

ANDERSON COUNTY COUNCIL
ANDERSON, SOUTH CAROLINA
Called Meeting – November 5, 2003 - 6:00 p.m.
Linda N. Gilstrap, Clerk to Council

M I N U T E S

All area newspapers, radio stations and television stations were informed of this meeting in compliance with guidelines set forth in the *Freedom of Information Act*.

PRESENT

Chairman William C. Dees – District #6, Presiding
G. Fred Tolly – District #1
Gracie S. Floyd - District #2
Vice Chairman Larry E. Greer – District #3
Clint Wright – District #4
Mike Holden – District #5
M. Cindy Wilson – District #7
Joey Preston – Administrator
Tom Martin – County Attorney
Linda N. Gilstrap – Clerk to Council

ABSENT

Tammie Shealy - Deputy Clerk to Council

(During times of discussion and presentations the minutes are condensed and paraphrased.)

The called meeting of the Anderson County Council convened in the Council Chambers of the Historic Courthouse on Tuesday, November 5, 2003 at 6:00 p.m.

Chairman Bill Dees called the meeting to order and welcomed all present. Chairman Dees gave the invocation and everyone stood and pledged allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

Chairman Dees reported that the reason for the called meeting was to consider second reading of Ordinance #2003-056 – an ordinance extending the time for filing objection to the evaluation and assessment of real property resulting from reassessment within Anderson County; and other matters related thereto. Mr. Holden moved to approve the ordinance on second reading and Ms. Wilson seconded. Council heard from Anna Marie Brock, County Auditor, who stated that she wanted to make sure that Council knew that they would be setting a precedent. She said that there may be issues that Council and staff have not considered. Ms. Brock told Council the procedures used under state law for appeals on reassessment. She said that she sees affects on Homesteads and reimbursements, and school index of taxpaying ability. She said that the reimbursements needed to be looked at very carefully because the County bills for the schools and the cities. What the County does affects a lot of different entities, she said. Ms. Floyd asked how many tax notices were mailed out originally. Ms. Brock responded 112,000-114,000 with around 5% coming back with appeals. Ms. Floyd said that the Council was gambling on education. If the school districts don't get the money that they need – what will they do? Ms. Wilson asked what happened to her recommendation last year when reassessment was postponed for one year. She suggested that estimates be sent out with the assessment notices with the current millage. Mr. Mike Freeman stated that he thought notices should be sent out to notify everyone because the news media will not get to everyone. Mr. Greer asked how much it initially cost to mail out the assessment notices and Mr. Freeman responded 37 cents times 115, 000 and the cost of the notice itself was extensive. He recommended a postcard with the notice that the Appeals will be opened back up. Mr. Greer said that a postcard cost 17 cents to mail and assuming that the card

cost around 3 cents the total for 114,000 notices would \$22,800 just to send out the cards. After time and printing the total would be around \$30,000. He asked for a cut off date because the opening up process will be tough enough. Mr. Martin said that all of this needs to be in the ordinance and not left up to staff to make up the rules to avoid challenge by taxpayers. After further discussion, Mr. Greer moved to amend the ordinance to insert the necessary language that the appeals process will be opened back up and that language be sent to every property owner on a postcard. Also all local news media should be notified. Mr. Tolly seconded the amendment. Vote was unanimous. Vote on the original ordinance on second reading as amended was five in favor (Holden, Tolly, Wilson, Dees, Greer) and two opposed (Wright, Floyd). Motion carried.

Remarks from Council Members:

Ms. Wilson thanked everyone for coming back to the meeting and she asked all citizens to keep involved.

Mr. Holden – no comments

Mr. Tolly said he went to see the movie Radio and recommended to everyone to go see it.

Mr. Wright said that he has a friend in Dallas and he sent him an email telling him how wonderful the movie was. He said he meant to say that he felt like Mr. Preston and his staff conducted themselves last night extremely professional in face of some extremely unprofessional behavior. He commended Mr. Preston and his staff.

Ms. Floyd asked all members to look at information on Roberts Rules of Order that she has placed at each member's station. She said that it seemed Council was only hearing one side of the story however there is another side out there that everyone needs to listen to.

Mr. Greer said that last night the County had democracy in action. People from all "walks of life" exercising their freedoms granted to us in this Country. He said on November 8 at 10 a.m. there would be a ceremony at the Anderson County Veterans monument honoring all those veterans.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda N. Gilstrap, Clerk to Council
ANDERSON COUNTY COUNCIL