

EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE FLORENCE COUNTY COUNCIL, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2015, 1:00 P.M., COUNTY COMPLEX, COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM, ROOM 804, 180 N. IRBY STREET, FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA

PRESENT:

Roger M. Poston, Chairman (Via Teleconference)
James T. Schofield, Vice Chairman
Alphonso Bradley, Council Member (Via Teleconference entered the call at 1:05 p.m.)
Kent C. Caudle, Council Member (entered the Conference Room at 1:09 p.m.)
Willard Dorriety, Jr., Council Member (Via Teleconference)
Jason M. Springs, Council Member (Via Teleconference)
H. Steven DeBerry, IV, Council Member (Via Teleconference)
K. G. Rusty Smith, Jr., County Administrator
D. Malloy McEachin, Jr., County Attorney
Connie Y. Haselden, Clerk to Council

ABSENT:

Mitchell Kirby, Secretary-Chaplain
Waymon Mumford, Council Member

ALSO PRESENT:

Dusty Owens, Emergency Management Department Director

Pursuant to South Carolina Code of Laws 1976, As Amended, Section 39-4-80, notice of the Emergency Meeting of the Florence County Council was not required. An Emergency Telephonic meeting was called on October 4, 2015 for 1:00 p.m. For The Purpose Of Declaring *A State Of Emergency* Due To Excessive Flooding In Florence County.

Chairman Poston called the meeting to order and stated the County was advised to close roads and recommended mandatory evacuation of the Black Creek area. County Administrator K. G. Rusty Smith, Jr. stated Council needed to approve a proclamation designating the conditions and actions needed. Emergency Management Department Director Dusty Owens stated the proclamation needed to be precautionary in nature because of the uncertainty of all of the issues the County would need to deal with concerning the flooding in the next several days. Evacuations were ongoing on Black Creek and citizens in the Lake City area were leaving their homes seeking shelter. There existed the possibility of evacuations in other areas as well. The proclamation was needed to ensure that a tool was in place that the County could act upon should the need arise to order an evacuation to a specific portion of the County. The proclamation would also outline other authority under the County Code that could be implemented by Council,

such as the closing of businesses, restricting access to other areas or declaring curfews. Mr. Owens anticipated the situation would worsen because the rain was projected to continue through Monday afternoon. In 2004, the crest for the flood on Black Creek was 16.5 feet and at 10 o'clock this morning it was already at that level and continued to climb. He was of the opinion that the proclamation needed to be written in the broadest possible sense to allow the Administrator and Council to implement actions as necessary.

County Attorney Malloy McEachin stated that in Council's deliberation and decision process for the proclamation, the following items needed to be included:

- Define the nature of the emergency;
- The geographic area affected;
- The conditions that required the emergency proclamation;
- Conditions that would terminate the emergency;
- Direct whether or not Council wanted to compel the evacuation of areas if people would not voluntarily evacuate; and
- Direct who would implement and enforce the proclamation.

Councilman Schofield stated he was of the opinion that Council should authorize the Sheriff's Office and Emergency Management Department to take all steps necessary to protect the lives of Florence County residents and order or allow them to order a mandatory evacuation especially in the Black Creek area. There were residents in that area refusing to leave now, but as the water continued to rise if those individuals called emergency personnel for assistance during the night, it would place emergency personnel in harm's way. He was also aware of situations particularly in Pamplico and lower Florence County where it was dangerous for people to be out on the roads, due to roads failing. He was of the opinion that the County should be pro-active and authorize the County Administrator and staff to do what was necessary.

In response to a question from Councilman Bradley regarding specific areas, Mr. Owens stated they could identify by streets the areas that needed to be evacuated.

After some discussion, Councilman Schofield made a motion Council authorize the County Administrator, Sheriff's Office and Emergency Management Department to take whatever steps were necessary to protect the lives of the citizens of Florence County. Councilman Springs seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. Councilman DeBerry asked that staff confer with the City of Florence regarding curfew. Mr. McEachin stated that, for the record, it was necessary to state that the nature of the emergency was flooding pretty much countywide; the area affected was Florence County, the condition requiring the emergency proclamation was the flooding, and that the proclamation would terminate when the flooding receded to a safe level. Councilman Schofield made a motion to incorporate into the original motion the information presented by the County Attorney. Councilman Dorriety seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. It was the consensus of Council that Vice Chairman Schofield sign the Proclamation on behalf of the County, since the Chairman was unable to come to the Complex.

It was the consensus of Council that County offices be closed on Monday, October 5th for non-essential employees. Mr. Smith stated staff would provide the appropriate notice to employees and the public.

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

COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURNED AT 1:18 P.M.