



**MINUTES
LAURENS COUNTY COUNCIL
HISTORICAL COURTHOUSE
MARCH 26, 2019 – 5:30 P.M.**

ATTENDING COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBERS – Chairman David Pitts and Vice Chairman Joe Wood; Council Members Diane Anderson, Jeff Carroll, Stewart Jones, Garrett McDaniel and Kemp Younts.

ATTENDING ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF – County Administrator Jon Caime; Clerk to County Council, Betty Walsh and County Attorney Sandy Cruickshanks.

ATTENDING DEPARTMENT HEADS - Laurens County Communications / E/911 Director, Joey Avery; Laurens County Fire Service Director, Greg Lindley; Laurens County Finance Director, Lisa Kirk; Laurens County Emergency Services Director, Matt Pennington; Laurens County Treasurer, Cindy Burke; Laurens County Human Resources Director, Debi Parker; Laurens County Public Works Director, Dale Satterfield; Laurens County Parks, Recreation and Tourism Director, Andy Howard and Lynn Lancaster, Laurens County Clerk of Court.

ATTENDING PRESS – Laurens County WLBG Radio, Iva Cadmus; *The Clinton Chronicle*, Vic McDonald; *The Laurens County Advertiser*, John Clayton.

INVITED GUESTS – Mr. Grant Davis of Mauldin and Jenkins; Mr. Jason Tavenner, Director, of Laurens County Disability and Special Needs; Laurens District #55 High School Robotics Team and Coaches.

MEETING NOTIFICATION – The requesting general public, department heads and Press were informed of the meeting in a timely manner. Postings of the Agenda were posted in County facilities on their bulletin boards and also posted on the County Web Site.

PUBLIC COMMENT SIGN UPS – None.

CALL TO ORDER – Chairman Pitts called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Chairman Pitts asked for all to stand for the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance. Councilman McDaniel provided the invocation and all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – The agenda was approved by a CONSENSUS of 7-0.

MINUTES OF MARCH 12, 2019 - The minutes will be included in the April 9th agenda package due to computer problems.

REPORTS TO COUNCIL:

RESOLUTION COMMENDATION - LAURENS DISTRICT #55 HIGH SCHOOL ROBOTICS TEAM AWARD – Councilman Jones asked for approval of the Resolution for the Robotics Team. COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL made the MOTION to approve with COUNCILMAN CARROLL SECONDING; VOTE 7-0. Councilman Jones asked for all of the team to come forward for the presentation.

HENRY LAURENS AWARD - COUNCILMAN JONES - As a MOTION, COUNCILMAN JONES requested consideration and approval for James E. Gambrell for the Henry Laurens Award. VICE CHAIRMAN WOOD SECONDING for discussion.

Councilman Jones stated the following comments about Mr. Gambrell: Original visionary of the Laurens County Museum and historian; First President of the Laurens County Museum Association; Inspirational

leader of conservation and preservation of Laurens County; Has shown unwavering passion for picking up litter and trash throughout Laurens County. Has been recognized by Laurens County and South Carolina for his efforts and dedication; Since he started picking up litter in Laurens County over 30 years ago, he's picked up over 3,000 bags of trash, not to mention all the other bigger items like tires, couches, TV's. totaling over 23 tons of litter and trash. Mr. James Gambrell has raised the bar for being a dedicated neighbor and servant to the people of Laurens County.

COUNCIL VOTED 7-0 to approve.

FY18 AUDIT REPORT- GRANT DAVIS OF MAULDIN AND JENKINS – Mr. Davis approached Council giving a brief overview of the audit documents received by Council.

This section of Laurens County annual financial report presents our discussion and analysis of the County's financial performance during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2018. Please read it in conjunction with the County's financial statements, which follow this section.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS:

- ☐ The County's assets exceeded its liabilities at June 30, 2018 by \$32 million (net position). Of this amount, \$54.0 million is net investment in capital assets; \$7.9 million is restricted for capital activity, debt service, family services and public safety, and with unrestricted net position of approximately (\$30.4 million).
- ☐ The County repaid \$2.0 million of bond and financing lease payables during the year. The County issued \$835 thousand in new debt during the year to purchase capital equipment for various departments.
- ☐ During the year, the County's General Fund balance increased by \$1.2 million. The General Fund total fund balance is \$7.6 million. Of this amount \$6.9 million is unassigned.
- ☐ The General Fund actual revenues were \$1.2 million greater than budgeted and General Fund expenditures were \$372 thousand less than budgeted.
- ☐ The County implemented Governmental Accounting Standard Board (GASB) Statement No. 75 as of July 1, 2017 which significantly changed the accounting for the County's other postemployment benefits and related disclosures.

OVERVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

This annual report consists of four parts - management's discussion and analysis (this section), the basic financial statements, required supplementary information, and an optional section that presents combining statements for non-major governmental funds. The basic financial statements include two kinds of statements that present different views of the County:

- ☐ The first two statements are government-wide financial statements that provide both long-term and short-term information about the County's overall financial status.
- ☐ The remaining statements are fund financial statements that focus on individual parts of the County government, reporting the County's operations in more detail than the government-wide statements.
- ☐ The governmental funds statements tell how general government services like public safety were financed in the short term as well as what remains for future spending.
- ☐ The business-type fund reports the activities of the County's solid waste department where the County charges fees to cover the costs of these services.
- ☐ Fiduciary fund statements provide information about resources held for the benefit of parties outside the government. Fiduciary funds are not reflected in the government-wide financial statements because the resources of those funds are not available to support the County's own programs.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE COUNTY AS A WHOLE

Net Position: The County combined net position decreased \$6.4 million or 16.9 percent between fiscal years 2017 and 2018. Approximately \$5.6 million of this decrease is attributable to the implementation of GASB Statement. Unrestricted net position of governmental activities decreased by \$6.7 million to a deficit of \$30.4 million. Capital assets of \$3.2 million were acquired during the year while depreciation expense on new and existing capital assets totaled \$5.6 million.

Changes in net position. The County's total revenues decreased by 0.2 percent to \$40.2. Approximately 56.9 percent of the County's total revenue comes from property taxes, 20.7 percent comes from fees charged for services and 21.5 percent is from state and federal aid. The total cost of all programs and services decreased approximately \$895 thousand or 2.2 percent. The County's expenses cover a range of services, with about 37.5 percent related to public safety.

Capital Assets - At the end of 2018, the County had invested \$63.9 million in a broad range of capital assets (See Table A-3). This amount represents a net increase before depreciation (including additions and deductions) of \$3.3 million. However, after depreciation and transfers to the business-type activities, capital assets decreased \$2.4 million or 3.6 percent, over last year.

Long-term Debt At year-end, the County had \$9.9 in bonds and capital lease obligations outstanding, a decrease of 10.6 percent over last year. The state limits the amount of general obligation debt the County can issue to 8 percent of the assessed value of all taxable property within the County's legal limits.

FINANCIAL REPORT – MONTH EIGHT (8) - FISCAL YEAR 2018 / 2019- Finance Director, Lisa Kirk, provided Council with a copy of the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 / Month Eight (8) Financial Report.

Mrs. Kirk also informed Council that they are continuing to post the Bank of America transactions on the website and the check registry by the tenth (10th) of the following month.

Continuing, Mrs. Kirk said, "I will be speaking with our computer module technician tomorrow concerning "Smart AP"; where we can electronically pay our vendors as opposed to cutting checks. The Debt Set-Off Collections for EMS this period have been the best so far with just under seventy five thousand dollars (\$75,000) collected".

DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH PROCLAMATION – Mr. Jason Tavenner, Director for the Laurens County Disability and Special Needs Board introduced attending Board Members and thanked Council for the financial help. Mr. Tavenner went on to provide information about a client that has been working within the Sheriffs Department doing odd simple jobs and how the client remains to be so excited with his job and is constantly smiling.

VICE CHAIRMAN WOOD made the MOTION to approve the Resolution towards declaring April as Disability and Special Needs Month. COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

FIRST DRAFT FISCAL YEAR 2019/2020 BUDGET – Administrator Caime noted that this will be the third year for reconstruction of the overall finances of the County as being as follows:

THREE YEAR, THREE PHASE FINANCIAL RESTRUCTURING OVERVIEW:

PHASE 1 (FY18) Goals: 1. Financial Transparency 2. Cut Costs through Efficiencies 3. Remove one time capital from O&M (annual operations and maintenance financials)

PHASE 2 (FY19) Goals: 1. More Financial Transparency, Efficiencies, and capital from O&M (in addition to phase 1 achievements). 2. Introduction of long range plans to guide budgeting and financial decisions

PHASE 3 (FY20) Goals: 1. More Financial Transparency, Efficiencies, and capital from O&M (in addition to phase 1 & 2 achievements). 2. Utilize long range plans to guide budgeting and financial decisions (from phase 2). 3. Introduce fund balances into the current and long range financial management and eliminate deficits. 4. Long term financial planning beyond the current fiscal year.

Continuing Administrator Caime said, "What I have done this year is breaking out the budgets that do not have any significant increases in spending from the current fiscal year. There are no new requests of spending in this budget; no increase in taxes and there are no new employees and no new requests for compensation. All have seen the proposed budgets from me and all agree with my recommendations. This can be conducted by Council real quickly and actually cuts out have of the budget process. The budgets do have increases for eligible personnel".

Administrator Caime said, "Next is what I'm calling non-consent budget. During the next Council meeting, I will be providing you with a separate supplemental report for EMS of their own revenue and capital".

Chairman Pitts asked for a better understanding of the health insurance markup; and, that he thought it was a flat fee paid by the employee and employer. Administrator Caime said, "Basically there is a surcharge based on our performance that goes to a pool. Some actually pay less than the markup".

Continuing Administrator Caime said, "Health Insurance went from 1.247 in fiscal Year 2017 to 1.0 in fiscal year 2020. Workman Compensation is another area that has had a twenty one percent (21%) decrease. A total annual cost reduction is at two million four hundred thousand dollar (\$2,400,000) which equates to about fourteen (14) mills of tax decrease. With the general fund budget, there were twenty five million dollars (\$25,000,000) requests. I have cut it to one million seven hundred forty seven thousand dollars (\$1,747,000). The total recommended budget is twenty three million four hundred sixty three thousand, three hundred seventeen dollars (\$23,463,317) and is a balanced budget".

Continuing, Administrator Caime said, "With the other funds, Victims Assistance has been running in a deficit spending for years and up to five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000). It is now balanced. Solid Waste, the fee increase from sixty five dollars (\$65.00) to seventy two dollars (\$72.00), is not going to be needed in the next fiscal year. EMS, running in with a five hundred thousand dollar (\$500,000) deficit on operations and maintenance which equates to a three (3) mills of tax. We have neglected the capital end on rolling stock".

Continuing Administrator Caime said, "The Treasurer 113 account was established as part of the County Administrators first budget and the phase 1 financial restructuring of FY18. The 113 has two designated revenue sources. In the past the expenses that should have been allocated to these revenue sources appear to have not been fully captured. As a result of this financial deficiency this fund was allowed to grow as the revenues outstripped the expenses.. At the end of FY17 the FB for these two funds was \$1,119,138. At the same time the GF was drawing down fund balances as expenses outstripped revenues. Some of these GF expenses should have been charged against these SRF funds. County Council took action to correct this deficiency by moving \$500,000 in this funds. At the end of each fiscal year going forward the revenues and expenses for SRF 113 will be accounted for in SRF 113. If a surplus is generated it will be allocated to the SRF 113 FB until the SRF FB reaches \$500,000. Any amount over \$500,000 in FB will be automatically transferred to the GF FB UD each FY. This action will permanently correct this situation".

Continuing, Administrator Caime said, "The 123 and 134 Fund - Fire Special Purpose Tax District have very healthy fund balances. As part of the long range strategic capital plan, advanced purchases of preowned equipment is planned for FY18 to FY20, prior to a reissuance of the next decade long bond for fire equipment in 2020. A renewed 10 year L/P for fire trucks is planned to take place in FY20 with the first payment due in Fiscal Year 2021.

Proposed budget adoption schedule

January 15: Completed budget worksheets returned to the Administration.

March (goal): Administration will present the first draft to the County Council for informational purposes only. Administration will then distribute first draft to the departments and budget managers. Administration will be available to meet with the departments and budget managers if you want to review your first draft budget.

April-June: Council works on Budget April 23, 2019 (target) (May 14 backup date) :

First Reading of Budget Ordinance May 14, 2019 (target) (May 28 backup date) 2019:
Second Reading of Budget Ord. June 11, 2019 (target) (June 25 backup):
Public Hearing and Third/Final Adoption

Councilman Jones questioned funds #123 and #134 and asked if there was any danger in running a deficit. Administrator Caime stated that both funds are healthy and that he did not foresee any problems with a deficit.

Councilwoman Anderson asked where the cost of living adjustment stood? Administrator Caime replied 2.4% per the Consumer Price Index.

Referring to the previous question, Chairman Pitts asked for confirmation that it meant a 2.3% expense and nothing in revenue. Administrator Caime replied that an increase in revenue would be for the increase in expenses. Chairman Pitts asked if there was a millage increase. Administrator Caime replied that there was not a millage increase.

LONG RANGE CAPITAL PLAN - \$3.5M FIRE LEASE/PURCHASE - CLARIFICATION OF NO TAX INCREASE

I. 10 YEAR REPLACEMENT PLAN: The fire services started a 10 year replacement plan in 2001.

- a. In 2010 approval was given to continue the plan.
- b. We are asking for approval to continue the 10 year replacement plan for 2021.
- c. Current \$3.2 million lease will be paid off in June 2020.
- d. \$3.5 million purchase payment starts in 2021.
- e. Current 20 mills of tax pays the payment without a tax increase.

II CURRENT FLEET: There are currently 105 vehicles in the Laurens County Fire Service.

37 – Engines	19 – Tankers	18– Service Units
12 – Brush Trucks	02 – Aerials	08 – Director's Fleet
09 – Chief's Vehicles		

III. PROPOSED FLEET FY20/FY30: 98 Vehicles

37 – Engines & Pumper/Tankers	13 – Tankers	16 – Service Trucks
13 – Brush Trucks	02 – Aerials	08 – Director's Fleet
09 – Chief's Vehicles		

IV. PROPOSED FLEET FY30/FY40: 88 Vehicles

37 – Engines & Pumper/Tankers	03 – Tankers	16 – Service Trucks
13 – Brush Trucks	02 – Aerials	08 – Director's Fleet
09 – Chief's Vehicles		

V. PROPOSED FLEET FY40/FY50: 85 Vehicles – From 105 = 20 less

37 – Engines & Pumper/Tankers	0 – Tankers	16 – Service Trucks
13 – Brush Trucks	02 – Aerials	08 – Director's Fleet
09 – Chief's Vehicles		

VI. LONG RANGE COST SAVINGS:

Long Range Fleet Replacement will save the county millions of dollars.
A fleet of 105 vehicles goes to 85 over the next 30 years
\$420,000 x 20 vehicles = \$8,400,000.00

VII. PROPOSED PURCHASE:

10 Pumper/Tankers	1 Service Unit	2 First Response Units
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We are continuing the same three million five hundred dollars (\$3,500,000) lease purchase. What we have said was that we were going to go on and purchase pre-owned equipment. Greg has agreed to hold off on several purchases for a couple of more years. There is no tax increase”.

Director Lindley said, “What we are looking at is considered a pumper tanker truck. They are a dual purpose truck. If we save by buying these types of trucks, by the time we get to 2040, we will need to reduce the fleet from about one hundred five (105) down to eighty five (85).

Referring to the document provided to Council, Chairman Pitts questioned the current fleet of nineteen (19) tankers and thirty seven (37) engines and then looking at fiscal year 2040-2050, there are thirty seven (37) engines and pumper / tankers which is the same number that we currently have. Mr. Lindley replied, "What we are doing is, each pumper carries one thousand (1,000) gallons of water and the tanker carries two thousand (2,000) gallons of water. To get the water to a housefire, they have to roll three (3) trucks. What we are proposing to do is to go to a pumper/tanker that will carry two thousand (2,000) gallons of water. We are cutting down on the number of trucks to get an appropriate amount of water to a fire".

Chairman Pitts noted that the number of volunteers are dwindling down and in some cases we have less than five (5) volunteer firefighters. Mr. Lindley agreed and stated that on a national trend there has been a thirty five percent (35%) reduction with Laurens County actually in worse shape percentage wise.

Vice Chairman Wood said, "At the last meeting there were a lot of numbers thrown at us. Mr. Lindley came to us wanting us to approve three and half million dollars (\$3,500,000) and all I could see then was putting this County deeper in debt. I see now that I was wrong. The Fire Departments don't actually belong to the County but to the special purpose district which is funded with a twenty (20) mill of tax. Four (4) mills of that tax is for buying these trucks. At the last meeting, we actually voted to go out and solicit the bids".

VICE CHAIRMAN made a MOTION to move ahead with the ten year plan and to secure the vehicles with COUNCILMAN JONES SECONDING; VOTE 6-1 (Councilman Carroll was in opposition).

OLD BUSINESS: TO GO TO A PUMPER/TANKER

RESOLUTION #2019-08 - BLUE LAWS SUSPENSION - County Attorney Cruickshanks noted that this Resolution allows for the continuation of the suspension of the Blue Laws in the unincorporated areas of Laurens County through December 31, 2019.

COUNCILMAN JONES made the MOTION to approve with COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

VEHICLE USE POLICY CLARIFICATION FOR NON-RESIDENT EMPLOYEES - Administrator Caime briefed Council by saying that Mrs. Walsh provided me with minutes from prior meetings and it appears that Council tabled the Ordinance due to unconfirmed decisions towards not allowing new hires that are not residents of Laurens County to be able to take the County vehicle home. This part was never clarified as it relates to new hires. I am requesting Council action to removing the tabled position and allowing staff to revisit Ordinance #736 and remove it as an Ordinance and make it an official policy for the County. The new Policy would be approved by the full Council.

VICE CHAIRMAN WOOD made the MOTION to approve removing the document from the earlier tabled position. COUNCILMAN YOUNTS SECONDING for discussion.

COUNCIL VOTED 6-1 (Chairman Pitts objected).

VICE CHAIRMAN WOOD made the MOTION to leave it as is with COUNCILMAN CARROLL SECONDING for discussion.

Councilwoman Anderson said, "This is leading us into dangerous territory. It will mean that we will be getting feedback from the public with cars being seen out of county. I think we need to just grandfather in those that already have the option to take the vehicles home and set it that no new employees will be allowed to take the vehicle home if living out of county. We need to move forward and not backwards".

Councilman Jones stated that he understood the dilemma at hand and asked if there was any tracking devices on the vehicles to help monitor.

Vice Chairman Wood noted that if an employee is on twenty four call and lived ten miles from the County line, is he going to leave the car on the side of the road. We need to give the County Administrator some leeway to work with.

COUNCIL VOTED 4-3 (Council Members McDaniel, Anderson and Pitts were in opposition).

AUTHORIZATION FOR COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO HIRE THE LITTER/HUMANE SUPERVISOR – Public Works Director Dale Satterfield asked for Council approval to allow the County Administrator to hire the Supervisor for the Litter / Humane Department.

VICE CHAIRMAN WOOD made the MOTION to approve the request to hire with COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL SECONDING; VOTE 6-1 (Diane Anderson was in opposition).

PUBLIC HEARING ORDINANCE #860 - CERAMTEC FORMERLY KNOWN AS "PROJECT X"- Chairman Pitts opened the public hearing at 6:50 P.M. With no one wishing to address the Ordinance, Chairman Pitts closed the public hearing at 6:51 P.M.

THIRD READING ORDINANCE #860- CERAMTEC – FORMERLY KNOWN AS "PROJECT X" – COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve the Ordinance with COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

PUBLIC HEARING ORDINANCE #861- FIBERTEX NONWOVENS INCORPORATED - Chairman Pitts opened the public hearing at 6:52 P.M. With no one wishing to address the Ordinance, Chairman Pitts closed the public hearing at 6:53 P.M

THIRD READING ORDINANCE #861- FIBERTEX NONWOVENS INCORPORATED- COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON made the MOTION to approve the Ordinance with COUNCILMAN JONES SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

APPROVAL OF CAPITAL PROJECT SALES TAX TO PROCEED FORWARD - Administrator Caime asked for Council approval to form a Committee to make project recommendations towards the capital sales tax.

COUNCILMAN CARROLL made the MOTION to approve for organizing a Committee with COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDING for discussion.

Chairman Pitts read pertinent sections of the State Law on Capital Project Sales Tax as follows from Section 4-10-300:

SECTION 4-10-310. Imposition of tax. - Subject to the requirements of this article, the county governing body may impose a one percent sales and use tax by ordinance, subject to a referendum, within the county area for a specific purpose or purposes and for a limited amount of time. The revenues collected pursuant to this article may be used to defray debt service on bonds issued to pay for projects authorized in this article. However, at no time may any portion of the county area be subject to more than one percent sales tax levied pursuant to this article, pursuant to Chapter 37, Title 4, or pursuant to any local law enacted by the General Assembly.

SECTION 4-10-320. Commission creation; composition

(A) The governing body of any county is authorized to create a commission subject to the provisions of this section. The commission consists of six members, all of whom must be residents of the county, appointed as follows:

(1) The governing body of the county must appoint three members of the commission.

(2) The municipalities in the county must appoint three members, who must be residents of incorporated municipalities within the county, and who are selected according to the following mechanism:

(a) The total population of all incorporated municipalities within the county, as determined by the most recent United States census, must be divided by three, the result being an apportionate average.

(b) The respective population of each municipality in the county must be divided by the apportionate average to determine an appointive index.

(c) Each municipality in the county appoints a number of members to the commission equal to the whole number indicated by their appointive index. However, no single municipality may appoint more than

two members to the commission; unless there is only one municipality in the county, and in such case the municipality is entitled to three appointments to the commission.

... (C) The commission created pursuant to this section must consider proposals for funding capital projects within the county area. The commission then formulates the referendum question that is to appear on the ballot pursuant to Section 4-10-330(D).

SECTION 4-10-330. Contents of ballot question; purpose for which proceeds of tax to be used.

(A) The sales and use tax authorized by this article is imposed by an enacting ordinance of the county governing body containing the ballot question formulated by the commission pursuant to Section 4-10-320(C), subject to referendum approval in the county. The ordinance must specify:

(1) the purpose for which the proceeds of the tax are to be used, which may include projects located within or without, or both within and without, the boundaries of the local governmental entities, including the county, municipalities, and special purpose districts located in the county area, and may include the following types of projects:

(a) highways, roads, streets, bridges, and public parking garages and related facilities;

(b) courthouses, administration buildings, civic centers, hospitals, emergency medical facilities, police stations, fire stations, jails, correctional facilities, detention facilities, libraries, coliseums, educational facilities under the direction of an area commission for technical education, or any combination of these projects;

(c) cultural, recreational, or historic facilities, or any combination of these facilities;

(d) water, sewer, or water and sewer projects;

(e) flood control projects and storm water management facilities;

(f) beach access and beach renourishment;

(g) dredging, dewatering, and constructing spoil sites, disposing of spoil materials, and other matters directly related to the act of dredging;

(h) jointly operated projects of the county, a municipality, special purpose district, and school district, or any combination of those entities, for the projects delineated in subitems (a) through (g) of this item;

(i) any combination of the projects described in subitems (a) through (h) of this item;

(2) the maximum time, in two-year increments not to exceed eight years from the date of imposition, or in the case of a reimposed tax, a period ending on April thirtieth, not to exceed seven years, for which the tax may be imposed;

(C)(1) Upon receipt of the ordinance, the county election commission must conduct a referendum on the question of imposing the sales and use tax in the area of the county that is to be subject to the tax. The referendum for imposition or reimposition of the tax must be held at the time of the general election. Subject to item (2), two weeks before the referendum the election commission must publish in a newspaper of general circulation the question that is to appear on the ballot, with the list of projects and the cost of the projects. If the proposed question includes the use of sales taxes to defray debt service on bonds issued to pay the costs of any project, the notice must include a statement indicating that principal amount of the bonds proposed to be issued for the purpose and, if the issuance of the bonds is to be approved as part of the referendum, stating that the referendum includes the authorization of the issuance of bonds in that amount. This notice is in lieu of any other notice otherwise required by law.

(2) If the referendum on the question of imposing sales and use tax is conducted in an odd-numbered year, and it is the only matter being considered at the general election, then six weeks before the referendum, the election commission must publish in a newspaper of general circulation the question that is to appear on the ballot, with the list of projects and the cost of the projects.

(D) The referendum question to be on the ballot must read substantially as follows: "Must a special one percent sales and use tax be imposed in (county) for not more than (time) to raise the amounts specified for the following purposes?"

Councilman Jones said, "I have studied this very deeply of lately. The primary local municipalities already have this one cent (\$.01) sales tax in place and this again would call for all local business owners, that are in the municipalities to raise their taxes again".

Councilman Younts stated that it would be in excess of a year before it was in place and questioned projects. Administrator Caime replied that a lot of work needs to be done so we can move forward.

Vice Chairman Wood said, "We have all talked about this and I tend to agree with Councilman Jones in some ways. I live in Western Laurens and ask just what will this buy us. This tax allows six (6) people to say what to do with it. An Agricultural Center would be great but not near the Airport. It needs to be more central within the County".

Councilwoman Anderson said, "I personally think this to be a good idea. Other Counties do this same thing and all counties do benefit from it. The proposed Commission needs to develop the projects. Other people coming through Laurens County would also be helping. If you or I go to Greenwood to shop, we are helping them".

Councilman McDaniel said, "We have talked about many options where about ninety percent (90%) I do approve. We need to find the best way to fund and make these happen when the sales tax sunsets in eight (8) years. We need to think quality of life".

Councilman Carroll said, "We have all talked for the last several months of things nice to have that we don't have. But in reality, we have roads and infrastructure that need repairs or need to be built. I don't want to raise taxes without giving the opportunity to address what actual needs we have that are primary needs".

Vice Chairman Wood said, "Promises can be broken and they have. The Local Option Sales Tax promised the citizens that one hundred percent (100%) would be credited to their taxes. For the past several years, Council has used twenty nine percent (29%) of these funds to balance the general fund. This has gotten to become a yearly thing with the budget".

VOTE 5-2 (Council Members Jones and Wood were in opposition).

ORDINANCE # 862 - SECOND READING - "PROJECT BLUEBERRY" - COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL made the MOTION to approve the Ordinance as presented with COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

RESOLUTION #2019-10 - FAIR HOUSING RESOLUTION - COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL made the MOTION to approve the Resolution as presented with COUNCILWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

EMS 12 HOUR PAY REQUEST APPROVAL (REVENUE NEUTRAL) - Director Matt Pennington approached Council asking to allow changing three (3), twenty four-forty eight (24/48) hour Paramedic positions to twelve (12) hour positions. Three (3) additional Paramedic positions were approved in 2017 and we have been unable to hire for these positions. This request will also work as a pilot to determine if we will be able to hire more Paramedics based on different hours. All salaries have already been approved, and the only change would be the hourly rate that would need to be increased. This is a budget neutral request and the related job duties would be the same as the current Paramedic job description for the twenty four / forty eight (24/48) hour Paramedic.

COUNCILMAN CARROLL made the MOTION to approve with COUNCILMAN JONES SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

EMS 800 RADIO GRANT ACCEPTANCE - Director Pennington approached Council acknowledging and requesting approval of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Office of Public Health Preparedness grant. The fiscal year 2019-202 grant is to purchase twenty-two (22) new 800 Radios in the total amount of eighty-seven thousand six hundred ninety seven thousand dollars and twenty cents (\$87,697.20) for FY 2019-2020 and includes one (1) year of user fees and a three (3) year service plan. This requires a ten percent (10%) match of eight thousand seven hundred sixty nine dollars and seventy two cents (\$8,769.72) with the funds coming from the Palmetto 800 line item in the budget.

COUNCILMAN WOOD made the MOTION to approve the request as presented with COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL SECONDING for further discussion.

Councilwoman Anderson asked if there is a reimbursement associated with this? Director Pennington stated that it is a grant where we actually purchase and they reimburse us.

COUNCIL VOTED 7-0 to approve.

Administrator Caime noted that a seventy thousand dollar (\$70,000) mass casualty trailer is parked out front for Council to view.

RESOLUTION OF GUN SANCTUARY- COUNCILMAN JONES – Councilman Jones said, “This is a very serious issue that I have been following where a Bill was passed in the United States Congress that offers infringements on our rights. What I want to reinforce here by Resolution is that the people of our County through their duly elected officials resolve that Laurens County Council is hereby designated as a “Gun Sanctuary County”, in order to preserve for the people of, on, and in Laurens County. This Resolution recognizes many things as the unalienable right to bare arms, as noted in the Second Amendment to the U S Constitution and the Constitution of South Carolina. As I have always said and stand as a proponent of due process. What I see happening in the Federal level right now we are opening the doors to undermining the due process. When law enforcement is needing to obtain someone, there are rules for them to follow. One statement that came out from the Whitehouse this week read – The Administration opposes the HRA because it would impose burdensome requirements of certain fire arm transactions and certain transfers, loans, sales and gifts to be processed by Federally, licensed, importer, manufacturer or dealer of firearms. It would impose permanent record keeping requirements and limitless fees on these transactions”.

COUNCILMAN JONES made the MOTION to approve the Resolution declaring Laurens County as a gun sanctuary County. VICE CHAIRMAN WOOD SECONDING for discussion.

Councilman Jones said, “One thing that I have studied in history is what the Nazis did in murdering over ten million people and what the Soviet Union did in murdering over twenty million people. There is always a process followed like background checks coupled with gun registries. The registries were used to confiscate fire arms with the leading to genocide. We have seen things like this in our recent history that targeted Afro-Americans. This Resolution says that we in Laurens County are going to reinforce our constitution”.

Vice Chairman Wood stated that he had read the document and I think it is okay because everything in it is already the law.

Councilman McDaniel said, “Firstly, I am a gun owner and I do have one in my vehicle. I believe in the US Constitution and I believe in the Second Amendment. I don’t particularly like the stigma attached with Laurens County being a gun sanctuary”.

Councilman Carroll said, “We all have been talking about moving the County forward and I don’t think that the gun sanctuary is the thing to do. We all took the oath to enforce all the amendments of the Constitution”.

Councilman Jones stated that is all the Resolution does – reinforce the Constitution.

Chairman Pitts read the oath that each one of Council took – “I do solemnly swear and I am duly qualified according the Constitution of this State to exercise the duties of the office of which I have been elected and I will to the best of my ability will preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of this State and of the United States”. I think this states volumes that I personally support the Federal and State Constitutions. Should I vote in the negative, of which I plan on doing, it certainly does not reflect that I do not support the Constitutions.

VOTE – 3-4 (Council Members Carroll, Anderson, McDaniel and Pitts in opposition).

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

COUNTY COUNCIL COMMENTS:

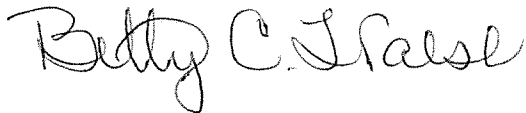
- 1.) Councilman Jones stated that we all take an oath over the Constitution. It is very important that we all reinforce, yet the State of South Carolina or the Federal Government tried to come into this County and undermine due process and undermine our second amendment rights, this Council and our Sheriffs Office would need to reinforce that. Its up to all of us to do that. That's the essence of government.
- 2.) Vice Chairman Wood extended his appreciation towards the Public Works Department and the Greenbox Sites concerning the recent deal handed to Council.
- 3.) Councilman McDaniel thanked Council for approving the referendum sales tax for capital purchases.
- 4.) Councilman Carroll, "I think we are going to be fine. It all is a difference of opinion. We are working hard to move Laurens County forward".

EXECUTIVE SESSION – COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL made the MOTION for Council to move into Executive Session at 7:31 P.M. for a contractual matter concerning Public Works / Solid Waste and an employment matter concerning the County Administrator. COUNCILMAN CARROLL SECONDING; VOTE 7-0. Chairman Pitts declared a five (5) minute break.

Council went into executive session at 7:42 P.M. Upon a COUNCIL CONSENSUS the Executive Session was closed and moved back in to open session at 7:53 P.M.

ADJOURMENT – COUNCILMAN MCDANIEL made the MOTION to adjourn at 7:55 P.M. with COUNCILMAN JONES SECONDING; VOTE 7-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betty C. Walsh".

Betty C. Walsh
Laurens County Clerk to Council