

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

February 4, 2020

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

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The Edgefield County Council held its regular meeting at 6:00 P. M. Tuesday, February 4, 2020 in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield, SC. Notice of this meeting was provided to The Edgefield Advertiser and others as requested.

Members present

- Scott Cooper, Chairman
- Albert Talbert, Vice Chairman
- Arthur Biggs, Councilman
- Dean Campbell, Councilman
- Dr. Jacqueline Kennion, Councilwoman

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Others present

- Tommy Paradise, County Administrator
- Dana Waters, Finance Director
- Andrew Marine, County Attorney
- Jennifer Gilley, Clerk to Council
- and others as per list attached

Chairman Cooper called the meeting to order. The invocation was given by Reverend Eldwin Griffin of Mt. Alpha Baptist Church in Ward, SC. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was then recited.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the February 4, 2020 agenda was made by Councilman Campbell, seconded by Councilman Talbert. Motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the January 7, 2020 County Council minutes (Regular Meeting of Council) was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilman Biggs. Motion passed unanimously.

Guest Speakers

None

Comments from the Public

1. Linda Anderson

Mrs. Anderson started her comments by telling Council that she would like to see the agenda come out to the public earlier so they had more time to review the content prior to the meetings. Mrs. Anderson also noted that she is still against the Planned Development proposed known as Tavern Hill. Mrs. Anderson told Council that she is in favor of the Rail Trail program that Council spoke about at their Council Retreat meeting held on January 16, 2020. She said she believes county staff and council members should look at the impact it would have on the citizens in Edgefield County. Mrs. Anderson closed her comments by saying she believes County Council members should listen more to the citizens and take more action to reflect the input they get from citizens.

Reports

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There was no discussion nor questions on the reports.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Cooper asked Council if there were any items that needed to be removed from the Consent Agenda to allow discussion. There were none. Motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented was made by Councilman Campbell, seconded by Councilman Biggs. Motion passed unanimously.

- 1. Consideration of reappointments to the Edgefield County Hospital Board of Trustees.
 - Alva LewisDistrict 1
 - Sandra CollierDistrict 4
 - Atlee Goodwin.....At-Large

- 2. Consideration of appointment/reappointments to the Economic Development Committee.
 - John HareECWSA
 - Will Williams.....EDP
 - Scott Neely.....Dominion Energy
 - Todd BrownEC Legislative Delegation
 - Charles BlackstonPrivate Representative

- 3. Consideration of Liaison Assignments/Council Member Appointments.
 - Fire Board Cooper
 - Hospital Board of Trustees Kennion
 - Planning Commission..... Biggs
 - County Transportation Committee Kennion
 - Countywide Recreation Committee..... Kennion
 - Economic Development Committee..... Cooper & Talbert
 - Tri-County Sanitary Landfill Committee..... Campbell & Talbert
 - Three Rivers Solid Waste Campbell
 - Upper Savannah Council of Governments Cooper & Talbert

Vice Chair Duties

Chair, Finance Committee

Oversee all Performance Evaluations of employees who report to Council

Consent Agenda Ends Here

Public Hearing

None

*Chairman Cooper noted that he would be recusing himself from old business number 1 because his family’s property is adjacent to the property in those items of business. He explained that Vice Chair, Albert Talbert would run the meeting during those items of business. Chairman Cooper turned in a recusal statement to Ms. Gilley and stepped out of the room while the remaining Councilmembers voted. The recusal form is on file in Ms. Gilley’s office with the minutes of this meeting.

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Old Business

1. Consideration of Approval of Third Reading of Ordinance Number 19-20-766, "An Ordinance to Zone 101 Acres of Land, more or less, Owned by SLH Investments to Planned Development (PD) and Approve the Concept Plan for said Property's Development."

Councilman Talbert asked Mr. Paradise if anything had changed with this ordinance. Mr. Paradise said nothing had changed in this ordinance. Councilman Talbert then asked Council if they had any discussion regarding this ordinance. Councilman Campbell said he had some questions for Todd Brown. Mr. Brown came to the podium to speak on behalf of the developers of Tavern Hill. Councilman Campbell asked if anything has changed with the proposed development that Council should be aware of. Mr. Brown said there have been no changes and addressed the question that Councilman Campbell asked at the last meeting. Mr. Brown reminded everyone that Councilman Campbell asked if the amount of green space would be 30% or 40%. Mr. Brown said he is comfortable with saying there will be 40% of green space. Councilman Campbell asked Mr. Brown that if the proposed planned development is approved, what he thought a timeline would be for Tavern Hill. Mr. Brown said that he would estimate breaking ground in September or October. Motion to approve third reading of ordinance number 19-20-766 was made by Councilman Biggs, seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. Motion passed 4-1 with Chairman Cooper abstaining due to his refusal.

*Chairman Cooper returned to the meeting.

New Business

1. Consideration of Approval of Memorandum of Agreement between South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) and Edgefield County for a First Push and Debris Removal Agreement on clearing state-maintained roadways and right-of-way.

Mr. Paradise told Council this agreement is for a first push of debris and removal following a declared emergency. He said this agreement permits Edgefield County to conduct disaster related first push activities on designated state-maintained roadway(s) and also calls for debris removal and disposal of items from streets and highways to allow safe passage and to eliminate health and safety hazards. Mr. Paradise also noted that if approved, this agreement allows for Edgefield County to apply directly to FEMA for reimbursement.

Councilman Campbell asked if this and the next two items of business will replace and or update existing memorandums of agreement. Mr. Paradise said that is correct.

Motion to approve the memorandum of agreement between South Carolina Department of Transportation and Edgefield County for a first push and debris removal agreement on clearing state-maintained roadways and right-of way was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Consideration of Approval of Memorandum of Agreement between South Carolina Department of Transportation and Edgefield County for a First Push and Debris Removal Agreement on clearing local government-maintained roadways and right-of-way.

Mr. Paradise said this agreement is for a first push of debris and removal following a declared emergency. This agreement permits SCDOT to conduct disaster related first push activities on

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designated local government-maintained roadway(s) and also allows for debris removal and disposal of items from streets and highways to allow safe passage and to eliminate health and safety hazards. He noted this agreement allows SCDOT to apply to FEMA directly through SCEMD for reimbursement and allows SCDOT to seek reimbursement from local government for any unreimbursed expenses for work performed on local government-maintained roads.

Motion to approve the memorandum of agreement between South Carolina Department of Transportation and Edgefield County for a first push and debris removal agreement on clearing local government- maintained roadways and right-of way was made by Councilman Biggs, seconded by Councilman Campbell. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Consideration of Approval of Memorandum of Agreement between South Carolina Department of Transportation and Edgefield County for a Snow and Ice Removal Agreement for clearing local government-maintained roadways and right-of-way.

Mr. Paradise told Council this agreement is for Edgefield County to assist the SCDOT with the removal snow, ice, and other obstructions from state roads during an emergency. It also provides for payment from SCDOT for these services based on the FEMA rates established for major disasters and emergencies.

Motion to approve the memorandum of agreement between South Carolina Department of Transportation and Edgefield County for a snow and ice removal agreement for clearing local government- maintained roadways and right-of way was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Consideration of Approval of Resolution Number 19-20-1069, "A Resolution of Support Endorsing the Establishment of a Rails to Trails System and Authorizing the County Council Chairman to negotiate with Norfolk Southern concerning Acquisition."

Mr. Paradise said Norfolk Southern Railroad has abandoned the use of railroad right-of-way that exists between Edgefield and North Augusta which could be used to extend the Ten Governors Trail and in the future tie into the City of North Augusta Trail System. He said this resolution provides Council's endorsement of the project and authorizes the County Council Chairman to negotiate with Norfolk Southern concerning the acquisition. He noted that any final action concerning the acquisition of the property would require Council approval by ordinance. Chairman Cooper said he wanted to clarify that if any purchases were to be made to acquire this property, it would have to come back to Council for approval. Mr. Paradise said that whether it was purchased or donated, it would have to come back to Council for approval.

Motion to approve resolution number 19-20-1069 was made by Councilman Biggs, seconded by Councilman Talbert. This entered Council into discussion. Councilman Campbell said that he is for it at this point since it would need to come back to Council for final approval. He went on to ask that if the County were to end up with this property through negotiations and the County tied into the City of North Augusta Trail System, would that make it easier, harder or neutral from an annexation standpoint. Mr. Marine said the way he interprets the statute, the City of North Augusta cannot use the trail system or roadways as a way to annex property. He said the surrounding properties would have to be used for annexation purposes. Councilman Biggs said that he doesn't think the county should make a monetary offer for the rail bed at this time. He said prior communication indicated

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Norfolk Southern is having an appraisal done on the property and he thinks they should have an established value prior to monetary offers. Chairman Cooper agreed with Councilman Biggs. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Consideration of Approval to Eliminate the "Green Dot" Policy for Convenience Centers.
Mr. Paradise told Council a "Green Dot" Policy was developed some years ago so that users of the County's Convenience Centers could be identified as county residents. He explained that a review of the applicable ordinances concerning the use of the convenience centers found that there is not an ordinance that prohibits non-residents from using the centers and due to recent discussions concerning the recycling centers, staff is recommending to eliminate the "Green Dot" policy for the convenience centers.
Motion to approve to eliminate the "Green Dot" policy for the convenience centers was made by Councilman Biggs, seconded by Councilman Talbert. Motion passed unanimously.
6. Consideration of Approval to Authorize the Expenditure of up to \$30,000.00 to EDTS for the upgrading of technology in the Council Chambers.
Mr. Paradise said this is a sole-source estimate from EDTS to upgrade the technology to council chambers that will allow for the live-streaming of meetings and replace the current audio system. He said to upgrade the internet to the building with fiber is \$4,825.08. The new audio and video equipment and installation is \$20,003.12 bringing the total to \$24,828.20. He explained staff is asking for additional fund in case EDTS finds unanticipated issues. The sole-source procurement is recommended because the County is under contract with EDTS for network and IT services. This is to be funded from the Council Contingency account. Chairman Cooper asked Ms. Gilley if she had anything to add to Mr. Paradise's comments, since she was the staff member that did the research on the upgrade. Ms. Gilley noted equipment and the person that needed to run that equipment for the meeting would be moved to sit at the dais. She explained the size of the equipment and the layout wouldn't allow for it to be installed at the desk that flanks the dais.
Motion to authorize the expenditure of up to \$30,000 from Council Contingency to EDTS for the upgrading of technology in the Council Chambers was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilman Cooper. This entered Council into discussion. Councilman Biggs asked if this would be affected in the future if the Magistrate Court were to be moved. Mr. Paradise said he doesn't believe this would be an issue since the building would still belong to Edgefield County Government. Councilman Campbell said he thought this was a much needed upgrade. He explained that this will not only improve the quality of meetings but said this building is also available if needed in the event of a disaster. He asked Suzy Spurgeon, EMA Director, to list some of the uses. She said it could be used for media coverage in the event of a disaster, shelter or a back-up emergency operations center if necessary. Councilman Campbell also said that he would like to see the small TV/screen replaced since it is virtually unusable with its lack of size and placement. Councilman Campbell made the motion to amend the original motion to include a new TV to replace the old one for presentations and allowing for up to \$33,000 to allow for this change, seconded by Councilman Biggs. Motion to amend passed unanimously. Main motion passed unanimously.
7. Consideration to authorize the County Administrator to move the Recreation Fund and millage to the General Fund for the FY 2020-2021 budget preparation.

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Mr. Paradise said during the Council Retreat of January 16, 2020, Council discussed the possibility of consolidating the Recreation Fund into the General Fund and transferring the associated millage of 1.5 mills to the General Fund. He noted this is not an increase or decrease in taxes, it would just be moving the accounts. He explained this will provide guidance to the County Administrator on how to proceed with the preparation of the FY 2020-21 budget. Councilman Campbell said when he suggested this change he was hoping this would allow for staff to treat this as any other department in regards to the budget and come up with other ideas to help increase the revenues for this department so that it won't continue to run as with a deficit.

Motion to authorize the County Administrator to move the Recreation Fund and millage to the General Fund starting Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and beyond was made by Councilman Campbell, seconded by Councilman Talbert. Motion passed unanimously.

8. Consideration to authorize the County Administrator to move the Edgefield County Hospital Fund and millage to the General Fund for the FY 2020-2021 budget preparation and designation a line for distribution to the Edgefield County Hospital in the amount distributed to Edgefield County Hospital in calendar year 2017.

Mr. Paradise said during the Council Retreat of January 16, 2020, Council discussed the possibility of consolidating the Edgefield County Hospital (ECH) Fund into the General Fund, transferring the associated millage of 6.5 mills to the General Fund and funding the Edgefield County Hospital the amount appropriated in calendar year 2017. He said the Hospital Transformation Agreement states, "ECH shall take all steps to maintain the Edgefield County (S.C.) mill levy tax and appropriation to the Hospital equal to or greater than the amount appropriated and paid in calendar year 2017 in order to support the operation and maintenance of the hospital and related facilities." Mr. Paradise explained that in calendar year 2017 ECH received \$535,013.15 from the 6.5 mills. He explained that as the value of the mill increases, the dollar amount going to ECH also goes up even though the county is only required to give them \$535,013.15. He noted this similar to the item of business above and is also not an increase or decrease in taxes, it would just be moving the accounts. This will provide guidance to the County Administrator on how to proceed with the FY 2020-2021 budget preparation.

Motion to authorize the County Administrator to move the Edgefield County Hospital Fund and millage to the General Fund starting Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and designating a line for distribution to the Edgefield County Hospital in the amount distributed to Edgefield County Hospital in calendar year 2017 was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilman Cooper. Councilman Campbell noted that he just wanted to clarify that 6.5 mills in 2017 was approximately \$535,000 and today it is approximately \$551,000. He said the increase in the value of the mill is due to the economy running well. He said by making this change, Edgefield County is fully meeting their requirements regarding the financial obligation to ECH as well as helping the county in future by allowing this additional money to fund other things in the county. Chairman Cooper noted how grateful he is for Edgefield County to have ECH. Chairman Cooper also noted he was thankful for the opportunity to serve on the hospital board during the time period Edgefield County researched multiple partnerships, noting how long the process to acquire the partnership with Self Regional Hospital took. Chairman Cooper explained that prior to the partnership, the fiscal solvency of Edgefield County Hospital was in question for a long period of time. Chairman Cooper noted that when considering Economic Development in Rural Counties, the viability of our local hospital is critically important. Chairman

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Cooper further noted that the only thing constant in healthcare is change, and that while he was in favor of making this line-item adjustment, it didn't mean that support for the hospital couldn't increase in the future, based on future changes in the industry. Motion passed unanimously.

9. Consideration to direct the County Administrator to prepare and present to County Council for approval to appropriate ordinance(s) to transfer the responsibilities of the Litter Control Officer from the Sheriff's Office to the responsibility of County Administrator.
- Mr. Paradise said during the County Council retreat on January 16, 2020, Council discussed the possibility of moving responsibility for litter control from the Sheriff's Office to the County Administrator. He said this will provide guidance to the County Administrator on how to proceed with the issue and prepare the FY 2020-2021 budget. He explained this will not take any personnel from the Sheriff's Office. He said someone would be hired and most likely placed in the Building and Planning Office and noted that this person would not report directly to the County Administrator but would be under his responsibility. He said if this is approved two things would need to occur including budget preparation and Council would need to pass an ordinance putting litter control under the County Administrator since the current code has litter control under the Sheriff's responsibilities. Councilman Biggs said he definitely thinks there needs to be a change since the inmates that pick up litter have to volunteer and when there are not volunteer's the litter control officer is used for other duties such as inmate transfers, etc. He noted there have been no volunteers for the last 5 months. He said with this solution, litter control would be someone's sole focus and he thinks that is important when trying to solve the issue.
- Motion to direct the County Administrator to prepare and present to County Council for approval to appropriate ordinance(s) to transfer the responsibilities of the Litter Control Officer from the Sheriff's Office to the responsibility of County Administrator was made by Councilman Biggs, seconded by Councilman Talbert. This entered Council into discussion. Councilman Campbell asked Mr. Paradise that while he understands no job description has been developed at this time, what he envisions this person doing when there are no inmates volunteering to pick up litter. Mr. Paradise said this person could be a code enforcement officer, he/she would be able to write littering tickets, he/she would be able to process litter for names and addresses on mail or other identifying documents and would also possibly be able to get inmates from the federal prison rather than the county jail. Councilman Campbell asked if this person would have to be a certified law enforcement officer like a deputy. Mr. Paradise said this person would have a lower classification similar than a deputy but they would be able to write tickets and make an arrest if they needed to do so. Mr. Paradise also said this person would need a weapon, a marked vehicle and other tools to do this job. Councilman Biggs asked how this position is currently funded. Mr. Paradise said it is funded with the \$100 Solid Waste Fee. Councilman Biggs asked if this would be revenue neutral. Mr. Paradise said there would be an initial cost to outfit the person with the vehicle, equipment, uniforms, etc.
- Motion passed 4-1 with Councilwoman Kennion voting against.

10. Consideration of Approval of Resolution Number 19-20-1070, "A Resolution to Create a Commission pursuant to the Capital Project Sales Tax Act, SC Code Ann. § 4-10-300, et seq. (1976, as amended); Duties and Responsibilities of the Commission; Memorializing the Appointment of Edgefield County Representatives to the Commission created pursuant to the Capital Project Sales Tax Act, S.C. Code

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Ann. § 4-10-300, et seq. (1976, as amended); To provide for the Duties and Responsibilities of the Commission Members and to Provide for Other Matters Relating Thereto.”

Mr. Paradise said this resolution would establish the Capital Project Sales Tax Committee, establish the committee’s responsibilities, and designate the members representing Edgefield County on the committee. This is the first step in having a Capital Project Sales Tax on the ballot for the voters in the 2020 general election. He noted there would also be three other seats that represent the municipalities on this committee. Chairman Cooper asked if the municipality representatives are determined by population. Mr. Marine said there is a formula that is used to decide who holds the additional seats on the committee. He explained that based on the 2010 census numbers Edgefield County would have 3 seats, the Town of Edgefield will appoint a member. He went on to explain the person appointed by the Town of Edgefield appoints two other members and they cannot live in the Town of Edgefield. He said this is determined by State Code. Mr. Paradise also noted that if the Town of Edgefield doesn’t appoint a person within 30 days of the resolution, it comes back to County Council for a decision on who to appoint.

Motion to approve resolution number 19-20-1070 was made by Councilman Biggs, seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. This entered Council into discussion. Councilman Campbell asked for clarification on the timeline. He noted the Town of Edgefield had their monthly meeting on February 3rd and said they wouldn’t be meeting again for another month. Mr. Paradise said they would have to follow the 30 day timeline. Chairman Cooper said the Town of Edgefield does have the authority to hold a called meeting to appoint this person in the allotted time. Chairman Campbell asked what would happen if the Town of Edgefield appoints their representative, but that person didn’t appoint the other two representatives. Mr. Marine said County Council would appoint those two people. He noted these positions have to be filled by someone that lives inside the municipality of Johnston, Trenton or North Augusta. Councilman Campbell asked who had the biggest population between Trenton and North Augusta. Mr. Paradise said Trenton did according to the 2010 Census reports. Councilman Campbell also asked if the person appointing the other members had the authority to appoint two people from Trenton or something other than the expected one from Johnston and one from Trenton. He explained he just didn’t want to be surprised later so he wanted to ask these questions now. Mr. Marine said according to the numbers, that person would have to appoint one representative from Johnston and one representative from Trenton. Councilman Campbell said that he would like to note that two things have to happen within thirty days. He said those things are: 1) Edgefield has to appoint someone within thirty days and 2) That one person has to appoint two other representatives within the same thirty days.

Councilman Campbell went on to ask for clarification on how much revenue the County would receive. He said based on the numbers he’s been given the CPST would bring in approximately \$15 million dollars over 8 years with the option to be renewed for an additional 7 years by a vote of the citizens. He asked Chairman Cooper if the thought was that this money was going to be used to help build the jail that is needed. Chairman Cooper said Edgefield County Council will assign the committee to develop a list of needs for the County. He explained the list is up to the committee but that he personally hopes the committee will look at all of the needs of the County including the jail. He said he does know of other things that are needed too. Chairman Cooper said that other than saying “Countywide Projects” he doesn’t want to steer the committee. Councilman Campbell agreed with Chairman Cooper that the committee will be developing the list of projects. Chairman Cooper noted

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that the list has to come back to County Council for approval before it can be added to the ballot. Councilman Campbell agreed that Chairman Cooper was correct but also added that Council only has the authority to vote it up or down and cannot amend the list of projects. Councilman Campbell said he just wants to be sure that the citizens understand the details. He also noted the CPST is a tax. He said the people get to vote this tax up or down. He said he wants to be sure the citizens realize that if the CPST passes and it does not address the issue of a new jail, a millage increase will have to be imposed soon to fund the new jail and that will be another tax increase. He also noted that if the CPST funds a portion of the jail, there will still need to be an additional tax increase to finish funding the jail. Councilman Campbell said he personally believes this is a way to tax the citizens twice, but that he will vote for this tonight to see where it goes, since there are so many more steps in the process.

Chairman Cooper said the jail is not a new issue and this particular item of business is not about the jail. He said last year the county went through a 6 month process to approve funding to complete a study to widen Bettis Academy Road. He said what they learned was that the study would take up to 18 months to complete making the process a total of 2 years. He said some things take a while but with the aggressive timeline for the CPST he believes this can be done in time for the November 2020 ballot.

Councilman Biggs said that while Chairman Cooper says this isn't about the jail, he believes that it is about the jail. He said he thinks County Council should tell the committee that staff would like for them to consider that project. He said that project will have to be started soon and this would be a good way to fund a portion of that cost. He said he understands they can't force the committee to include the jail but he does want the committee to know the jail is a priority.

Mr. Paradise said that it would be appropriate for County Council to make a recommendation to the committee of what is needed. He said staff could develop this list and bring it back to Council for discussion. He said then this list would be given from County Council to the CPST Committee as a recommendation. He noted that a list like this would include projects and approximate costs of those projects.

Motion passed unanimously.

Comments from the Public

None

Executive Session

Actions may be taken in public session on matters discussed in Executive Session including contractual matters.

Executive Session to receive legal advice regarding retention of counsel for a proposed funding initiative.

Motion to enter into executive session was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. Motion passed unanimously.

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Council returned from Executive Session. Motion to leave executive session and enter into open session was made by Councilman Talbert, seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. Motion passed unanimously.

New Business Continued

11. Consideration to Authorize the County Administrator and County Attorney to retain outside specialized legal counsel to assist in the preparation of the Capital Project Sales Tax ballot initiative. Chairman Cooper said County Council received Mr. Marine's legal opinion on this in Executive Session.

Motion to authorize the County Administrator and County Attorney to retain outside, specialized legal counsel to assist in the preparation of the Capital Project Sales Tax ballot initiative was made by Councilman Cooper, seconded by Councilman Biggs. Motion passed unanimously.

County Administrator's Report

Mr. Paradise started his report by telling Council that staff has completed on-site reviews of the location of the first four county entrance signs to be installed. The signs will be located on Hwy 25 N, Hwy 23 & Saluda County, Bettis Academy Road, and Martintown Road. He said the new sign on Martintown Road will replace an existing county entrance sign. Mr. Paradise said Hwy 25 S only has 6-feet of right-of-way available at the location previously selected and staff will be looking for alternate locations for that sign. Mr. Paradise said the Land Management Ordinance (LMO) Steering Committee and consultants will have public input sessions that will be held at 7 PM on February 10th at the Sweetwater Community Center and February 11th at the County Council Chambers.

Mr. Paradise then told Council the EMS Director, Raymond Batchelor will be retiring effective April 10, 2020. The position has been advertised with first application reviews scheduled for February 27, 2020.

Mr. Paradise told Council the Edgefield County Water and Sewer Authority has advertised for bids for the Stephens Road Sewer main extension to service Tavern Hill which will close on February 19, 2020.

Next, Mr. Paradise said American Financial Credit Services was contracted to collect delinquent business personal property taxes for Edgefield County. He explained that since March 2019 they have collected \$6,883 and closed 118 of 349 cases.

Mr. Paradise moved on to announce Will Williams will be representing Edgefield County at the RECon convention May 17-19, 2020 in Las Vegas which is put on by the International Council of Shopping Centers. He said the RECon is the world's largest global gathering of retail real estate professionals. The RECon aims to ensure that the retail real estate industry is broadly recognized for the integral role it plays in the social, civic and economic vibrancy of communities across the globe.

Then Mr. Paradise said Edgefield County participated in the CSRA Labor Study that is being conducted by the Economic Development Partnership, Augusta Economic Development Authority, and The Development Authority of Columbia County.

Mr. Paradise reported the Chairman of the Safety Committee, Brian Neville, and the Risk Manager, Lee Ann Anderson, attended the SC Insurance Trusts Meeting held in late January.

Mr. Paradise closed his report by telling Council he met with members of the Census 2020 staff and it is important to Edgefield County that all of the residents are counted. He said counting begins March 12, 2020. During the 2010 Census the towns of Edgefield, Johnston, and the eastern portion of the county adjacent to Saluda County had low response scores and he hopes to see a better response for this census. He explained those most at risk for not being counted are children under 5, minorities, veterans, the elderly

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and those that use English as a 2nd language. He also noted that residents that live in a rural area also don't have a good response rate.

Comments by County Council Chair

Chairman Cooper started his report by saying that he was happy Ms. Gilley was back. He noted she was out sick during the Intergovernmental Meeting. He thanked Mrs. Waters, Mrs. Anderson and Mr. Paradise for covering that meeting for Ms. Gilley. Chairman Cooper also thanked Jim Dorn at the Edgefield County Senior Center for allowing the meeting to be held in their facility.

He went on to thank the Library Board of Trustees for hosting a chili dinner that County Council was invited to attend. He also recognized Jalisha Adams, Library Manager, for having the highest number of participants and completions for the reading program in the 12 libraries that participate in the ABBE System. He noted the numbers were over 40%.

Chairman Cooper invited everyone to attend the LMO Meetings that were planned for 7 PM on February 10th at the Sweetwater Community Center and February 11th at the County Council Chambers.

He also noted the Finance Committee would be meeting on Monday, February 10, 2020 with Mr. Gallagher of Compass Municipal Advisors to discuss the county's capital needs. He said he would report back to Council the details of that meeting.

Chairman Cooper said Mayor Durham, Town of Edgefield, invited Western Carolina Tel to the last Economic Development Committee meeting to share the fiber they are extending in the neighboring counties.

Chairman Cooper also noted that he would be attending the Economic Development Classes that are offered by the Department of Commerce.

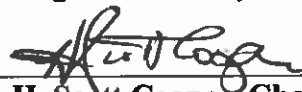
Chairman Cooper told Council the South Carolina Association of Counties Bi-Annual meeting is being held next week in Columbia.

Chairman Cooper closed his comments by saying the Rural County Summit will hold their 30th anniversary summit meeting in Clemson March 1-3, 2020.

Adjourn

Councilman Talbert made the motion to adjourn at 8:13PM, seconded by Councilwoman Kennion. Motion passed unanimously.

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H. Scott Cooper, Chair

ATTEST



Jennifer L. Gilley, Clerk to Council