

MINUTES

County Council Meeting

Special Meeting

October 19, 2001

A Spartanburg County Council Retreat was held on Friday, October 19, 2001, in the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce Board Room. The following were present: Honorable Karen Floyd, Chairman; Honorables Rock Adams, Ken Huckaby, Jeff Horton, Frank Nutt, Johnnye Code-Stewart and David Britt, Members; along with James K. Hartmann, County Administrator; Bill Dennis, Deputy County Administrator; Glenn Breed, Assistant County Administrator; Chris Story, Assistant County Administrator; Roy McBee Smith, County Attorney; and William McBee Smith, Assistant County Attorney.

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, notice of this meeting was provided in advance to the local news media and other interested persons.

I.

Chairman Floyd called the meeting to order.

II.

Honorable Jeff Horton updated County Council regarding a meeting held with representatives from Arcadia and Una Fire Departments. The Arcadia Fire Department fell into financial crisis when Mayfair Mills, its largest source of revenue, closed earlier this year. Mr. Horton advised Council if they do not vote to pay the interest on the Arcadia trucks, the equipment will be repossessed. The Arcadia interest is due by November 15, 2001. Mr. Horton has talked with Donnie Sisk, Una Fire Chief, and Tommy Dorsey, Arcadia Assistant Fire Chief. Una Fire Department has 30 Volunteers and two paid employees with an Annual Budget of \$130,000. Arcadia has 30 Volunteers with no paid employees and an Annual Budget of \$100,000. Both Fire Departments have an ISO Rating of Five. Una Chief, Donnie Sisk, advised Mr. Horton that Una could adequately serve the Arcadia district without any problem. Mr. Horton advised Donnie Sisk and Tommy Dorsey that it would be up to them working together to make a merger successful. Mr. Horton made a motion that Council does not fund the trucks. He would like for Council to encourage participation between the two departments. Motion seconded by Mr. Adams and carried. Motion made by Mr. Huckaby to approve a Resolution calling for a Public Hearing and to adopt the first reading of the Ordinance by title only calling for the annexation of the Arcadia Fire Service Area into the Una Fire Service Area. Motion seconded by Mr. Horton and carried. Mr. Horton stated the Una Fire District Board will probably have to be expanded. He hopes Council will appoint Arcadia residents to the board. Council authorized staff to have short-term agreement with Una for the balance of this year. Council also requested County Staff plan a dinner to bring together members of the two Fire Departments in an effort to encourage cooperation. Mr. Horton hopes the Arcadia volunteers will join the Una Department. Arcadia volunteers have specialized training and offer special services.

III.

Chairman Floyd discussed holding an Emergency Preparedness Meeting and discussing security of County and a comprehensive approach toward a threat to the community. Chairman Floyd stated there are three types of entities; Service Providers, Industry, and Utilities. (See backup for more information regarding Goals, Agenda, Action and Issues.) County Staff will plan meeting and advise Council of time and place. As follow-up to the *Honoring Our Own Event* held at Gibbs Stadium, Chairman Floyd requested Mr. Chris Story draft a letter from County Council to Fire Chiefs, ROTC, Rescue, Police, 911, telling them they are our heroes, and it was a privilege to honor them on Tuesday, October 16, 2001.

IV.

Mr. Jim Hartmann made presentation on County's financial situation. As Mr. Hartmann reviewed the outcomes and implications of the budget passed in May, Chairman Floyd commented that most of the departments are in the negative. We overestimated our revenues. We are already in the process of cutting. This is going to be a very challenging year. During discussion on Property Tax Revenue Growth, Council advised County and School Districts are only entities not raising taxes. Mr. Horton requested County Staff compile a list of top ten taxpayers and have it available for people to see. Page 273 of Budget has a list, but it does not include FILO. Mr. Horton advised some people think BMW pays no taxes. Drop in Building Permits and corresponding drop in Building Permit Valuations were discussed. Mr. Nutt advised Homes Sales are way down. Mr. Britt advised Subdivisions (New Starts) are not going up as quickly. Manufacturing Assessed Valuation Drop Off List was discussed. Chairman Floyd requested information regarding what happens when a company goes bankrupt. She requested Administration look at Hoechst/Manville/Kosa as an example. She wants to be sure we are not making Accounting Advantage for some firm when they come to Council and request FILO. Mr. Hartmann advised we are reliant on State for 18% of Revenues. During discussion on Cost Cutting Measures, Mr. Britt stated we have to do drastic things to provide Core Services. He stated we need to fight mandates that we do not receive benefit from before the mandate. Mr. Horton stated mandates are difficult to control. Possible Initiatives were discussed. Chairman Floyd emphasized the need to do the right thing. Mr. Nutt does not feel Road Maintenance Fee is the right thing to do. Council feels Mobile Home Permit Fee needs to be reviewed. However, Mr. Nutt pointed out increasing this would hurt lower income families. Mr. Horton feels Animal Licensing would be a funding source only. It would cost responsible people more money. Recreation Fees were also discussed. Should there be a charge? Do we look at these more as a business than Public Service? Business License Fee was discussed. A tax to do business would not encourage new business. Mr. Adams stated it would put us more in control. Outside Agency Funding was discussed. Mr. Britt asked how much we are required to do? Chairman Floyd requested a subcommittee be formed to look at these agencies. She recommended the subcommittee be comprised of the Public Health and Human Services Committee which includes Honorable Johnnye Code Stewart, Chairman, Honorables Ken Huckaby and Jeff Horton. Each item on this list needs to be reviewed. For instance, do we need to allocate \$111,436 to Council of Government, etc? After discussions on Mobile Home Permit Fee, Animal Licensing Program, Park Fees, Funding of Outside Agencies, and Road Maintenance Fee, Chairman Floyd agreed with Council that they need to think about this until next meeting and devote time to discuss possible solutions to raise revenue and/or lower costs.

Meeting adjourned.

Spartanburg County Council

By:_____

Karen Floyd, Chairman

Attested:

Deborah C. Ziegler

Clerk to Council