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Subject: Morning Clips – Friday, July 15, 2016

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Governor Nikki Haley News:

Post and Courier: Syrian refugees resettle in South Carolina, more planned

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160714/160719672/syrian-refugees-resettle-in-south-carolina-more-planned>

Gavin Jackson

Resettlement of Syrian refugees rose in South Carolina last month as part of a national push — despite security concerns raised by officials. Since mid-June, some 22 refugees from the war-torn Middle Eastern country have resettled in the state, according to the latest available data. The federal government has approved an additional 26 for resettlement, according to Gov. Nikki Haley's office. More than 5,000 refugees have resettled nationwide under President Barack Obama's push to have 10,000 resettled in the country by the end of September. The growing numbers concern Haley, who last November asked Secretary of State John Kerry to halt resettlement of Syrian refugees in the state until receiving assurances that proper security checks were completed.

NOTE: "We are a compassionate state with a history of welcoming those in need, but the safety and security of South Carolinians is the governor's highest priority," Haley spokeswoman Chaney Adams said in a statement.

NOTE: While Adams acknowledged the state cannot stop the federal government from sending Syrian refugees to South Carolina, she said Haley has been in contact with FBI Director James Comey and made it clear to Kerry that until refugees from Syria can be properly vetted "it's not appropriate for them to be sent to South Carolina or any other state."

WIS: Time running out for flood-hit farmers to apply for help

<http://www.wistv.com/story/32451107/time-running-out-for-flood-hit-farmers-to-apply-for-help>

Chad Mills

This year's proving to be a better one for Kershaw County farmer Wayne Belger. Last fall, after October's devastating flood, his farm and many others were left in shambles. "Most of the river land flooded and actually stayed flooded for several weeks, so the majority of the river bottom stayed flooded. Even the upper fields here were boggy. They couldn't get combines in them, so it was just a mess," said Belger. Weeks ago, despite a veto by Governor Nikki Haley, lawmakers sealed the deal for \$40 million in aid to the farmers like Belger. But before the funds can be dished out, flood-stricken farmers need to apply. The South Carolina Department of Agriculture has been teaching farmers how to apply in more than a dozen education sessions like one in Camden on Thursday night. "It's been very helpful for the farmers to come, ask their questions, go home, pull together their information, so that they can get it into us, hopefully, in the next few weeks," said Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers. But Weathers said he's somewhat surprised that, so far, only 40 to 50 farmers have sent in applications for funds, and he was and still is expecting more than 2,000 applications. The application period started two weeks ago, and only runs for 30 more days.

SC after Dallas Shootings:

The State: Here's what a firefighter said on Black Lives Matter that cost his job

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article89659662.html>

Glen Luke Flanagan

Officials have released the Facebook comment that got a Columbia firefighter terminated after a Black Lives Matter march. Edward Augustyn was one of three firefighters who were fired from the Columbia Fire Department after making comments on social media about the Sunday march. The other two firefighters who lost their jobs were Capt. Jimmy Morris and Dave W. Proctor, a senior firefighter hired in October 2013. Augustyn's comment, "Ya think they would be going to bed to get ready for work tomorrow," was in response to what former Capt. Jimmy Morris posted on Facebook, spokesman Capt. Brick Lewis said. At the time, Augustyn was on a standard six-month probationary period after completing the fire department's training academy. During that period, getting in any trouble is grounds for firing. Though Augustyn's comment might not seem like much on its own, Lewis said that taken as a reply to Morris' post – and considering Augustyn's probationary status – the department had no choice but to fire him. Richland County also fired one paramedic for comments on social media after the Sunday march. The county has not identified the paramedic or released the comments.

Post and Courier: Police seek culprit who hit Charleston officer with large piece of brick or concrete during protest

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160714/160719699/police-seek-culprit-who-hit-charleston-officer-with-large-piece-of-brick-or-concrete-during-protest>

Andrew Knapp

Charleston police on Thursday said they were trying to identify the person who hurled a large piece of concrete or brick that hit an officer as protesters marched on a downtown street. A video captured the encounter Wednesday night when the police tried to clear the demonstrators off a one-way portion of King Street about 9:30 p.m., Charleston Police Department spokesman Charles Francis said. The video was not available Thursday night. An incident report says officers formed a line to hold King Street, at which point protesters began to push on the officers in an attempt to break the line. Shortly after, police officer Joseph Jacobs was hit with the object in his protective vest; it bounced off and hit him in his right cheek, the report states. He was taken to Roper Hospital for about 30 minutes and then released with mild swelling and lacerations to his right cheek.

Post and Courier: South Carolina city, town leaders get crash course on police issues

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160714/160719671/south-carolina-city-town-leaders-get-crash-course-on-police-issues>

Robert Behre

City and town officials should ensure their police policies are up to date, but they also should appreciate that when officers use force, there can be a gap between what the public thinks is OK and what the courts say is legal. Those were two big pieces of advice offered to more than 100 South Carolina mayors and council members Thursday by Jack Ryan, a former police officer who currently serves as an attorney with the Legal & Liability Risk Management Institute. His address, "Law Enforcement in Trying Times," came as the nation is grappling with outrage over videotaped incidents of police officers killing civilians and grief over five Dallas police officers shot and killed last week. Ryan, who worked for more than 20 years in the Providence, R.I., police force, currently trains officers and serves as an expert witness in cases of officers' use of deadly force. He said he usually works with about 30 cases annually, "but I weighed in on 64 cases last year."

Aiken Standard: Unity walk in Aiken calls for love, not hate

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/20160714/160719719/unity-walk-in-aiken-calls-for-love-not-hate->

Dan Brown

Aiken residents and others from around the county gathered on Thursday for a sense of unity, walking in a gesture of togetherness and fellowship, not marching out of anger and hate. More than 50 people participated in Thursday's Unity Walk through downtown Aiken that started at the city's Administration and Finance Building and ended at the headquarters of the Aiken Department of Public Safety on Laurens Street. "This should be a time of love, not hate," said the Rev. Paul Bush, president of the Concerned Ministers Fellowship, standing beside city police officers and officials.

Independent Mail: Ministers promote peace at Anderson vigil for law enforcement

<http://www.independentmail.com/news/prayer-vigil-in-support-of-law-enforcement-in-anderson-379a1949-94a9-193f-e053-0100007fd838-386871921.html>

Mike Ellis

Standing in front of a crowd of more than 50 law enforcement officers, ministers and many others at Carolina Wren Park, Anderson resident Jennifer Walling said she came out to a prayer vigil on Thursday morning because she thinks emergency responders don't get paid enough. "Police, EMS, fire, all of those who do service for us, they need to be respected more," Walling said. The Rev. Evan Hill, an organizer with Engage Anderson and pastor at Hopewell Baptist Church in Anderson, said the vigil spoke to both faith and law enforcement, but the bigger aim is to get the broader community to hear a message of peace. "We don't want Anderson to be a national headline," he said. In the wake of recent shootings by and of police officers, people need to rely on their faith, Hill said.

Herald-Journal: Woodruff police officer creates Build-A-Bear for victim

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20160714/articles/160719846>

Allison M. Roberts

A Woodruff police officer is getting some unexpected attention after purchasing a bear for a young witness set to testify in a difficult case. For the past two years, Officer Brian Knighton said he has been working with the young abuse victim. Recently, Knighton and the victim's advocate have been working with the girl to prepare her for testifying in court. Knighton said he was in the mall with his wife when they spotted the Build-A-Bear store, so he went in and picked out a bear. When it was finished, Knighton put a police officer's uniform on the toy and named it Badge. "It's just a reassurance that even though I'm not there, something of me is represented where she knows if she ever needs help she can call me and I'll listen to her," Knighton said.

Dylann Roof Case:

Post and Courier: Federal indictment of Dylann Roof lacks key element, judge rules

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160714/160719667/federal-indictment-of-dylann-roof-lacks-key-element-judge-rules>

Andrew Knapp

A federal judge ruled Thursday that the government's indictment of Dylann Roof did not thoroughly explain a key element of the shooting suspect's alleged crimes. U.S. District Judge Richard Gergel ordered prosecutors to file a "bill of particulars," a detailed explanation of 12 of the 33 charges against Roof in the June 2015 attack that killed nine black worshippers at Emanuel AME Church. His order came in response to a request by Roof's lawyers and despite opposition from the government, which voiced concern that it would reveal too much information and give the defense an advantage at Roof's death penalty trial. Roof, 22, of Eastover, was indicted on hate crimes, religious freedom

violations and use of a firearm in a violent crime.

Savannah River Site/MOX News:

The State: Drones over SRS nuclear site prompt discussion of no-fly zone

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article89741377.html>

Sammy Fretwell

In the wake of reported drone sightings at the Savannah River Site, federal officials are looking to tighten air space restrictions over the 300-square-mile nuclear weapons complex in western South Carolina. The Department of Energy says drones have flown over SRS at least eight times since June 19, raising concern that someone could be studying the site's security force or taking photographs. SRS, one of the key cogs in the nation's Cold War weapons production effort, has an array of nuclear facilities that contain sensitive materials and information the federal government guards closely. Drones have been spotted over every major part of SRS since the first one was seen last month, DOE spokesman Jim Giusti said. The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the State Law Enforcement Division are looking into the matter.

Aiken Standard: Federal report condemns Department of Energy, Savannah River Site company for failure to protect whistleblowers

<http://www.aikenstandard.com/20160714/160719741/federal-report-condemns-department-of-energy-savannah-river-site-company-for-failure-to-protect-whistleblowers>

Thomas Gardiner

A newly published investigation reveals systematic failures and retaliation against contractor employees who speak up about health and safety concerns throughout the U.S. Department of Energy. In a news conference Thursday, three U.S. senators released the results of a two-year investigation from the Government Accountability Office into whistleblower protections at Department of Energy sites. The information presented by U.S. Sens. Claire McCaskill, D-Mo.; Ed Markey, D-Mass.; and Ron Wyden, D-Ore.; was presented as a condemnation of practices throughout the Energy Department. "The report makes it clear that the DOE has utterly and completely failed to protect whistleblowers," Markey said. "Whistleblowers' currency is the truth, and they are repaid with retaliation." The legislators were joined by two former contract employees from two of the Energy Department's nuclear sites, one from the Hanford Site in Washington state and one from the Savannah River Site near Aiken.

SC Political News:

Post and Courier: S.C. has positive reaction to Mike Pence as possible vice presidential pick

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160714/160719663/sc-has-positive-reaction-to-mike-pence-as-possible-vice-presidential-pick>

Emma Dumain

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., has made no secret about his dislike for Donald Trump. Still, Graham offered rave reviews Thursday of the presumptive Republican presidential nominee's rumored pick to be vice president, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence. "I like him a lot," Graham told reporters on Capitol Hill. "He's a real smart, solid choice." Asked whether he would have liked to see a vice presidential candidate who could diversify the GOP and stand up against the history-making Democratic ticket candidacy of Hillary Clinton, Graham demurred. "There are a lot of other people he could have chosen, some not — " he trailed off. "I think that he's a very good choice by Mr. Trump. I like Mike Pence." Trump was supposed to reveal his pick on Friday, but a terrorist attack in Nice,

France, prompted him to turn to Twitter to say that he would postpone the event out of respect for the dozens dead. There is much speculation that Pence was chosen to bolster Trump's conservative credentials. Former U.S. Rep. Gresham Barrett, R-S.C., said there is little question Pence would be a plus to the ticket.

NOTE: Gov. Nikki Haley knows Pence from their membership in the Republican Governors Association. Asked for comment on word of Trump's supposed pick, Haley declined to weigh-in until the formal announcement.

The State: What does SC think of Trump's VP pick?

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article89712317.html>

Bristow Marchant

S.C. political leaders largely have positive reactions Thursday to reports that Republican Donald Trump will name Indiana Gov. Mike Pence as his vice-presidential running mate. Multiple news outlets reported the presumptive GOP presidential nominee had selected Pence, a former congressman, as his vice presidential choice. Pence is a reassuring choice after some of Trump's unorthodox statements on the campaign trail, congressional Republicans said.

Associated Press: SC delegate vows to challenge platform at GOP convention

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=ocr7eaGE

Meg Kinnard

A South Carolina delegate to the Republican National Convention says he's exploring ways to challenge the conservative platform being constructed for adoption next week. State Sen. Tom Davis told The Associated Press Thursday the committee charged with forming the current set of policy prescriptions known as the party platform has created a "screed of intolerance" that could lead to the GOP's downfall. This week, delegates began the tedious process of updating the platform to be adopted at the convention next week. Changes adopted so far signaled renewed support for religious conservative values. Davis has represented Beaufort since 2009 and advocates for libertarian-leaning causes like the use of medical marijuana. If the GOP continues on its course, Davis says, "there'll be no need for an autopsy this time."

Associated Press: Senator's speech on race stirs recollections of police stops

<http://bigstory.ap.org/4d3fd0f233d9446289884de4755e80e7>

Mary Clare Jalonick

South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, the lone black Republican in the Senate, candidly described being stopped by police, even Capitol Hill cops, because of the color of his skin. It's an experience all too familiar to many of his African-American colleagues in Congress. A day after Scott's personal recounting on the Senate floor, several lawmakers said Thursday that they have had similar experiences, whether it's being pulled over for no reason while driving in their hometowns or being challenged by police. Their white colleagues, they think, would never be treated the same way. Scott described being pulled over seven times within a year and also being stopped by a U.S. Capitol Police officer who said he recognized the pin he was wearing that identifies him as a senator — but didn't recognize Scott.

McClatchy DC: Sen. Scott proposes 'simple solutions' to rebuild trust in black communities

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/politics-government/congress/article89678507.html>

Vera Bergengruen

A day after his frank speech about the frustrations of being targeted by police as an African American

man made national headlines, Sen. Tim Scott took to the Senate floor one more time on Thursday to call for solutions to rebuild the trust between black communities and law enforcement. In order for any legislation to make a difference, the South Carolina Republican said, Americans will have to do their part. "The government cannot make us get along," he said, acknowledging that it was a "dark hour" for race relations in the country. "It just simply cannot force you and I to take the leap of faith to try to trust again." The only black Republican in the Senate said he does not see a way forward without Americans "looking into each other's eyes, walking in each other's shoes, and listening." It was the last of Scott's three speeches on the Senate floor this week addressing the issues between police and black communities. He decided to speak out after the violent shootings of two black men by white police officers in Baton Rouge, La. and St. Paul, Minn., were followed by a retaliatory ambush that left five officers dead in Dallas.

Post and Courier: In final floor speech, Scott expresses hope for race relations and the 'American family'

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160714/160719668/in-final-floor-speech-scott-expresses-hope-for-race-relations-and-the-american-family>

Emma Dumain

History is not lost on U.S. Sen. Tim Scott. "It's a dark hour in race relations for America," the South Carolina Republican said on the Senate floor Thursday. "But I bring you hope, real hope: In the Deep South, with a provocative racial history, the voters of the 1st Congressional District of South Carolina — a heavily white district, the home of the birthplace of the Civil War — elected the grandson of a man who picked cotton. "I want to say that one more time," Scott said. "In the heart of the South, the home of the Civil War, a majority white district elected the grandson of a man who picked cotton over the children of the former United States senator and presidential candidate Strom Thurmond, and a very popular governor." That grandson, of course, is Scott. This was the final installment in the three-part series of floor speeches he delivered in response to the week of fatal and tragic confrontations between the black community and law enforcement officials, episodes that left Scott reeling in "pain and agony," he said, creating a sense that he had to do something.

Post and Courier: Locals impacted by gun violence appear at two D.C. events

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160714/160719641/locals-impacted-by-gun-violence-appear-at-two-dc-events>

Emma Dumain and Jennifer Berry Hawes

Loved ones impacted by two of Charleston's most high-profile, racially charged episodes of gun violence appeared at separate events in the nation's capitol Thursday, one with the president and another with lawmakers. Jennifer Pinckney, widow of the Rev. Clementa Pinckney, stepped to microphones Thursday evening with her two young daughters to address a crowd of gun-control activists assembled on the National Mall. "Clementa Pinckney, where are you?" she began. "Because of what happened that evening, a father, a husband ... is not by our side." U.S. Rep. Jim Clyburn, D-S.C., emceed a "speak out" that Pinckney attended on the steps of the Capitol to support gun-control legislation. Many who spoke at the event called for closing the so-called "Charleston loophole," which allowed accused Emanuel AME killer Dylann Roof to purchase the gun he used to kill Pinckney's husband, Emanuel's pastor, and eight other worshippers last June.

McClatchy DC: Clyburn, House Democrats vow to continue gun control fight after 7-week recess

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/politics-government/congress/article89751887.html>

Vera Bergengruen

Continuing the role he has played since last month's 26-hour gun control sit-in, Rep. Jim Clyburn

acted as a master of ceremonies at an evening rally with House Democrats and families of gun violence victims in front of the U.S. Capitol on Thursday. After greeting the sign-waving crowd of gun control advocates, the South Carolina Democrat asked for a moment of silence for the victims of Thursday's attacks in Nice, France. He spent the rest of the event introducing the speakers, guiding them to the podium and directing the crowd. When the sun set and it became too dark for the speakers to read, he stood behind them and used his cellphone flashlight to illuminate their notes. "It's easier to get a gun in America than a voting card," shouted Rev. William Barber, who leads North Carolina's branch of the NAACP. "That's immoral. That's insane." He referred to the shooting in Clyburn's hometown of Charleston, saying the nine victims who were killed at Emanuel AME Church "deserved more than a flag to come down. They deserved more gun laws to come up."

The State: Some Richland legislators want answers now from Rec Commission board

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article89558322.html>

Avery G. Wilks

Members of a divided Richland County legislative delegation have called for answers from the county recreation commission that is the target of a public corruption probe and lawsuits. The inquiry from fewer than half of the 17-member State House delegation has triggered a counter allegation from the delegation's chairman, an African-American senior senator, that the inquiry has racial overtones. "This is the second time the same group has made an inquiry as it relates to an African-American director," Sen. John Scott said, referring to then-Richland County election director Lillian McBride. Sen. Joel Lourie, one of the letter's authors, said Scott's suggestion is offensive. Eight of the county's legislators wrote a letter on July 11 to the recreation commission's board, saying in part they "are extremely disturbed by what has been happening at the Recreation Commission in recent months."

The State: SC 5th District labeled an 'emerging race' by national Democrats

<http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/politics-columns-blogs/the-buzz/article89532097.html>

Bristow Marchant

A South Carolina congressional race is drawing national attention from Democrats who hope to pick up seats in the House of Representatives this fall. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee has labeled the race in South Carolina's Fifth Congressional District as an "emerging race," based on the strong fundraising figures from Democratic challenger Fran Person. "Fran Person has proven he is one of the few Democrats who can raise the necessary funds to make South Carolina's 5th Congressional District more competitive," the DCCC said in a "Red to Blue" email highlighting battleground races where the party hopes to make gains. Of the 10 races highlighted, Person's race against incumbent Rep. Mick Mulvaney is the only one in the Southeast outside Virginia. Person reported finishing the second quarter with \$225,686 raised, and \$403,448 from March through June. Full second quarter numbers from both candidates are expected at the end of the week. Mulvaney had raised \$579,559 through May 25.

SC Agency News:

The State: Lexington jail detainees suffering from food poisoning, DHEC says

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/crime/article89559042.html>

Glen Luke Flanagan

After illness swept the Lexington County Detention Center over the past three days, officials say they found salmonella in detainees' stool samples Thursday and safety issues in the kitchen. That's according to a release from the Department of Health and Environmental Control. Salmonella is an

indication of food poisoning. Jail operations were continuing as normal as officials with the state Department of Health and Environmental Control visited the site and conducted a kitchen and food preparation inspection. "We're still booking inmates as normal," Capt. Adam Myrick, spokesman for the Lexington County Sheriff's Department said Thursday morning.

Herald-Journal: SC launches program to reduce food waste

<http://www.goupstate.com/article/20160714/articles/160719855>

Chris Lavender

A new statewide campaign hopes to curb the amount of food waste going into landfills. South Carolina alone produced about 607,000 tons of food waste in 2015. The new state effort, a partnership between food banks and composting businesses, kicked off this week. "Don't Waste Food S.C." seeks to reduce food waste in the state by 50 percent by 2030. Leaders from the state Department of Health and Environmental Control, Department of Commerce and Department of Agriculture are spearheading the effort with help from Feeding America, which operates a network of food banks. Composting businesses are also key to the campaign. "South Carolina is positioned to be a leader in tackling the complex environmental and health challenge of food waste," said Catherine Heigel, state Department of Health and Environmental Control director. "The Don't Waste Food S.C. campaign is building awareness and partnerships to help our state make a collective impact on this ... issue. Working together, we can reduce the amount of food being added to our landfills and connect food resources with communities in need."

Post and Courier: S.C. Research Authority board clears way for agency to hire next director

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160714/160719661/sc-research-authority-board-clears-way-for-agency-to-hire-next-director>

Thad Moore

The S.C. Research Authority moved closer to naming its next executive director Thursday as its board cleared the way for the agency to make a hire. The board of the state-chartered research-and-development agency unanimously approved a resolution allowing board chairman Bill Blume to hire an as-yet-unidentified candidate. The resolution also said the new director's proposed salary — \$230,000 — is "reasonable under the circumstances and not excessive." Board members didn't publicly say who they approved to hire during the Thursday conference call, but the board discussed the candidate in closed session for more than half an hour. SCRA has been looking for a new head after longtime chief Bill Mahoney left in March after 11 years running the Summerville-based agency.

Opinion/Editorial:

The State: Columbia chief appropriately fired three firefighters

<http://www.thestate.com/opinion/editorials/article89594982.html>

Editorial

WE COMMEND COLUMBIA Fire Chief Aubrey Jenkins for his quick and appropriate response after two firefighters made terrible comments on social media about Sunday night's Black Lives Matter protest. Chief Jenkins and his department were open about what had been written, identified the two people involved, and fired them. His response surely defused potential tension between the department and many of the citizens it serves. It's unfortunate that the firefighters lost their jobs because of what we hope was a temporary lapse in judgment. But it is never, ever acceptable to threaten to injure or kill someone, even if in jest. That's reason enough for two of the firings. What's more, the lapse also threatened to undermine the credibility and effectiveness of the fire department.

Post and Courier: Uniting police and community

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160714/160719648/uniting-police-and-community>

Editorial

Tim Scott's position as a U.S. senator from South Carolina hasn't given him a pass. Like many other black men, he has been stopped by police — seven times in one year alone. So the conservative Republican is weighing in on the long-simmering question of what role racial bias has in policing. It's a question worthy of his time and effort — and requiring involvement of both police and the community. Police shootings of black men in Louisiana and Minnesota last week ramped up that conversation across the nation, as did the shooting deaths of five police officers by a black man in Dallas who reportedly said he wanted to kill even more white people. Fortunately, Charleston has been talking seriously about how to improve relations between police and citizens — particularly black citizens — for 10 months as its Illumination Project has heard from about 750 residents during listening sessions.

South Carolina News:

The State: S.C. roads twice as fatal as nationwide

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/crime/article89560862.html>

Cynthia Roldan

South Carolina's roads were twice as deadly for drivers in 2015 than the rest of the country, preliminary data shows. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration released a report on July 1 that showed traffic deaths in 2015 were up 7.7 percent nationwide. But in South Carolina, there were 154 more fatal crashes in 2015 than in 2014, totaling 977, an increase of 16 percent. Officials attributed the disparity to a combination of cheap gas, rural roads, more registered vehicles in the Palmetto State and an increase in distracted drivers. Those factors, coupled with slightly fewer highway troopers, have made the state's roads more dangerous. "Twenty-fifteen was a very tough year for us with traffic fatalities," said Department of Public Safety Director Leroy Smith during a House Legislative Oversight Subcommittee meeting on Wednesday.

Local News:

Post and Courier: Coroner plans to address inquest that faulted couple in Mount Pleasant boy's death

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160714/160719665/coroner-plans-to-address-inquest-that-faulted-couple-in-mount-pleasant-boys-death>

Andrew Knapp

Charleston County Coroner Rae Wooten plans to later address the result of an inquest that implicated a Mount Pleasant couple in a toddler's death, a representative of her office said Thursday. Bryan Seabrook, 29, had already been arrested on a count of homicide by child abuse, but the charge was dropped by prosecutors for lack of evidence pointing specifically to him. Six jurors in a two-day coroner's inquest returned a decision Wednesday that Seabrook could again be held responsible for the crime, and his girlfriend, 48-year-old Marty Dixon, was implicated as an accessory. Dixon was the grandmother of the toddler, 2-year-old Elijah Washington. Wooten's inquest has faced criticism from opposing attorneys in the previous criminal case. The jury's decision is a recommendation; she ultimately must decide whether to jail the two.

Associated Press: 2 Charlotte men arrested for North Myrtle Beach killing

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=tYtjhXdr

SC State Wire

Two North Carolina men face murder charges in the shooting death of a woman in North Myrtle Beach. Media outlets report that 29-year-old Amanda Renee Fisher was shot Saturday outside a K&W Cafeteria. Witnesses told police they heard shots and saw two suspects flee the scene in a white sedan. Another witness said he heard a popping noise and saw a man pulling the victim out of a white vehicle before re-entering the vehicle and driving away. Police released the photos of two men, whose pictures were found on Fisher's cellphone. They were later identified as 20-year-old Nicolas McIver and 29-year-old Terrell Freeman. McIver and Freeman were arrested Wednesday afternoon in Charlotte. Both are awaiting extradition to South Carolina on murder charges. It's unclear if they have an attorney.

Associated Press: Woman charged in infant daughter's suffocation death

http://m.apnews.com/ap/db_268748/contentdetail.htm?contentguid=srYzC83Y

SC State Wire

A Greenville woman has been charged in the death of her 5-month-old daughter. Media outlets report that 20-year-old Meaghan Lesley Rider was arrested June 27 and is charged with murder/homicide by child abuse and unlawful neglect of a child or helpless person. Deputy Greenville County Coroner Kent Dill says EMS and fire officials responded April 17 to a call of an unresponsive infant. Investigators found Skyler Williams in her bassinet. Dill says a piece of plastic was found in the bassinet that investigators believe obstructed the infant's breathing. According to an arrest warrant, an autopsy indicates that suffocation was the cause of death. On the second charge, a warrant says Rider exposed her 1-year-old child to methamphetamine. It's unclear if Rider has an attorney.

Morning News: Florence group gets grant for alcohol, drug abuse project

http://www.scnw.com/news/local/article_3ac6bffe-4a22-11e6-a88d-db52bfb96403.html

Deborah Swearingen

The Florence County Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse received a \$318,218 grant Wednesday from the United States Department of Agriculture to help increase access to treatment and preventative care in rural communities throughout South Carolina. "We're going to have a fully integrated statewide telesystem for the alcohol and drug agencies," said Randy Cole, chief executive officer of the Florence County Commission on Drug and Alcohol Abuse at Circle Park. Although the system will benefit patients across the state, Florence is credited for receiving the grant because Cole and Circle Park applied on behalf of the statewide drug and alcohol system formed by legislative Act 301.

The State: Richland 2 superintendent gets 2.5% raise after 'commendable' review, announces plan to retire

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/education/article89763652.html>

Rachael Lowe

Richland 2 superintendent Debbie Hamm's job performance earned a 'commendable' rating from the Richland 2 Board of Trustees Thursday night. At the same time, the board was informed that Hamm, who has worked for Richland 2 for nearly 40 years, planned to retire at the end of the 2016-17 school year. "Dr. Hamm received an overall commendable evaluation based on her outstanding work in her Four Squares of focus – Learning, Character, Community and Joy," board chairman James Manning said in a news release. Last year, after concluding her first year at the helm, Hamm was credited by then board chairman Calvin Jackson with helping to stabilize the 27,000-student school district.

Post and Courier : Berkeley County schools ramp up spending and hiring after recession slump

<http://www.postandcourier.com/20160714/160719673/berkeley-county-schools-ramp-up-spending-and-hiring-after-recession-slump>

Paul Bowers

As Charleston County teachers brace for a lean budget year and increased classroom sizes, neighboring Berkeley County School District is increasing spending by up to \$20.6 million, bringing on extra teachers and hiring psychologists and other support staff in anticipation of a wave of new students. Berkeley County schools' recently approved \$258.8 million general fund budget represents an 8.6 percent increase over last year's, paid for by a property tax hike that will add \$30 to the tax bill for a vehicle valued at \$30,000. The increase will affect all property taxes except for owner-occupied homes. "School budgets have been reduced for so many years that there really hasn't been an opportunity to step back and reflect: What have we lost over time?" said Berkeley County Schools Superintendent Brenda Blackburn.

National News:

Associated Press: With Pence a favorite, Trump postpones naming running mate

<http://bigstory.ap.org/aa0f535bf0a6443d8a04e65004a20779>

Julie Pace and Jill Colvin

Donald Trump abruptly postponed plans to announce his vice presidential pick after an attack left scores dead in Nice, France, a decision that raised questions about Trump's selection process. The presumptive GOP nominee had planned to introduce his running mate at a news conference Friday morning in New York, but said on Twitter Thursday evening that he would be postponing the event "in light of the horrible attack." During a day of rampant speculation, Indiana Gov. Mike Pence emerged as a late favorite for the job. Trump told Fox News he had not made his "final, final decision," and his advisers cautioned that he could change his mind. The billionaire said his selection would "absolutely not" be changed by the France attack. In the French resort city of Nice, a truck drove onto a sidewalk and plowed through a crowd of Bastille Day revelers who'd gathered to watch fireworks Thursday night.

Associated Press: List of Christie allies tied to Port Authority schemes grows

<http://bigstory.ap.org/bcd20c6c4d8b4dac9f3d8b8f9c185686>

Michael Catalini

A growing list of New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's allies have pleaded guilty or have been charged in schemes involving their relationships at the powerful agency that runs airports, bridges and tunnels in New York and New Jersey, though Christie, a close ally of presumptive Republican presidential nominee Donald, faces no accusations of wrongdoing. David Samson, a mentor to Christie who the Republican governor tapped as chairman of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, pleaded guilty Thursday to using his position to pressure United Airlines to reinstate a flight from Newark to Columbia, South Carolina, to make it easier to get to his vacation home. Jamie Fox, a former lobbyist for United who Christie later named to a Cabinet post, was charged by federal prosecutors with soliciting the bribe. Fox's attorney says he will fight the charge.

World News:

Associated Press: France reels as Bastille Day truck attack kills 84 in Nice

<http://bigstory.ap.org/dd2eb90cafaa4ab1914ee24d506c9666>

Ciaran Fahey and Elaine Ganley

A Frenchman of Tunisian descent drove a truck through crowds celebrating Bastille Day along Nice's

beachfront, killing at least 84 people, many of them children. The slaughter ended only after police killed the armed attacker in a hail of bullets. French leaders on Friday extended the country's 9-month-old state of emergency and vowed to deploy thousands of police reservists on the streets after Thursday night's massacre of pedestrians leaving a fireworks display for France's national independence day. Video shot by terrified civilians shows crowds fleeing in panic, leaping off the elevated pavement onto the beach below, and police finally surrounding the stationary truck and fatally shooting its driver. Wassim Bouhlel, a native of Nice, told The Associated Press he saw a truck drive into the crowd, then its driver emerged with a gun and started shooting. "There was carnage on the road. Bodies everywhere," he said.

Associated Press: The Latest: Russian reportedly killed in Nice attack

<http://bigstory.ap.org/122b69d693eb4c7bbfa5b8a4d2ca59a9>

Russian news agencies on Friday quoted Irina Tyurina, spokeswoman for the Russian Union of Travel Industry, saying that a Russian woman was killed and her friend hurt in the Nice attack. Tyurina said she got the information from insurance agencies. "Two friends from Russia were taking a walk on the Promenade des Anglais. One was killed by the truck, the other lightly injured, she's got broken toes and some other minor injuries," Tyurina said. Thousands of Russian tourists are estimated to be holidaymaking in Nice.

Associated Press: World leaders express horror at attack; sympathy for France

<http://bigstory.ap.org/7a309e0588e048bc9b012da3f2e7ae23>

World leaders are expressing dismay, sadness and solidarity with France over the attack carried out by a man who drove truck into crowds of people celebrating France's national day in Nice, killing at least 84 people...

NOTE: President Barack Obama condemned what "appears to be a horrific terrorist attack" in Nice. "Our thoughts and prayers are with the families and other loved ones of those killed," he said. Noting that the attack occurred on Bastille Day, the French national holiday, Obama praised "the extraordinary resilience and democratic values that have made France an inspiration to the entire world." Secretary of State John Kerry called it a "horrendous attack in Nice. ... I was proud to stand alongside French leaders earlier today at Bastille Day celebrations in Paris, and the United States will continue to stand firmly with the French people during this time of tragedy." Both presidential candidates also condemned the attacks, with Republican Donald Trump declaring "this is war" and Democrat Hillary Clinton vowing "we will not be intimidated. Clinton said "every American stands in strong solidarity with the people of France, and we say with one voice: We will not be intimidated. We will never allow terrorists to undermine the egalitarian and democratic values that underpin our very way of life." Trump, who postponed plans to announce his vice presidential pick because of the attack, said "this is war. If you look at it, this is war coming from all different parts."

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