUMAN RESOURCES**

### **ADDITIONAL FULL-TIME POSITION**

Councilman Mumford made a motion Council Authorize A Full-Time Assistant Public Defender Position Grade 26 To Be Funded By The South Carolina Office Of Indigent Defense. Councilman Culberson seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. Mr. Smith stated the County was not asked to contribute any funding for this position; it was totally funded by the South Carolina Office of Indigent Defense.

## **OTHER BUSINESS:**

### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### **CITY OF LAKE CITY**

Councilman Springs made a motion Council Approve The Expenditure Of Up To \$15,000 From Council District 1 Infrastructure Funding Allocation For The Construction Of A New Restroom Facility At Dew Park In Lake City. Councilman Dorriety seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

#### **DEWITT'S BLUFF LANDING**

Councilman Poston made a motion Council Approve The Expenditure Of Up To \$950 From Council District 2 Infrastructure Funding Allocation For Facility Improvements At Dewitt's Bluff Landing. Councilman Culberson seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

#### **LYNCHESS RIVER ATHLETIC PARK**

Councilman Kirby made a motion Council Approve The Expenditure Of Up To \$3,100 From Council District 4 Infrastructure Funding Allocation To Purchase Additional Bleachers For Lynchess River Athletic Park. Councilman Dorriety seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

#### **TIMMONSVILLE HIGH SCHOOL BASEBALL FIELD**

Councilman Kirby made a motion Council Approve The Expenditure Of Up To \$800 From Council District 4 Infrastructure Funding Allocation For Facility Improvements At Old Timmonsville High School Baseball Field. Councilman Culberson seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**WINDY HILL VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY**

Councilman Culberson made a motion Council Approve The Expenditure Of Up To \$4,500 From Council Districts' Infrastructure Funding Allocations (Approximately \$534 From Each District) To Assist The Windy Hill Volunteer Fire Company With The Purchase Of Training Equipment And Construction Of Facilities To Train For Aircraft Fires. Councilman Springs seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**MCLAUGHLIN ROAD/HIGHWAY 52 TURN LANE**

Councilman Springs made a motion Council Approve The Expenditure Of Up To \$45,000 From Council Districts 1, 4 And 8 Infrastructure Funding Allocations (Approximately \$15,000 From Each District) To Construct A Turn Lane On McLaughlin Road And Highway 52. Councilman Kirby seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**CITY OF FLORENCE**

Councilman Mumford made a motion Council Approve The Expenditure Of Up To \$56,000 From Council Districts 3, 7, And 8 Infrastructure Funding Allocations (Approximately \$18,667 From Each District) To Assist The City Of Florence With The Following Projects: \$15,000 Jeffries Creek Park Shelter Repairs (District 8); \$2,000 Lester Park Shelter Repairs (District 3); \$25,000 Timrod Park Tennis Court Resurfacing (\$3,166 District 3, \$18,667 District 7 And \$3,167 District 8); And \$14,000 Freedom Florence Backstops (\$13,500 District 3 And \$500 District 8). Councilman Bradley seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**UTILITY**

**RESURRECTION CENTER**

Councilman Bradley made a motion Council Approve The Expenditure Of Up To \$6,930 From Council District 3 Utility Funding Allocation To Pay For Crushed Asphalt For Driveway At Resurrection Center In Florence, SC. Councilman Mumford seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Councilman Caudle made a motion Council Enter Executive Session, Pursuant To Section 30-4-70 Of The South Carolina Code Of Laws 1976, As Amended, To Discuss A Contractual Matter. Councilman Mumford seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Council entered executive session at 10:28 a.m. Council reconvened at 11:09 a.m.

There being no further business to come before Council, Councilman Culberson made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Bradley seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURNED AT 11:09 A.M.**