



**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL  
SEPTEMBER 14, 2020**

**Present:** Moses Bell, Jimmy Ray Douglas, Doug Pauley (arrived at 6:15 p.m.), Cornelius Robinson, Clarence Gilbert, Council Members; Jason Taylor, County Administrator; Laura Johnson, Assistant County Administrator; Tommy Morgan, County Attorney; Patti L. Davis, Clerk to Council.

**By Phone:** Mikel Trapp (left the meeting at 7:06 p.m.), Bertha Goins

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

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved by Council Member Douglas, seconded by Council Member Gilbert, to approve the agenda. ***The motion carried 6-0.*** Chairman Robinson stated Council Member Pauley is running a few minutes late.

**3. INVOCATION**

In Council Member Pauley's absence, Vice Chair Goins led the invocation.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved by Council Member Bell, seconded by Council Member Gilbert and Vice Chair Goins, to approve the minutes from the Regular Meeting of August 10, 2020. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

**5. PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS**

- A.** Dr. J. R. Green - 2021 South Carolina Superintendent of the Year. Chairman Robinson stated lightning struck twice in Fairfield County, and this is a great accomplishment for Dr. Green and the County. He is proud to have Dr. Green as superintendent. Council Member Bell thanked Dr.

Green for all his work with the Fairfield School District. He feels he is an example to other superintendents across the State, and his integrity and ideas are overwhelming. Council Member Bell thanked Dr. Green for making Fairfield County proud. Council Member Gilbert also thanked Dr. Green for his work as evidenced by his grandson, who is a student in the school district. With the new environment, everything is working perfectly for him. Council Member Douglas congratulated Dr. Green for this honor. Vice Chair Goins stated she admires Dr. Green and thanks God for what he is doing in his life. She prays God will continue to use him mightily in helping the people and the generation to come. Dr. Green thanked County Council for recognizing him tonight. He feels it is truly humbling to be recognized as the 2021 Superintendent of the Year; however, he does not look at this award as an individual accolade. Instead, this is a celebration of all the many outstanding accomplishments in the district. During his entire tenure with the School District, Dr. Green has advocated that greatness can be achieved only if we work together. He is now into his 9<sup>th</sup> year, and it is not about J. R. Green. He simply wants to be part of the effort. Things have been accomplished because everyone pulls together to make it happen. Dr. Green again thanked Council for the recognition, and he looks forward to more great things to come to the district. Chairman Robinson then read the plaque "Presented to J. R. Green by Fairfield County Council in Recognition of Being Named the 2021 South Carolina Superintendent of the Year", and a photo was then taken. Chairman Robinson agreed it is a team effort, and we will continue to push and be that team to make it even better.

- B.** Proclamation Recognizing October 4-10, 2020, as National Fire Prevention Week. Chairman Robinson allowed Mr. Jason Pope, Director of the Fire Service, to make remarks at this time. Per Mr. Pope, this is an important time of year for the fire service. October 4-10 is National Fire Prevention Week, and this year's theme is "Serve Up Fire Safety in the Kitchen", with the focus on kitchen safety. Almost half of reported house fires are started as a result of fires in the kitchen. About 2/3 of those house fires begin with food items and other cooking material. This is a great threat nationwide as well as in Fairfield County. A cooking fire can grow very quickly; therefore, these are taken very seriously. These type of fires can be prevented, and Mr. Pope wished to share some safety tips, which will also be shared throughout the month of October with the passing out of prevention materials at the local schools.

- When in the kitchen, never leave cooking food unattended.
- Be alert when cooking.



- Keep an oven mitt or pan lid nearby for any potential grease fires.
- Try to keep children away from cooking surfaces (kid free zone for at least 3 feet around the stove).

In addition, Mr. Pope reported that the County IT Department assisted the Fire Service in adding a smoke alarm request to the Fire Service portion of the County website. Under the resource tab will be a link entitled "smoke alarm request". The Fire Service has partnered with the American Red Cross and the State Fire Marshall's office to provide smoke alarms at no charge. Mr. Pope has a team of volunteers who will assist with placing the smoke alarms. To date, almost 300 smoke alarms have been installed this year. Mr. Pope thanked Council for passing the National Fire Prevention Week Resolution. Chairman Robinson then paraphrased the Proclamation, and a photo was taken.

## 6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

## 7. ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS AND ORDERS

Chairman Robinson stated that it is First Reading by Title Only for Items A, B and C, so there will be no discussion on these items.

- A.** First Reading (By Title Only) Ordinance No. 754: An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of an Agreement Between Fairfield County and Project Windsor to Provide Certain Incentives, Authorizing the Sale of Certain Real Property in the County, and Other Related Matters. Motion made by Council Member Bell, seconded by Council Member Douglas, to approve First Reading (By Title Only) of Ordinance No. 754. ***The motion carried 6-0.***
  
- B.** First Reading (By Title Only) Ordinance No. 755: An Ordinance to Amend the Fairfield County Land Management Ordinance (No. 599) to Provide for the Zoning Reclassification from R-2 (Inclusive Residential District) to B-1 (Limited Business District) of 1.6 Acres Owned by Rockton Baptist Church (Applicant). This is Tax Map No. 145-01-35-002-000. Property is Located Between Crane Street, Winter Street and Sandifer Road, Winnsboro SC 29130. Motion made by Council Member Bell, seconded by Council Member Gilbert, to approve First Reading (By Title Only) of Ordinance No. 755. ***The motion carried 6-0.***

**Council Member Pauley arrived at 6:15 p.m.**

- C.** First Reading (By Title Only) Ordinance No. 756: An Ordinance to Amend the Fairfield County Land Management Ordinance (No. 599) to Provide for the Zoning Reclassification from R-1 (Single Family Residential District) to RD-1 (Rural Residential District) of 17.61 Acres Owned by Yvan Baquerizo (Applicant). This is Tax Map No. 093-00-00-031-000. Property is Located at 8393 US Highway 21 North, Ridgeway, SC 29130. Motion made by Council Member Bell, seconded by Council Member Gilbert, to approve First Reading (By Title Only) Ordinance No. 756. ***The motion carried unanimously 7-0.***
- D.** Ordinance No. 757: An Emergency Ordinance to Declare a Local State of Emergency in Fairfield County and Providing for Conducting Electronic Meetings for Fairfield County Council and All Fairfield County Boards and Commissions. Motion made by Council Member Gilbert, seconded by Council Member Douglas and Vice Chair Goins, to approve Ordinance No. 757. Per Mr. Taylor, the County continues to have new Coronavirus cases on a regular basis, and the total number fluctuates regularly. There was a high of 17 new cases over the past month with today having 2 new cases. The County has about 18 confirmed cases among staff members. Council Member Bell stated he was in Kershaw County, and when entering the Administration Building, a person's temperature is taken and a mask must be worn. Based on the temperature reading, a person will either be admitted or not, and everyone is required to wear a mask. He inquired if we are doing the same in Fairfield County. Mr. Taylor stated we do have some equipment ordered, and some County procedures have been changed, such as the majority of his meetings are now being held at the Commerce Center as opposed to bringing people into the Administration Building. Also, per Mr. Morgan, the Kershaw Administration Building is open to the public, and their building is within the city limits with Camden having a mask ordinance. Kershaw County is similar to Fairfield County in that there is not a county-wide ordinance; however, the location of the Administration Building is within the city limits. ***Motion carried unanimously 7-0.***

**8. BOARD AND COMMISSION MINUTES - Received as Information**

- A.** Disabilities and Special Needs

**9. BOARD AND COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS**

None.



## 10. OLD BUSINESS

- A.** Discussion of Council's Upcoming Meeting Schedule. Chairman Robinson asked for Mr. Morgan to give an explanation of this item. Motion made by Council Member Gilbert and seconded by Vice Chair Goins for discussion. Per Mr. Morgan, at the January 13 meeting of Council, there was an item for new business for the 2020 meeting dates, which was voted on and approved 7-0. That calendar provides typically for two meetings per month on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays. Last year, Council voted to amend that schedule to only have one meeting in the fall months toward the end of the year because there is typically not as much business. Moments ago, Council passed the Emergency Ordinance allowing for calling special meetings. If Council entertains a motion to amend the calendar for the remainder of 2020 to go to one meeting, then that would mean Council would have meetings on October 12, November 9 and December 14 with the possibility of special called meetings should they be necessary. Council Member Bell opined that the Emergency Ordinance provides the mechanism for the Council to have one meeting a month as determined by the Chairman. Per Mr. Morgan, this is correct, and the Chairman can cancel a meeting at his discretion; however, Title IV of the Home Rule Act requires that counties have at least one County Council meeting per month. Some councils only have one meeting, and some have two or more. Vice Chair Goins made a motion to amend, to have upcoming meetings on the dates given, especially due to the situation with COVID-19. Council Member Douglas seconded the motion to amend. Council Member Bell stated he is okay either way; however, he was thinking the Chair could make this decision. Mr. Morgan stated the issue would be that the Emergency Ordinance expires on November 14, and the second meeting in November is on November 23, which is after the expiration of the Emergency Ordinance. If Council does redo the Emergency Ordinance, this would occur at the November 9 meeting. ***Amended motion passed unanimously 7-0.***

## 11. NEW BUSINESS

- A.** Discussion Concerning Relocation Site for Civil War Monument Located on the Mt. Zion Green. Chairman Robinson stated there will be no vote taken tonight, and this item is simply on the agenda for discussion. Per Mr. Taylor, the County received a request from the Town stating the Town would like to have the monument moved, and

they are asking if the County would accept it to be placed at the museum. He then requested for Mr. Morgan to discuss the legal aspects. Per Mr. Morgan, the law Mr. Taylor is referring to is the Heritage Act, which is found at S.C. Code Ann. 10-1-165, and this has previously been discussed. The provision that applies in this instance is subsection A: No Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Mexican War, War Between the States, Spanish American War, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf War, Native American or African American history monuments or memorials erected on public property of the State or any of its political subdivisions, may be relocated, removed, disturbed or altered. This is the primary language that is at issue. The Town has indicated in a letter, contingent on the S.C. Legislature taking action with regard to the repeal of the Heritage Act, which would require a 2/3 majority vote of both houses, that the Town would then ask the County if it would be willing to relocate the Civil War monument on property at the Fairfield County Museum. This is a contingent request because the law currently prohibits the monument from being moved. Chairman Robinson states he believes this would not even come up for discussion until January. Per Mr. Morgan, every year there are prefiled bills, and there are currently two sitting in the Senate (Senate Bill 151 and 152) along with House Bill 314, that talk about the repeal of the Heritage Act. Given the COVID situation, this was not brought up by either house before the General Assembly stopped meeting. The General Assembly is under a *sine die* Resolution, which states that only limited matters will be discussed, so this will not be taken up by the General Assembly until January 2021 at the earliest. Council Member Bell inquired if our Delegation could request that this monument be moved versus having to approach the Heritage Act. Per Mr. Morgan, they would not be able to do this. The Heritage Act applies across the board. There have been other entities who have tried to make similar applications with one request being to move a monument to a different part of the same park, and again, this was shot down. The Heritage Act is written at the State level to be a universal repeal; otherwise, it would be a special or local legislation issue which is prohibited under the South Carolina Constitution. Council Member Pauley stated it is very premature to have this discussion with the Heritage Act still being enforced. Mr. Morgan stated it could be considered premature, and there is no action Council could take at this time. The Town has brought it to the County's attention and, hence, the discussion. However, at this time, no action can be taken. Council Member Douglas made a motion to table the discussion; however, Chairman Robinson stated there is no



need to table it because this is just a discussion. Council Member Bell is very appreciative that the Town of Winnsboro reviewed this and the harm it is doing to the community with the Confederate monument being directly in front of the future Administration Building. He commended the Town for recognizing that. Council Member Pauley stated the monument, as long as he can remember, has always been in the Town of Winnsboro's jurisdiction, and they are responsible for it. He does not see the need for the Town to want to give it to the County and the County accept the monument for it to be placed on County property. If for some reason the Heritage Act is repealed and the monument can be moved, he feels the Town should find a better suited location that they own instead of it being on a piece of County property. Vice Chair Goins thanked Mr. Morgan for clarifying the Heritage Act, and in that, it publishes all monuments for all types of cultures. This has been a very touchy subject, but just as this is trying to be removed and others like the Confederate monument, people must realize that other cultures may then decide they do not want your monument in a particular location. She questioned what would happen then. She is just throwing this thought out to say we must be considerate of the push that is behind this, but also think on your own as well. If this were an African American monument and someone would try to remove it, how would you feel. It covers all areas of history, all areas of culture, and that is why the Heritage Act was put in place, to protect those things. Vice Chair Goins is good with whatever is done, but she just wanted to put this thought out there.

## **12. COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

- A.** Introduction of Jonathan Burroughs - Public Works Director. Mr. Taylor stated Jonathan is a lifelong resident of Fairfield County, and the County is very glad to have him on board as the Public Works Director. He has hit the ground running and is doing a good job. Mr. Burroughs stated he started interviewing with the county about six years ago for various positions. He then gave an abbreviated account of a family emergency he recently went through and stated his wife had told him to keep persevering. He knows where he is supposed to be. He is now going on week 5 on the job, and he is truly enjoying it. The guys are fantastic, and Mr. Burroughs is working on incentives. These employees do a lot of work, and the average person really does not know what these workers are capable of doing for the County. Mr. Burroughs thanked the County for this opportunity, and he will do his

best. Council Member Bell inquired of Mr. Burroughs' background. Mr. Burroughs stated he has background in education and leadership. Council Member Pauley stated he appreciates the desire to work for the County. He and Chairman Robinson have already heard good things throughout the community. Vice Chair Goins welcomed Mr. Burroughs to the team. Chairman Robinson states he knows Mr. Burroughs' demeanor and thinks he will be a good asset to the team.

- B.** Gene Stephens, President, Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce - Business Promotion Program. Mr. Taylor stated he and Mr. Stephens had been discussing ways to help the County's small businesses during the pandemic. One idea is to bring some of the local businesses into the 21<sup>st</sup> century as far as how they market themselves to the public. The concept was to help them with a web presence, and in particular, a website with a point of sale feature. A local restaurant was struggling, and they created a point of sale website. After this was created, the business was doing very well. Mr. Stephens has found a company that can perform this service for a very reasonable price. Mr. Taylor and the Chairman have listened to the presentation and were impressed. Businesses can be assisted with this better than just a one-time grant. A grant would be a Band-Aid, but with this, the business could actually come out of the pandemic stronger. Per Mr. Stephens, discussions were begun early about how the businesses were struggling. One thing that stood out was when the business had to close, they could not do business and were struggling to find a way to do minimal contact ordering. The merchants had no way to pull in any income because they did not have any kind of e-commerce capabilities at that time. Mr. Stephens has been reaching out to find someone who could help with creating a Virtual Fairfield, which is the ultimate goal. The company is Retail Systems. When someone visits the Town, they will first do a search on Google for restaurants and other points of interest. A lot of the local businesses and restaurants do not have a Google rating because they do not have a website. A packet was handed out to Council with information, along with some of the businesses that are being looked at for the program. The company normally charges a minimum of \$400 just to get started and create an e-commerce site for a company. They are a family run business and have agreed to come into the County to set up each business for \$50 per business. This is whether the business would want full e-commerce capabilities with PayPal, logistics, etc. or down to just having a website presence. The hosting/maintenance would then be \$50 per month. Recent statistics state 12.4% of all retail is



done through e-commerce right now, and this number is expected to go higher. Council Member Douglas feels the towns should be named in the presentation and not just Fairfield County. Council Member Pauley inquired if there is a certain number of businesses that would need to buy into the program before it gets started. Per Mr. Stephens, there is no minimum, but he is pretty sure the businesses listed would want to participate in the program in order to get a digital presence. The business relationship would be between Retail Systems and the actual business itself. The proposal is to kick start the businesses with paying the start-up fee along with three months of maintenance. After this, the \$50 maintenance fee would be up to the business. Council Member Bell inquired if this would come out of the money the County already gives to the Chamber. Per Mr. Taylor, the Chamber has some money from the Town of Winnsboro, and Mr. Stephens will be getting the numbers together to see if there is money above and beyond what the County already gives. Council Member Pauley also inquired concerning the different visual store fronts for the business, and he thought there was an ordinance in place with the Town or the County where all the store fronts had to be uniform. Also, he remembers at one time the Town or the Chamber would give \$500 to every new business to help them get to a point where the store fronts look nice. Mr. Stephens stated he is presenting to the Town of Winnsboro on Tuesday night. Per Council Member Douglas, the Town of Winnsboro does do this. They have a certain amount of money, and each business can utilize this for store fronts. The business must apply and be accepted. Per Mr. Stephens, this is a matching grant fund. Stronger code enforcement is also needed, because there are some codes that are not being followed. They work off a report basis, and right now there is not a lot of teeth in enforcement; however, they are working on this. Council Member Douglas asked if the code enforcement is being handled by the County, and per Mr. Taylor, the County handles the building codes only. Mr. Taylor also feels Council Member Pauley's point is a good point. This is just a piece of the puzzle, and there are a lot of other things, including the appearance of the property. This matters and could determine whether or not the business will succeed. Also, maintaining regular hours is a problem, and this needs to be addressed to help the downtown grow and thrive. Council Member Pauley suggested that possibly there could be stipulations for the businesses to participate in this program, and Mr. Taylor agreed, with some conditions being keeping regular hours and the condition of the business. Once we start investing as a community into the businesses, Mr. Stephens feels they will then start taking

more pride themselves in the way their business looks. His is considering a year-round lighting concept to make it look nicer at night, which could encourage the restaurants to stay open a little later consistently, and hopefully create a nighttime activity. Council Member Bell inquired if the Chamber's budget was cut this year. Mr. Taylor stated he does not believe their budget was cut. Chairman Robinson stated the list is a good variety, and he agrees that people do utilize Google when it comes to businesses. Mr. Stephens stated businesses can have a Google rating along with Yelp, but neither of these is possible without a digital presence. Council Member Pauley stated Mr. Stephens is all over the County. During the Big Grab, one minute he was in Blythewood, and ten minutes later he was halfway across the County. Mr. Stephens stated his ultimate goal is to be able to create a Fairfield County app which will build an experience for people. The Big Grab was this past weekend, and there were a lot of people out participating. It took him 25 minutes to drive from Blythewood to Ridgeway because of the traffic. The Town of Blythewood also loves the ongoing work, and they want to be involved. Mr. Stephens is considering a partnership including Winnsboro, Ridgeway and Blythewood, which almost creates a triangle on a map. An all-day experience could be created to travel 17 miles and hit all types of restaurants, stores, etc. Mr. Stephens also stated people come from many different locations to participate in the Big Grab event. He feels we were blessed that the rain held off on Saturday, and the event was a great experience. Council Member Pauley inquired concerning the origin of the Big Grab. Per Mr. Stephens, originally it was 23 miles in a direct line. Now, it is a figure 8 and is up to 50 miles. He has also been requesting input on how to make the event better and has received some great feedback.

- C. Furman Miller, Midlands Region Trail Coordinator, Palmetto Conservation - Alston Trail Head. Mr. Taylor introduced Mr. Miller, who is here tonight to talk about the Alston Trail Head. This is one of the more visited places in the County and one of the most photographed places in the County. This is where the old rail bridge runs over the Broad River to Peak and over into Newberry County. Last year, the County budgeted \$45,000 to start looking at how we can partner to take something good and make it into something even better. There is now a plan in place, and most of the money was spent toward the plan. The plan is now being taken to funding partners, and there has been a good response, with future plans to fund a new parking lot, possible camp sites, a boat launch and a



fishing pier. There is not good access to the Broad River in Fairfield County, and we are looking to try and develop this and make it nicer. Per Mr. Miller, the signature project, The Palmetto Trail, is a 500 mile cross state hiking and biking trail with one terminus on the coast at Awendaw which is north of Charleston, and the other terminus in downtown Walhalla. There is a little less than 400 miles of actually established trails, and the organization is looking to close the gaps by partnering with different organizations, local government, state government, individuals and businesses. In the process of doing this, there is opportunity to collaborate with groups, and in this case, with Fairfield County. Alston is the trail head for the Peak to Prosperity passage. This is an 11 mile rails to trail conversion that starts in Alston and ends near Mid Carolina High School in Newberry County. This is one of the more popular passages. The trail has been kept open during the pandemic for use. There were 55 cars parked at Alston on one particular day. People are getting out and looking for something to do, and this is a great activity. It is a wonderful asset for the State as well as the County. The Broad River trestle is a crown jewel, and this is a destination photo stop for prom pictures, wedding pictures, weddings, dinners, etc. This site gets a lot of use. Less than 11 years ago, it was basically a trash dump. The project on the Peak-Prosperity passage began in 2004, and the Alston Trail Head was opened in 2009. The usage recently has been exponentially higher as people are looking for things to do. Mr. Miller is really excited about this collaboration effort, and he wished to thank the County for their willingness to cooperate and collaborate on this project. He encouraged everyone to see the proposed drawings of the Alston Trail Head, and he feels it is phenomenal. The trail head proposal is to create a picnic area with a loop trail there for fishing, an observation deck into the river, a cut granite improved kayak and canoe launch, long term potential for some lodge-type buildings, amphitheater area with extension of the parking lot, some interactive cooperation with the Railroad Museum and the primitive campsites mentioned by Mr. Taylor. With their opening in Columbia, REI has already given a grant to install two of these campsites already. The trail enters Fairfield County at a spot that could not be more beautiful. Mr. Miller provided some brochures for Council, and again encouraged everyone to visit the trail. He emphasized that this area will be a destination not only for residents, but also tourists. People from all over travel here to do the hiking and biking. Recently, new kiosks were installed. There is a partnership with Kidtrack with brochures containing activities on the trail. A bicycle maintenance station has been installed which includes

minor maintenance for the cycles. The organization is invested in making this a beautiful spot, and Mr. Miller is looking forward to future cooperation to make the spot even better. Chairman Robinson remembers when the trail was just beginning to get cleaned up, and this past year, he took his daughter to this spot for graduation pictures. While there, he saw cars from North Carolina, Virginia and more. Council Member Pauley stated they also have marathons. Mr. Miller stated the first year the marathon was done, the sponsors expected about 70 people. The entries had to be closed at 250. The second year there were 300 applicants. This year, it had to be done virtually and still had almost 400 people who virtually ran the 10K. It has been requested for next year, and this is an extremely popular event. He also stated if anyone is interested in presentations, guided hikes or any kind of events, please get in touch with him, and he will be more than happy to help coordinate the event. South Carolina is a beautiful state and has a lot to offer, and the trail actually gives an avenue to see this. Council Member Bell thanked Mr. Miller for coming tonight, and asked if Mr. Miller is willing to do some sponsored hikes. He did see the announcement in the paper and feels it is really good, and also feels more should be done for the citizens to know more about it in order to take more advantage of it. Mr. Miller says they do have a social media presence, newspaper articles, word of mouth, etc. He is willing to go to Rotary Clubs, Chambers, etc. to do presentations in order to get the word out. Mr. Miller will also leave cards for Council if anyone wants to get in touch with him. He is the coordinator for the Midlands Region and is more than happy to answer questions. There are only 10 people in the entire non-profit organization, but they can provide someone to guide a hike to give the background information and answer questions. When people go out to the trail to hike, they will then post pictures. 50% of the comments would include questions about the location. However, there are still people who are local and have never heard of the trail. Mr. Miller takes every opportunity to try to use any and all opportunities to spread the word. Vice Chair Goins thanked Mr. Miller for all the hard work. She is also excited about this, and there is so much history in the area. It is an awesome place and will be even greater in the future.

**Council Member Trapp left the meeting at 7:06 p.m.**

- D.** Diana Robinson, WIOA Director and Sam Hodges, Project Manager, Fairfield County Economic Development - September Job Fair. Thanks to Mr. Davenport, Mr. Hodges and Council support, Mr. Taylor stated



Fairfield County has had good economic development lately. One thing we must be sure of is to make our citizens aware of the new companies, and hopefully, they can take advantage of the jobs that are available. We want our companies that have been recruited to be successful and get good employees. To make that happen, a Job Fair has been organized, and further details will be covered by Mrs. Robinson and Mr. Hodges. This has been tried at other locations in the County with mixed results. The upcoming Job Fair will be held at the Mitford Recreation Center, Jenkinsville Recreation Center and in Winnsboro. As part of this awareness with the Job Fair to get people employed, we will also be touching on the Census, which is incredibly important for pulling federal and state dollars into the County. Right now, Fairfield County is not responding to the Census at the level it should. Therefore, this will be included in the Job Fair. Mr. Hodges reported there are ten total companies who will be participating, including MLily, Element, Isola, Mekra-Lang, SeaPro Boats, Fairfield County, Fairfield County Sheriff's Department, S.C. Highway Patrol, Pruitt Health and Fairfield County School District. This will take place September 30 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at three separate locations, including the Mitford Rec Center, Jenkinsville Rec Center and the Winnsboro Rec Center. Every company will provide the County with general application forms for prospective employees to complete. There will be marketing materials giving further information about the companies. Afterward, the applications will be collected and returned to the companies. From there, the companies will decide who to call for interviews. Council Member Bell questioned how the locations were selected. Per Mr. Hodges, the thought was to have this widespread throughout the County, and the rec centers were chosen that have been under used. These also have Wi-Fi capabilities to aid with the Census. Council Member Bell does not see Ridgeway on the list, and the Ridgeway Fire Department assists with the school's Wi-Fi capabilities. Chairman Robinson stated a job fair was done previously, and Council Member Bell agreed there was one done at the Town Hall about 8 or 10 months ago. Mrs. Robinson stated this is the first annual, so this is something that can be built upon. As COVID gets under control, we can look at doing things in Ridgeway. The event was held October 9 of last year, and there was not a good turnout. Now, there are upgrades at the Fire Department. We will do these three locations and see how this goes and then go forward with looking at other locations. Chairman Robinson inquired if advertising would only be done with flyers. Per Mr. Hodges, the plan for advertising is to put the flyers in the food boxes to go out next week,

spread throughout the schools and restaurants and also do a big social media campaign. Flyers will not be mailed out. Mrs. Robinson stated they are open to other suggestions. Council Member Bell inquired concerning the companies not being present. Per Mr. Hodges, some of the companies will be present, but with three locations, this could be difficult. We will have marketing materials to help explain what the companies do. Council Member Pauley inquired how the companies were selected. Per Mr. Taylor, Mrs. Robinson interfaces with other companies beyond those listed, and possibly a generic application can be taken that could be looked at later for other openings. Per Mrs. Robinson, the Department of Social Services, Department of Employment and Work Force and S.C. Works is also helping to support this effort. They will be getting the word out, and hopefully the next event will be bigger and better. The possibilities are endless, and we are trying to do what we can to get our citizens employed and get Fairfield County on the map. Council Member Pauley appreciates the coordination of the Job Fair. Vice Chair Goins also thanked Mr. Hodges and Mrs. Robinson for their efforts as this is much needed. COVID has taken a toll on a lot of people, and this may be a way of bringing things back up to where we can continue to move forward. Council Member Bell inquired if there is anything that can be done in the Ridgeway community around the Census taking. Mr. Taylor stated we do need to look at having the Fire Department open for the Census and have computers there, because we must get our Census numbers up. Mr. Taylor has been working with Mr. Bryan Franklin, who is the Mayor of Blythewood but also the Census representative. He is supposed to be providing the County some banners and signs to promote awareness. Council Member Bell stated the Census is very important for the County, and we need to do everything we can to promote this. Mr. Taylor agreed and stated if our numbers are low, we will not get our share of federal and state dollars. Chairman Robinson inquired of the current unemployment rate for the County. Per Mr. Taylor, currently the rate is about 8.5% with the State average being 7.5%. However, per Mr. Davenport, the County has not really lost jobs. Instead, most of the unemployment rate has increased by those working outside the County having lost jobs. Mr. Davenport feels this is a real opportunity because of all the companies on the list, and there are people in the County that are driving right by these businesses to go to work in other locations. Now, they could drive 5 miles instead of 25 miles to get to work. The need for the Job Fair was largely driven by the companies in the private sector needing workers.



- E.** Bob Innes, Animal Control Director - Update on Services. Per Mr. Taylor, as we have done in the past, we want to begin having some of the department heads appear at Council meetings to give updates. We have asked Mr. Innes to come in and discuss the changes to his operation based on the new Ordinance. Per Mr. Innes, there has been a good response, and the biggest part has been explaining the changes to the citizens. The department purchased a large number of runners for citizens to purchase in order to get the animals off the chains. He has now had to order more. There have been a couple of instances with problems, but in the end, the necessary changes were made. The changes are still being publicized, and everyone gets seven days' notice to make the changes. Most of the feedback has been positive, and Mr. Innes was pleasantly surprised. There has been a bit of a slow down with COVID-19, one of these being animals getting spayed and neutered. Mr. Innes wanted to briefly give figures for the 2019-2020 year. The department took in 1,510 animals, which is an increase from the prior year, and these numbers do seem to be rising. Of these, 1,430 were released or found homes or reclaimed. Animal Control generated an income of \$116,540 of which \$59,467 were donations going toward animal care and \$53,073 were County fees. This is a significant increase from the prior three years. A \$4,000 grant was also received last year from PetCo. Mr. Taylor stated this is a tremendous increase as we usually take in about \$7,000. There were 36 dog bite incidents which had to be reported to DHEC, none of which were rabid. There were two reports of rabid animals in the County and both were skunks. The department reached out to all the Fairfield County schools to talk to the children about animal care, and a free rabies shot clinic was offered to the public. As the COVID problem hopefully subsides, Council Member Douglas has kindly donated a wells cargo trailer, which is in fantastic condition. This will be used for a roving free rabies clinic. Dr. Robbie Chappell has agreed to volunteer his time, so there would be no cost to the County. These will be staged through 2021 at the different fire departments and recreation grounds due to the parking requirements of the trailer. There has been a great increase of neglected animals in the County, and a lot of this is basically educating people. Chairman Robinson thanked Mr. Innes for the update.
- F.** Census. See Item D above for discussion.

**G. Food Distribution Update.** Mr. Taylor stated much of the planning for these events has been transferred from Mrs. Johnson to the Recreation Department. Per Mrs. Johnson, the next food distribution is scheduled for September 23 beginning at 5:00 p.m. The sites are McCrorey-Liston School of Technology, the Airport, Geiger Elementary and Mitford Fire Station. There will be a grand total of 800 boxes to give out for Fairfield County residents with a limit of two boxes per car, one per household. Mrs. Johnson also once again listed the Census sites, including Mitford Community Center, Jenkinsville Community Center and Fairfield County Parks and Recreation Monday through Thursday 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Computers will be available just to complete the Census. A site will also be looked at in the Ridgeway area. Also, absentee voting begins Monday, September 28 through November 2 at Midlands Technical College Fairfield Campus, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There will be one Saturday absentee voting day on October 31 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Voter Registration is in the process of getting this information printed and mailed.

**13. CLERK TO COUNCIL'S REPORT**

None.

**14. COUNTY COUNCIL TIME**

Goins: Vice Chair Goins thanked everyone and stated we are truly blessed in Fairfield County. When you hear all the great things happening and expectations we have going forward, she thanks God for all the great people working together to make this happen for the citizens of Fairfield County. She asked also for a copy of the Census notice to be forwarded to her and also inquired concerning the electronic signs.

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

At 7:35 p.m., motion made by Council Member Pauley and Vice Chair Goins, seconded by Council Member Gilbert, to go into executive session to discuss (a) Personnel Matter - Discussion Regarding the Annual Review of the County Administrator and Clerk to Council. ***Motion carried 6-0.***



At 8:15 p.m., motion made by Council Member Gilbert, seconded by Council Member Bell and Vice Chair Goins, to return to regular session. **Motion carried 6-0.**

Motion made by Council Member Gilbert, seconded by Council Member Douglas, to extend the standard 1% raise to the Clerk in addition to another 1% for job performance. **Motion carried 6-0.**

**16. ADJOURN**

At 8:17 p.m., it was moved by Council Member Bell, seconded by Council Member Douglas, to adjourn. **The motion carried 6-0.**



PATTI L. DAVIS  
CLERK TO COUNCIL



CORNELIUS ROBINSON  
CHAIRMAN