

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

February 6, 2024

6:00 PM

County Council Chambers

The Edgefield County Council held its regular meeting at 6:00 P.M. Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 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**

- Dean Campbell, Chairman
- Albert Talbert, Vice Chairman
- Tiffani Ireland, Councilwoman
- Dr. Jackie Kennion, Councilwoman
- Jerry Moody, Councilman

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**Others Present**

- David Caddell, Administrator
- Taz Potts, County Finance Director
- Aretha Eubanks, Clerk to Council
- Hart Doc Clark, Building and Planning
- Andrew Marine, County Attorney

Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. Chairman Campbell asked for a moment of silence in honor of Mr. Thurmond Burnett, former Edgefield County Coroner for 47 years. The invocation was given by Minister Jameal Eubanks of Chalk Hill Baptist Church.

**Approval of Agenda**

Chairman Campbell asked if there are any changes to the agenda. Hearing none, Councilwoman Kennion made the motion, and Councilwoman Ireland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Guest Speaker**

Will Williams, President and CEO of Western SC Economic Development Partnership

Bondex and US Fibers are undergoing expansion. These two investments will mean a total of \$50 million in new capital investment that will create 150 jobs. Milliken received a Fee in Lieu of Taxes in 2019 from the county and since then has invested more than \$7 million. They asked for an extension of their investment period, which means they will be adding more investment sometime over the next 5 years.

We visited 8 existing industries over the last year. We hosted 4 quarterly meetings. In addition, we hosted two separate social events for our existing industries. One was an oyster roast in February. The other was Existing Industry Night at a Green Jackets game in partnership with Columbia County and Augusta Economic Development Authorities. We also facilitated a Strom Thurmond High/Career Center visit to Generac as they work on their career academy.

We continue to work with Retail Strategies to try and find other retail opportunities to locate in the county. We have heard loud and clear from you all and other members of the community that another grocery store is highly coveted. We have been looking further out past the CSRA to

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Mom and Pop establishments to show what is happening in Edgefield County with the population growth and what is missing in the market. There are very positive conversations that are continuing. Industrial recruitment has a lot of runways, but Retail Strategies has about double that number of runways. We are working closely with them. I will be with some of them tomorrow night. They are visiting next month. Chairman Campbell, David Caddell, and myself and a few others will sit down to talk with them face to face.

Due to litigation between the county and the owner of the industrial park land, it is difficult to market the industrial property or submit potential projects.

I want to thank you all for having the foresight four, five, and six years ago to start putting funds out of the Fee in Lieu agreements into the industrial park fund. It is a slow gain, but those funds have continued to grow. Once we get a clear path forward, there are some things that we would like to do in the industrial park in terms of getting a pad ready for construction because as you know, there is nothing flat in the industrial park. It has a lot of topography so we would like to have a pad ready but not do a building. This would take 90 to 120 days off of a construction timeline. That would be something we could show to a prospect. I do appreciate the support and encouragement that you all provide for economic development in the county. I think you all have realized that it pays a lot of the County's bills that homes do not do.

**Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Campbell asked for approval of the January 2, 2024, Regular Monthly minutes. Councilman Talbert made the motion, and Councilman Moody seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Comments from the Public**

There being no comments from the public during this comment period, Chairman Campbell closed this public comment period.

**Reports**

Chairman Campbell asked the Council if they had any questions or comments on the reports. There were none.

**Consent Agenda**

Chairman Campbell: Is there a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented? Councilwoman Kennion made the motion, and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

1. Consideration of approval of the Third Reading of Ordinance 21-23-786, to amend Chapter 24 Land Development Sections 24-248, 251, 252, 285 & 286 of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances including application, major subdivisions, land development other than a subdivision, County Planning Administrator, and County Planning Commission.

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Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell if there are any changes we need to consider or anything we need to change.

Administrator Caddell: Nothing to add or change since the second reading.

Chairman Campbell: Council, are there any questions or comments on this ordinance? Hearing none, Councilman Talbert made the motion, and Chairman Campbell seconded. The motion passed 3-2, with Councilwoman Ireland and Councilman Moody opposing.

2. Consideration of approval of the Third Reading of Ordinance 21-23-784, to amend Chapter 2 Administration Section 2-21 Compensation of the Edgefield County Code of Ordinances.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell about any changes we need to consider since the second reading.

Administrator Caddell: During the second reading of the ordinance, the Council approved an amendment to cap the Council cost-of-living increases at two percent total over two years. These changes have been added to the ordinance.

Chairman Campbell: Question or comments from the Council on this ordinance. Hearing none, Councilman Moody made the motion, and Councilwoman Kennion seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**New Business**

1. Consideration of approval to award the contract to Lucas Refrigeration to replace the 10-tongas pack HVAC unit at the Agriculture Building for \$21,548 to be paid from the County Building Bond Fund 034-001-01000-00100.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell if he will explain this to us.

Administrator Caddell: The heating/air unit at the Ag Building, which houses Emergency Management, Veterans Affairs Office, Clemson Extension, and NRCS, went down during Christmas. It was ultimately repaired but it is 28 years old and many of the parts are unavailable. We propose to pay for the repairs with the County Building Bond Fund. Lucas Refrigeration, a local contractor was the low bid. So, we recommend approval of this item.

Chairman Campbell: Question or comments from the Council. Hearing none, Councilman Talbert made the motion, and Councilwoman Ireland seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Consideration of approval to award the contract to Lucas Refrigeration to replace the 14-ton split heat pump unit at the DSS/DHHS Building for \$35,785 to be paid from the County Building Bond Fund.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask the administrator to explain.

Administrator Caddell: The heating/air unit at the DSS/DHSS Building also went down during Christmas. It was ultimately repaired but it is 32 years old and rusted through in places. We propose to pay for the repairs with the County Building Bond Fund. Lucas Refrigeration, a local contractor was the low bid. We recommend approval for this.

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Chairman Campbell: Questions or comments from the Council. Hearing none, Councilman Moody made the motion, and Councilwoman Kennion seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Consideration of approval of Resolution 23-24-0003, an inducement resolution providing for a Fee In Lieu of tax agreement between Edgefield County and PAC TELL Group, Inc. D/B/A US Fibers.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell to take us through some of these details.

Administrator Caddell: In December the Council passed both a FILOT and MCIP agreements to benefit US Fibers. While not required for that process, an inducement resolution often accompanies these agreements to summarize both investments and incentives. The company has requested this resolution, and the staff recommends approval.

Chairman Campbell: Questions or comments from the Council. Hearing none, Councilwoman Ireland made the motion, and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Consideration of approval of a revised County Recreation Fee Schedule.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell to explain this new fee schedule.

Administrator Caddell: The County Recreation Committee has recommended to the Council a new registration fee schedule for the County Recreation Programs. This is in part to cover an increase in referee compensation and the rising cost of uniforms. I do want to point out that these fees do not and will not if changed cover the cost per child of the programs. The County covers between 38-66% of the per-child cost. Basketball and football can collect gate fees so the cost to the County is 44% and 38% respectively. We are not able to collect gate fees for the other sports. The County covers 52% for soccer, 60% for softball, and 66% for baseball. Staff recommends approval of these changes.

Chairman Campbell: Question or comments from the Council.

Councilwoman Kennion: This is a win-win situation for all that will help with uniforms and supplies. Football team needs new helmets and cheerleaders need new uniforms. And it is going to cost. But what will it do for parents who have multiple children participating from the same household? The fee has been at \$60 for over 20 years. The inflation is rising, and that is why I say it is a win-win situation. We invited parents to come speak. Only two parents attended out of 80. We did what was needed.

Administrator Caddell: Dr. Kennion, if I could share, if we did not collect gate fees, the County would be covering 80% of the cost per child for cheerleading. So, I understand the problem because the uniforms are so expensive. There is such a disagreement over what quality and type of uniforms these girls wear. It is a difficult issue.

Councilwoman Ireland: I would like to say that I echo the frustration in terms of the amount of children who have families that have multiple children. It does get expensive. We all know that we do not do this to make money for the County. This is not a money-making machine for the County. This is a service we provide for the citizens. I would like to discuss what you mentioned about the uniforms. I think we need to be very aware that when it is uniforms and accessories or

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when it is just plain out cuteness that you are not happy with. That is where I don't think we are being too mindful of that. Also, Administrator Caddell and I have discussed gate fees for parents when they have a child participating in sports of which they have paid the fee for the children. But then they have to pay to go watch their child play does not sit right with me. But I get it, and I know you are on it. I hope that we explore other options and avenues to cover that so that maybe one day we can take those gate fees away. It grates my nerves that we charge those parents to go watch their children play. That is my challenge to think of ways we can do that. I do appreciate that we have to go up a little bit, and not jump up by \$20. Maybe we can hold these fees to this for a while.

Administrator: I agree with that. I have to add that the Recreation Committee has thought long and hard about this. I have come to some of the meetings. The decisions are so difficult, especially when there is so little input from the parents at the meetings. So, you have members of this committee having to make these difficult decisions. They ask questions, they talk to people out in the community, and I think they gave it their best shot. I am satisfied with that.

Councilman Moody: Are we going to go up on team sponsorship fees? These are the charges sponsors receive for putting their company name on the back of the jersey.

Administrator Caddell: That would be a decision or recommendation that would come through the recreation committee. If they consider that and bring it to us, I think we should probably look at a tier level for sponsorship. There may be an industry here that would be willing to help out children in recreation.

Councilman Moody: Are we going to raise the fees? I think we ought to raise the sponsorship right along with it.

Councilwoman Kennion: We have several companies that sponsor our children.

Councilman Moody: Haven't we also discussed putting another person in the recreation department in the future?

Administrator Caddell: Yes, we are expanding Bettis Park programs and with the interaction between parents, coaches, and officials. We recognize the need to have an official county employee at every recreation game in the evening. We are going to need to do that. Now that person's duties will be to go out and meet with companies.

Councilman Moody: I was hoping we put another person on it. Let the sponsors fill those fences up out there with the sponsorship signs and everything else to help alleviate some of the burden on the parents.

Chairman Campbell: Any other questions or comments from the Council? Hearing none, Councilwoman Kennion made the motion, and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Consideration of approval of Edgefield County entering into a lease with Piedmont Technical College Foundation – Edgefield Properties, LLC on the premise at 506 Main St., Edgefield, on behalf of the SC Department of Juvenile Justice for office space. The lease term is three years.



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Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell to walk us through this one.

Administrator Caddell: The Department of Juvenile Justice is currently housed in Saluda. But Saluda no longer has office space for them. Piedmont Technical College has offered very affordable rent for a portion of their pottery instructional building behind their campus. We would execute the lease and bill Saluda and McCormick for their portion. And that portion is based on population. The net result of all of this is simply, that we sign the lease and our cost goes up \$59 per year as a difference from what we pay now. Staff recommends approval for this because Piedmont Technical College is doing a service for this agency.

Chairman Campbell: So, to the administrator, this is shared by three counties. If I understand correctly, of the three counties, our office has the most use of the office meaning we have more cases.

Administrator Caddell: Yes, we do have more cases. Around this issue, one thing that we have to think about is oftentimes it is the grandparents who are bringing these juveniles to the meetings. It is a nice service for them to not have to drive to Saluda.

Chairman Campbell: Questions or comments from the Council.

Councilwoman Kennion: This will cause only a \$59 increase over the last year.

Administrator Caddell: We pay about \$3500 in lease payments. This will increase our cost by about \$59 and it has nothing to do with our rent increase. It is our increase in population or our increase in our share of the rent.

Chairman Campbell: Any other questions or comments from the Council? Before we do this, let me ask Administrator Caddell are we actually approving a lease or just approving you to execute a lease when it comes about.

Administrator Caddell: We are approving the lease and it should be included in the exhibits and either the chairman or administrator can sign that lease.

Chairman Campbell: Council, do we have a motion to approve entering into this lease with Piedmont Technical College? Councilwoman Kennion made the motion, and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Consideration of approval to authorize staff to solicit a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a professional impact fee study.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell to explain what is being asked here.

Administrator Caddell: This study was one of the recommendations from our User Fee Committee and must be done before any impact fee may be considered. An impact fee is a fee assessed as a part of building permits to fund projects necessitated by increased growth in an area. Our User Fee Committee which Councilman Moody and Councilman Talbert served on made this list of recommendations for us to consider. This is simply the next step in analyzing a user fee.

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Chairman Campbell: This would get to you and us the proposals that can be done later. So, we will look at proposals next time or at some point.

Administrator Caddell: That is correct.

Chairman Campbell: Questions or comments from the Council. Hearing none, Councilman Moody made the motion, and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Consideration of approval of the First Reading of Ordinance 23-24-001, to amend section 24-286 c 1 Planning Commission Terms of Office.

Chairman Campbell: I will ask Administrator Caddell to tell us about this one to make sure we all understand this one.

Administrator Caddell: This ordinance makes a change in Planning Commission terms so that the district member can be chosen in even-numbered years. As you know the elections are in the odd number of years. This would allow a newly elected Council member who is taking office the ability to select their district representative on the Planning Commission. As such, we recommend the approval.

Chairman Campbell: I think you may have said that backward. Elections are in the even-numbered years.

Administrator Caddell: That is correct. I am sorry.

Chairman Campbell: But, what you just said does line up with what we are doing.

Administrator Caddell: Yes.

Chairman Campbell: A newly elected council member would have until March to appoint their district person.

Administrator Caddell: Yes.

Chairman Campbell: And, the At-Large member still can come up before us. I mean there are alternate times of the other years.

Administrator Caddell: Yes, they are staggered. What we would be doing now is giving the district member a one-year term, and the At-Large member a two-year term. So that when the Council Member takes office, they would be able to place their district member.

Chairman Campbell: I think this just really cleans up some language from what we have already changed before so it will be clear.

Administrator Caddell: We did change it, but we reversed the At-large versus the district member's seat.

Councilman Moody: This came about as it was brought to our attention that it was backwards. That is the reason we are changing the language. We are not changing the procedure of it. We are just flip-flopping the years.

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Chairman Campbell: Any other questions or comments from the Council? Hearing none, Councilwoman Ireland made the motion and Councilwoman Kennion seconded. Under discussion, there is one thing I want to add is because we are going to have to reappoint all of these people after March, we are going to have to move this through the system. This is not controversial and it is already on the books. We are only switching the years and cleaning up the language to make it work. So, we are going to have a second reading and public hearing at our Regular Meeting in March. Then the third reading at the Budget Workshop so we may do the appointments.

Administrator Caddell: That is correct.

Chairman Campbell: Any other discussion? Hearing none, Motion passed unanimously.

**Comments from the Public**

Louise Settles: GLEAMNS is rocking and rolling with all the rain. Down at the center we had the walls come down because of the heavy rains. We are working through that. We almost have that worked out. The only thing we had to do was shift some of the classes to keep the kids safe, yet continuous. So, this way we would not have to interfere with the working parents. Because sometimes when something happens at school, whether it is there or in public schools. The parents are working so it gets a domino effect because everybody has to make arrangements. My second conversation is about my neighborhood. Sheriff Rowland has been out to this particular house several times. But with all the heavy rain and winds, that particular house I am referring to had debris flying into the next neighbor's yard and the street. One day when I was coming around the curb, a motorcycle helmet crossed in front of me. I had to swerve to avoid hitting it. The next-door neighbors had stuff piling all up against the windows and everything else. It is ridiculous. Since the time you were out there Sheriff Rowland, you would not think anyone lived there. It looks like someone just abandoned the whole section there. So, I am asking again Sheriff Rowland, would you please get out there and help me put some pressure on these people?

Sheriff Rowland: We have issued at least two citations. I will get with Assistant Administrator Clark and Officer Randy Doran to tighten it up.

Louise Settles: I appreciate it because I think he seems to be playing a game of cat and mouse. The minute you guys come out there, I guess he develops an attitude. He looked like somebody just went around and just did whatever they had available to through out there, but in my neighborhood, we don't play games like that. I am glad I have your support.

Daniel Coates: Good evening, Mr. Chairman, members of the Council, guests, and neighbors. My name is Daniel Coates and I'm a resident of Edgefield County and live on Weaver Road. Tonight I'd like to bring to your attention an issue that concerns broadband fiber internet service in Edgefield County and more specifically to those of us that live in very rural areas. Whether we like it or not, almost everything we do today relies on some form of internet connectivity. Our household appliances, our jobs, home offices, work-at-home residents, business owners, farmers, students, everyone needs a form of reliable internet. By reliable internet, I'm referring to broadband fiber or similar hardwire internet service. Cellular, copper, and satellite internet connectivity is not considered reliable internet. As most Edgefield County residents know, if you



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want reliable broadband internet service, you call Carolina Connect, pay the installation fee, and voila...you have excellent internet connectivity. Every person I've spoken to in Edgefield County about internet connectivity raves about Carolina Connect. This opportunity is only available to Aiken Electric Co-operative customers in Edgefield County. This does not apply to over 7,000 residents in the county that are Dominion Energy customers. Last summer I was denied broadband fiber internet service because I live 4,000 feet from the nearest fiber hub. I was told (as well as all other Dominion Energy Customers) that unless there's funding to pay for installing broadband infrastructure in my area then the likelihood of receiving this service is slim to none. This denial of service (because of lack of funding) applies to virtually 7,000 other Dominion Energy residents in Edgefield County. In case you didn't know, I'm told it costs about \$28,000 to run a mile of fiber in the air, and about \$40,000 to run a mile of fiber underground. Recently we discovered there is state and federal funding available to cover these costs. In fact, over \$6.6 billion has been allocated to the state since 2021 for broadband fiber installation. Two weeks ago, I sat in on the South Carolina Broadband Advisory Council Webinar and learned that Edgefield County got very little money to support broadband fiber installation in 2024. This is a very poor screenshot of funding allocations as of the end of January 2024, but you can see that Edgefield County is blank. You won't see many fiber trucks on the road this year in Edgefield County. According to the South Carolina Broadband Office, the net big tranche of funds will be allocated in March 2025, over \$550 million will be allocated to ensure that broadband fiber internet service is available to every residence in the state of South Carolina. To prepare for this allocation, the SC Broadband Office is implementing a broadband service challenge period from April to June 2024...it's called the Volume I – Broadband Equity Access and Deployment or BEAD Challenge Program. The purpose is to challenge the accuracy of the interactive map database used by the SC Broadband Office to determine areas of need. It's up to nonprofit organizations, Internet Service Providers, and County Governments to help ensure the accuracy of this database. It would help immensely if all Edgefield County residents who DO NOT have broadband fiber internet to take the I Need Internet Survey on the South Carolina Broadband Office website. What can the county do? GET INVOLVED...in the process and look out for the 7,000 other residents in Edgefield County who are Dominion Energy customers and have no access to reliable internet. Help the ISPs focus on clear areas of need within the county. Provide regular updates to the County Council and to the people of Edgefield County where we stand with this issue. If you look at the broadband map I displayed earlier, you'll see that Saluda County is well-represented in broadband fiber internet services. They've cracked the code in acquiring broadband fiber internet funding. I'd like to turn this over now to my good friend neighbor and friend, Jane Jenkins Herlong, to offer comments on service in Harmony and Bouknight Road area.

Jane Herlong: I am just really concerned that since I've lived here, I've had you name it, everything. This gentleman by the name of Ben Varney hooked me up to something that I was pinging off the AT&T. I think he is going to prison and I hope he is not taking me with him because we are just about desperate. We have an old church that was built in 1825 and we have nothing to protect that church. Can you imagine our sweet little Methodist Church? We have about 15 residents in the area and we are all the time trying to work with Marshall Myers with Carolina Connect. He has been great and I certainly appreciate what he has done. I was shocked that Edgefield County got nothing, zero. And I want to know who the heck is going to the bat for

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us. I would like to know that because there are so many of us that are just out. I mean, I've got Elon Musk on a table in my backyard. I don't want him in my backyard. I am throttled down all the time and it just goes out. This has been a problem. I know there is a Mr. Stritsinger who is on the advisory board. We have been all over this y'all. And I appreciate what Daniel brings to the table. But we have gone to the office that is going to be disbanded after the funds are gone. We all have gone over the maps; we have done every single solitary thing to do. This last draw was zero. What is the problem, why can't we get represented to get some good connections with fiber? I am so mixed up about it. So, I just appreciate your time and I appreciate your looking into this. We would appreciate anything you all can do to connect us with the right people to get some money so we can have decent internet.

Chairman Campbell: I think you are going to hear some answers here in just a moment.

With no further comments, Chairman Campbell closed the public comment period.

**Report By County Council Members**

Councilwoman Ireland: Councilwoman Kennion and I have been the liaison with Carolina Connect and Aiken Co-Op. I called Mr. Gary Stooksbury for an update today. He said Aiken Co-Op is done running all of their fiber to all of their customers, Aiken Co-Op members. They finished this in mid-December. They are currently working in the Aiken County. That is where they have gotten grants and that seems to be where they are concentrating on bringing the non Co-Op customers in that county service. But we are not on the list to be looked at right now. There will be another funding round that will be opened in the next 30 days, and they will be looking into possibly coming into this county for non-served in Edgefield if they get some of that money. He did want us to know that Aiken Co-Op did run fiber to the square with the mayor and the town's contribution. That encompassed the town and 20,000 feet outside of the town. But, they are not looking to go further than that at this time. At this time, that is all Aiken Co-Op is doing in our county. Specifically, he did say that he was aware of the area you were speaking about and that he has had multiple conversations about it. He knows about this concern and that it would take grant money to get it to your area. They have looked at grant money, but it is beyond our control because we don't fund it from the County level. That is through the state and federal. We just try to help them along. We the Council recently passed a resolution to try to get them the funding. It did not help. Mr. Stooksbury said that he is keenly aware of the situation location, knows exactly what it will take to run the service to you all, and as grants become available, they will continue to try to if there is something Aiken Co-Op can do. As far as we are concerned on the Aiken County Co-Op/Carolina Connect and County side of things, they have done what they have promised to do by bringing it to all of their customers. I am one of them and am extremely happy. Councilman Albert and I had never had reliable internet until they came. I cannot thank them enough.

Councilman Moody: I would like to give a shout out to two EMS employees, Casy Harrell, and Brian Davenport. You may have read about them. They were involved in a neighboring county incident where they actually saved three lives from a burning fire. Next month we will officially recognize them here at a County Council meeting to thank those two.

Councilwoman Kennion: I would like to ask when the next trash pick-up will be.

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Assistant Administrator Clark: Do you mean the large state one or do you mean the county?

Councilwoman Kennion: Yes, the state.

Assistant Administrator Clark: SCDOT is about to announce a slowdown on their side of the program, but it will be next month. We are still providing them with the same size list of roads whether they are going to fund them or not. I think their cash level is trickling down. So, over the next six months, you will see how much they do slow down until the next year's funding becomes available. If you have a specific road, then call Officer Doran and get them on his list. I just hired another part-time employee to pick up garbage for the County crew. We always have people that are on probation picking up trash. So, if you have specific roads, make sure you tell Officer Doran.

Councilman Talbert: They have done an outstanding job and we definitely appreciate it in the County and up on my end in District I. It really looks good out there. If I see a big piece of trash thrown out on the road, I will pick it up myself so no one else will throw nothing else beside it. They have done an excellent job.

Assistant Administrator Clark: Between the SCDOT and the County Litter Control employees, we are picking up between 12 to 18 hundred tons of garbage off of the side of the road per year. It will have an impact, but it will take time.

**County Administrator's Report**

- 1 Broadband – The SC Broadband Office has significant federal funding to expand the internet to all SC residents who do not currently have access over the next three years. We encourage all of our residents who want internet but do not yet have it to participate in the “I need internet survey” on the state broadband website. A simple search for the SC Broadband Office will get you there. The survey is on their home page, a link is on our homepage (Edgefieldcounty.com), and our County Facebook page. Within the survey, you will be able to make a selection for email updates from the Broadband Office. There are two pending grant applications for internet expansion in Edgefield County being reviewed by the State Broadband Office.
- 2 Our county budget preparation season is here. Vice Chairman Talbert is Chair of the Finance Committee. We will be meeting with Elected Officials and Department Heads in the next couple of weeks to prepare the annual budget. We look forward to producing a budget for the Council’s consideration over the next month.
- 3 Our long-awaited Council Chambers audio upgrades will be installed on March 18-22.
- 4 Foster Crowder has made tremendous improvements to our website. I encourage Department Heads and Elected Officials to continue to send him suggestions and upcoming events to post.
- 5 Clerk to Council Aretha Eubanks just returned from Clerk to Council training and learned a great deal. She reported that one of her instructors was our Clerk of Court

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Charles Reel speaking on the First Amendment. She said that he is an excellent instructor.

- 6 Assistant Administrator Hart Clark was selected to attend the SC Economic Developers Association’s Economic Development Institute beginning later this week and offered in four parts around the state. I completed it in November and can vouch for it being a great program.

**Comments by County Council Chairman**

I want to announce that the County Council will have a called meeting at 6:00 PM., March 12, in these Council Chambers, for the purpose of a Budget Workshop. During the Budget Workshop, we will hear from the Administrator and Finance Committee on the recommendations for the draft 2024-25 budget. No votes will be taken on the budget on March 12. This workshop is an opportunity for the County Council to ask questions or make proposals to the Administrator before the Council officially takes it up for first reading at the regularly scheduled April meeting.

I want to add that, as we indicated earlier in the meeting, we will have the Planning Commission Terms of Office ordinance on the March 12 agenda as well. This item will be up for a final vote.

**Adjourn**

Council, there being no other business to conduct tonight, I’d entertain a motion to adjourn. Councilwoman Ireland made the motion, and Councilman Talbert seconded. Motion passed unanimously. The Edgefield County Council regularly scheduled meeting adjourned at 6:57 PM.

**Edgefield County Council**

  
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**Dean Campbell, Council Chairman**

**ATTEST**



**Aretha Eubanks, Clerk to Council**