

**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
LEXINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL
JUNE 21, 2004**

Lexington County Council held a Special Meeting on Monday, June 21, 2004 in Council Chambers, beginning at 6:00 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to receive public comment and to vote on a millage rate increase for the Lexington County Library, General Fund, Indigent Care, and the Lexington County Recreation and Aging Commission. Chairman Davis presided; Mr. Rucker gave the invocation; Mr. Derrick led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members attending: George H. Smokey Davis Bruce E. Rucker
 William C. Billy Derrick Jacob R. Wilkerson
 Bobby C. Keisler John W. Carrigg, Jr.
 Johnny W. Jeffcoat Joseph W. Owens
 M. Todd Cullum

Also attending: Art Brooks, County Administrator; Larry Porth, Finance Director/Deputy County Administrator; Katherine Doucett, Personnel Director/Deputy County Administrator; Jeff Anderson, County Attorney; other staff members, citizens of the county and representatives of the media.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the agenda was sent to radio and TV stations, newspapers, and posted on the bulletin board located in the lobby of the County Administration Building.

Mr. Davis read the guidelines for participation and asked that those who signed up to speak provide their name and each speaker would be allowed three minutes to make comments. Mr. Davis added that Council would be voting on a possible tax increase.

Mr. Davis opened the meeting for public comments from those in favor and in opposition of the three (3) mill increase for the Lexington County Recreation and Aging Commission.

The following chose not to speak but stated they support the three (3) mill increase.

**Myrna Leaphart
Taconia Gilliam
Evelyn Gantt
Dorene Keisler
Rita H. Colson, 180 Rister Road, Gaston, SC 29053
Ruth Truesdale
James Truesdale
Tswana Bonneted
Jessie Mae Green
Earth Mae Williams
Azalea Colter
Genova Lakes**

Elora Brewer
Dorothy White
Geneva Mack
Irene Day
Marion McKnight
Essie Paling
Maggie McDonnell
Dassie Favor
Martes Davis
Hazel Rakes
Doris Peebles
M. H. Hutto
Evie Boatwright
Martha Matthews
Susan Summers
Eva Whitman
Nell Eagle
Emma Quattlebaum
Willie Mae Bynen
Elora Glover
Jackie Head
Art Starnes
Mary Johnson
Vivian Hayes
Ella Keadle
David Kleckley
Gail Hart Franft
Carol LaGrave
Tim Mack
Joe Craft
Gwen Smith, 1224 Barr Road, Lexington, SC 29072
Kathy Kelly
Susie Gunter, Lexington Senior Center
Corey McCartha
Annie Mae Gates
Vivian Summers
Loretta Mize, Lexington Senior Center
Jennifer Edwards, Lexington Senior Center
Josephine Owens, Lexington Senior Center
Stacey H. Craps, 164 Rosewood Lane, Lexington, SC 29072
Suzanne Meeks, 219 Crosby Road, Gilbert, SC 29054
Earline Rishburg, Lexington Senior Center
Joyce Whitaker, Tri-City Senior Center
Mary Jones, Tri-City Senior Center
Mary Grogan, Tri-City Senior Center
Sylvia Buccolo, Tri-City Senior Center
Anna Godwin, Tri-City Senior Center
Teresa Grice-Ginn, Tri-City Senior Center

Mary Beth Callais, 151 Doverside Drive, Columbia, SC 29212

Mandy Smith, 975 Rawl Road, Lexington, SC 29072

Clabbie Edmond, 415 Edmond Drive, Batesburg, SC 29006 - I attend the leisure center, and I have been there quite a few years. I delivered Meals on Wheels at times. We are doing nicely and we now have a great staff at Batesburg/Leesville and we deliver Meals on Wheels. I did it for awhile and we have a lot of nice people. A lot of them the only meals they have are the ones we give. We want this increased so that we would not have to put someone on the waiting list and they will be needing a meal. So we are here this afternoon to ask, not for what we want but for what we need, that we be able to take care of those who are in need.

Sallie Cannon - I have been attending the Batesburg/Leesville Leisure Center for approximately fifteen years and have been a regular attendee. I first attended the Leesville center after my husband passed; I needed something in my life to give me purpose to look forward to. So I started going to the center each day. And by going and meeting with my fellow peers we fellowship, we laugh, we talk, sometimes we even cry together, and we share ideas which are helpful to each other to be able to communicate and talk together. To know that we have a special place that we can go and communicate is a blessing to us and I ask that you grant this increase that we may continue. Thank you.

Carolyn Williamson - We just want to make sure that the needs of our senior citizens are met.

E. G. Wyndham, Tri-City Senior Center, 200 Dreher Road, West Columbia, SC 29169 - Gentlemen, about ten years ago I had bypass surgery and the meals that I received at home when I got home helped me get well, and I appreciate it very much. Today I am attending the center and am appreciative for what they have done and they have a wonderful program going. Thank you very much.

Lynda Christison, Aging Program Director, 125 Parker Street, Lexington, SC 29072 - I am the Director for the aging program for the Lexington County Recreation and Aging Commission. I want to tell you a little bit about the need. Fourteen percent of Lexington County's population or 30,255 people are age 60 and over. Between 1990 and 2000 the population of Lexington County that is over 60 grew by more than double the State's overall population. The State grew by 31 ½ percent and Lexington County 64 ½ percent; it's a huge increase. Outside the beach communities, we are the fastest growing county for seniors.

Our parents were busy. I am a baby boomer, some of you are baby boomers; they are a lot of people who are baby boomers. There are 69,025 baby boomers in Lexington County. That is more than the double of seniors. In two years those baby boomers that were born in 1946 will be age 60 and eligible for our services. In South Carolina, and this statistic really floored me, there is a formula for determining who needs help in the home, who can do what and who can't do what. Twenty-nine percent of people age 55 to 64, 40 percent of those of age 65 to 74, 67 percent of those age 75 to 84, and 87 percent of those 85 plus have difficulty shopping and preparing their own meals. That is fully 40 percent of the over 60 population and if you translate that to Lexington County, that is 14,311 seniors that need help getting meals. We currently only serve about 10 percent of those seniors. For many people families are able to fill in or they just plain make do, but a lot of people hit a point where they really need that extra meal. We have increased in the last four years the number of home-

delivered meals we are serving per year has grown by 59,306 meals. That has been at a cost of \$128,614 over 1999 and 2000. Right now we are seeing an average growth rate of 10 to 15 percent. Nationally the expectation is that in 2015, as baby boomers really start to flow into the system, we will see a 30 percent a year growth rate. We need to plan now for helping to deal with this issue. This is a big problem, or potentially it could be. Right now we serve an average of 654 meals a day for this year. In May, the way our growth pattern is growing, we served 674 meals. Our mission is to help people maintain or improve their health so they don't end up in any kind of assisted living or home care until they absolutely have to. And every month that you can prevent somebody from going into a nursing home saves \$4,000 or more. We really would like to plan for this by being able to increase the number of home delivered meals we offer by being able to increase the number of congregate meals we offer and also to increase our frozen meal program. The frozen meal program helps people who live out in the country, people who can't get on a regular route, people who may be on dialysis and can't be home on a daily basis. One of the things that we have done is get a grant for the Batesburg/Leesville area to add a food distribution center. That center will allow us to increase the number of meals that we are able to provide by quite a bit. Right now we only have 20 openings left for what we are capable of handling out of our Tri-City Center. Any help that you can provide for this would really be wonderful and you have heard a lot of people talk about what this program means to them. We need to be able to expand it to meet other people's needs. There are a lot of folks here that benefit from the meals, and we serve an average of 2,000 people a year. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Tim Chandler, 209 Rollingwood Drive, Lexington, SC 29072 - I come tonight supporting the increase for the youth of Lexington County. We've heard from the folks here tonight representing the aging and I'm here to represent the youth of Lexington County and ask that you support this millage increase to support the programs that are administered through the Recreation and Aging Commission. Over 3,000 youths are involved in baseball; 800 in basketball; 5,000 in softball, youth and adult, and approximately 2,000 involved in youth sports and football across the County. It is a daunting task for these youths to have facilities that are of a quality that Lexington County should have to meet the needs of each of these communities. This is one of the key components of the quality of life in Lexington County - good recreation facilities for the constituents that are here in the County. This will also serve, not just the older generation, but those from 5 to 95 in the recreation department. Please consider carefully the impact that this will have on the youth as they come up in this community and as new families come and look at the quality of life in Lexington County and we are in favor of that millage increase. Thank you for your time.

Grady Decell, 154 Barnacle Circle, Lexington, SC 29072 - I am president of the Lexington County Girls' Soccer Association and we are in favor of the millage increase. We keep growing like everybody else. Last fall we had 780 girls playing rec soccer. This past spring we had 915. The thing I want to thank you for was in the past you have supported the growth of soccer for the boys and girls in this County, and we have some of the nicest facilities in the state. One of the reasons I was asked to speak is because the Lexington County Girls' Soccer Association has teams in every one of the small towns in the County. Because we have grown so much, we are adding vice-presidents left and right just to handle the numbers. Lexington/White Knoll has 415 players, Cayce/West Columbia - 154, Swansea - 93 and nine teams including a high school team, Pelion - 191, Gilbert - 92 and seven teams, Batesburg/Leesville - 16 and two teams. That's one of our places we are going after this year. In this County the girls' rec has 915 girls. In the fall it was 780 so we expect it to grow again this spring. I am able to see the whole County and what the needs are

because we have programs in each community so we are aware of what it takes to take care of the fields and facilities we have which are some of the best or best in South Carolina and we certainly want to keep those up. We don't want to leave the boys out but, they have 950 - 1,000 playing rec and then the boys' and girls' classic have approximately 350 - 500 boys playing in travel teams. We do appreciate the support, we know what it takes to run a league, we don't have to worry about taking care of the fields; we have people at the County that support us and have continued to support us but not enough people to take care of the upkeep and we hope that you can support that. Once again, it is for our girls and all the kids here. Hopefully we are helping to put people in places that are positive for them and keep them out of trouble.

Larry Mack, 421 Charlie Rast Road, Swansea, SC - I am currently chairman of the Lexington County Recreation and Aging Commission. I come before you tonight requesting a three (3) mill increase. It has been over ten years since we have had an increase and I think we have done real well because we have been very frugal with the taxpayers' money. With the increase that we have had in population and the number of youth teams and the recreational part of it, we need your help. Currently our plans are to put \$360,000 directly into the aging program. We need three positions hired in the Batesburg/Leesville area for the food distribution. We are looking at a \$131,000 increase in food cost this year. We have a total of 27 percent increase in congregate meals and 39 percent increase in home delivered meals. We are estimating 48,860 congregate meals to be served this year and 114,640 home delivered meals this year. Along with this we need to hire seven additional maintenance workers. We have to take care of our facilities and do what we can to cover that and with the additional costs we are incurring trying to keep everything up we need your help. I come before you tonight asking for your support and asking for your help and we appreciate what you can do for us. Thank you.

Senator Jake Knotts, Chairman of the Lexington Delegation - Gentlemen, I come here tonight to support the request for the millage increase for the recreation commission for our senior citizens. The reason I do that is, I've looked at it very hard, very close, and in order for our senior citizens to continue in the Meals on Wheels, I think we need to look at it and look after those senior citizens who have made this County. They have sat there over the years and paid their taxes and they have given up a lot of things in their life in order to be good citizens of Lexington County. I know nobody wants to really raise taxes and millage but if there is only one thing that we need to look after that is our senior citizens. They have given a lot to this County and I would hate to see any senior go without food. I have talked with Jay Criscione, Director, Recreation and Aging Commission, at length and asked him what the ultimate amount of taxes they could live with and he said that in order to continue the Meals on Wheels and continue the services for senior citizens that he has not come here before and asked for any tax increases but this is a necessary tax. I know we appoint them but this is one thing that we need to look after, our senior citizens. I hate to put this upon you, but if it is one millage increase that needs to be passed, it is the millage increase for our senior citizens.

Chairman Davis stated this concludes all who had signed up in favor of the millage increase for the Lexington County Recreation and Aging Commission.

Chairman Davis opened the meeting for comments from those in opposition.

Ralph Lewis, 1421 Pine Street, West Columbia, SC 29172 - I am against this tax. There are citizens that don't get their medicine because of your taxes. There are seniors out there that can't

pay their taxes; they lose their houses on account of your taxes. Sure people need to be fed but where does all this food go to that Harvest Hope and all these other places have and get. There is absolutely no reason for our taxes to go any higher. And you people sitting there are responsible for what goes on in this County and you need to take the responsibility of it. You are suppose to be representing the whole County not just part of it and I don't think you are representing the whole thing. I would like to just leave something with each one of you, please, if you don't mind, and you be your own judge, jury and execution. Thank you.

Chairman Davis closed the public meeting for discussion on the three (3) mill increase for the Lexington County Recreation and Aging Commission.

Mr. Davis opened the meeting for public comments from those in favor and in opposition of the one (1) mill increase for the Lexington County Library.

The following chose not to speak but stated they support the one (1) mill increase.

Gwen Drakeford, 1910 Parliament Drive, Cayce, SC 29033

Robert Baird

Lola Lashway, 321 Nottingham Road, Columbia, SC 29210

Cynthia Kent, 1301 Murraywood Drive, Columbia, SC 29212

Charles Band, 406 Shortbow Court, Columbia, SC 29212

Mary Lott, 1120 Chinquapin Church Road, Batesburg, SC 29006

Betty Boozer, 344 Wilson Street, Batesburg, SC 29006

H. Hugh Rogers, 1 Saxe Gotha Lane, Lexington, SC 29072 - For many, many years I have worked for libraries, believing in libraries, especially public libraries. They are not just for entertainment, not for leisure reading only but for bettering ourselves, informing ourselves, educating ourselves for a better life. I am in favor of the one (1) mill. I don't think that will wreck us. I do want to say for every dollar the one (1) mill, if passed, it places on me, my home tax bill, \$1.50 on my tax bill at my office as well as some other properties we have and are renting out. So it is something to think about but without it, the property actually might not be worth as much. It might not be as rentable. Be that as it may, it is time to replenish the fund now that has lasted us so long; it is in the best interest of an enlightened populous and I am in favor of it. Thank you very much.

Fremont Huggins, 108 Huggins Street, Lexington, SC 29073 - Mr. Chairman and Council at a previous meeting the question was asked - what will it take for the library just to maintain and I want to be sure that we are all thinking alike tonight and make you aware of the fact that this is not a growth budget, it is a maintained budget. If we get the one (1) mill increase that we have requested, we will be able to fund the library at a level just lower than where we were in the year 2000-2001, so you see how far behind we are. We have not had a millage increase since 1992. With that idea in mind in order for us to maintain the Number 2 status that we have in the State, and we are constantly being chosen as the Number 2 library system in the State, out done only by Richland County, whose taxpayers pay about \$55 a year and ours pay about \$23. So we are doing more with less. We kind of feel like Avis Rent-a-Car, we are Number 2; we work hard. We don't mind that but we are to the point where we can't do what we have been doing in the past and we are not growing any new programs. We want to maintain the programs we've got and it is going to take this millage increase in order to do that. Thank you very much.

Dan MacNeill, 207 White Falls Drive, Columbia, SC 29212 - I am the Director of the Lexington County Library System. I would like to make two short remarks tonight. First the library is one of Lexington County's major success stories. First, the bond that Council passed was the key to that success. At the time it was passed, we had a library system that was fine for the 1960's but for the 21st Century it left a lot to be desired. The Library Board did a great job in spending that bond money. All building projects came in under budget and were of high quality. The high use by the public is a stamp of their approval, I believe. The staff has provided a level of service that has resulted in our being ranked second in the state for the last three years by an organization that ranks libraries nationally for the quality of library services. Richland County was ranked first, but we outranked Greenville, Spartanburg, and Charleston. As statistics Charleston's per capita tax support income was \$32, Spartanburg \$24, Greenville \$23, and Lexington \$17, yet we were ranked second. I think this shows that we have been efficient in the use of our available funds. One way to look at it is that we have been carrying out the philosophy of doing more with less. The second point I want to make is that people want government to meet their needs as efficiently as possible. I don't think people mind paying reasonable taxes if they know they will receive high quality service in return. Public libraries are government agencies and are supported by taxes. We need to provide the highest quality of service to the public, and I believe that are library does that. We play a major part in making Lexington County a desirable place to live. We help people throughout the County meet their educational, informational, and cultural needs. What about some tangible values. We will circulate this year a little over 1.5 million items; books, videos, books on tapes, magazines, etc. If the library did not exist and people had to buy all of these items that they borrowed from us, using an average cost of \$25 per item, they would have spent \$37 million. We answer thousands of requests for information each month. Our collection helps people do everything from finding a new job to learning a new language, or repairing a car. We provide numerous programs for children and adults, we work in conjunction with several of the senior citizen's centers in providing services to seniors, and we provide public internet access to anybody in all our branches. I would like to request that you support the recommended one (1) mill increase that we requested because we have used the fund balance as frugally as we have been able to in the last seven years and cannot take anymore from it at this point. So, therefore, I would ask that you consider our recommendation. Thank you.

Pete Stewart, 1702 Beaver Dam, Columbia, SC 29212 - I am a volunteer at the Irmo branch library. It is my understanding that when the bond was approved to extend the County's library system seven years ago, including the construction of several new branch libraries, Council did not at that time allow for the additional operating expenses that these facilities would incur. This was done with the understanding that the library system would make up the difference from its own fund balance until those monies ran out. That time has come. It seems that this commitment was actually made seven years ago. The Board is only asking for sufficient funds to operate these facilities as was mandated at that time. We are running the system; we have been running the system on borrowed time. Now the bill has come due. To me there is nothing more important in any society than an informed public. Our collective knowledge of the world around provides constructive entertainment, improves our standard of living, and makes us all better citizens. Since the founding of this country over two hundred years ago, public libraries, as well as our public schools, have been the foundation of that collective knowledge. So I am asking you to please approve the millage and funding requested by the Library Board of Trustees. To do otherwise would result in a reduction of library services which would not be in the best interest of Lexington County residents who have come to expect and appreciate the value of such an excellent library available to them. Thank you.

Rosemary Wilson, 109 Winyah Court, Lexington, SC 29072 - I am here in support of the millage increase for the operating expenses of our Lexington County library system. Sidney Sheldon, a well-known children's author once said, "libraries store the energy that wields the imagination, they open the windows to the world that inspire us to explore and achieve, and contribute to improving our quality of life, libraries change lives for better." For our family and other families with young children in Lexington County, our library system does just that. As new parents, we are told the best thing that we can do is to read to our children everyday, since reading to children is the number one way to improve their overall development. Obviously, reading is fun for a young child. It creates a special moment for a parent and a child during our increasingly busy lives. It fosters one-on-one communication with the parent or caregiver that is needed as a child grows and faces the many challenges of our world. Reading to a child helps them with language development, it builds listening skills, increasing attention spans, develops creativity, and it helps to develop a child's ability to use their own imagination. With reading to children being so powerful how can a community not provide this service to help parents especially in a community that has one of the best public education systems in our state and growing as fast as Lexington County. Research shows a strong connection between healthy libraries and student achievement based on comprehensive studies in seven states, and still counting. The study has proven that children in communities with well funded, well stocked and run by professional trained librarians score 10 to 25 percent higher on standardized tests than their counterparts in communities with poor resource libraries. And the results are linear. The longer the libraries are open during the day, the better the children will do. Once more they show that these results apply regardless of ethnic or economical makeup of the community. A public library provides greater resources than any one family in the community can provide for their children. Besides the endless collection of great authors, stories, and information, the library gets children excited about reading. They accomplish this through the many youth oriented programs they offer; the summer reading program, story time, bookmobile, and the rock-n-read for teenagers, just to name a few. To understand just how excited our libraries get children and their families about reading, here is one example. This year during the first day of the summer reading program close to 700 children signed up in the Lexington main library. That is just one of the branches in our system. Another testament to the benefits of libraries, in a study by the St. Louis Public Library, it was determined there are two benefits. The direct and the indirect, are the social benefits to the library. The direct benefit is providing information materials and services directly to its user. The social benefits are the benefits the third party or the population as a whole when an individual uses a public institution. Library services yield indirect benefits. When a user gets the need they need, for example the information to start a business, the help in learning to read, or materials for an important speech society benefits indirectly. The direct benefits accumulate when new businesses hire the unemployed, the underemployed, when children grow to be literate voters and productive workers and when the community leaders are successful in passing a bill to stabilize a community's neighborhood. To sum up, libraries are carrying out a social mission for which they were chartered to provide uses for which those users receive direct benefits and because good things happen to others in the communities, the whole society benefits indirectly from the library's operations. Since the opening of the first publicly supported library in 1833, public librarians, board of directors, local government officials, and philanthropist such as Andrew Carnegie and Bill Gates have recognized these two benefits of direct and indirect from the public library services. As Walter Cronkite once said, "Whatever the cost of our library, the price is cheap; it is cheaper than an ignorant nation." The same applies to our community. Thank you.

Carole Myers, 125 Leonard Drive, Lexington, SC 29072 - I am a member and have been a

member of the Library Board for a number of years and above all, I am a patron of the branches. I go to all the libraries. As many of you know, we have been good stewards of the County's money. We have been using the fund balance for seven years, believing you were honorable men. When we built these new libraries, our operating costs increased dramatically, although our millage remained the same. We were told by Council to be patient and prudent for the time would come for the library to receive the needed increase. During this period, we have not increased our book budget while our patrons' needs have steadily increased. The employee health insurance is another huge expenditure and it had to be absorbed. Our employees are exceptional; they work on rotating schedules. They are not there eight to five. They work evenings, Saturdays, Sundays and they are able to maneuver the large carts full of books. They have to be computer literate. They have to be knowledgeable, helpful, and public friendly. Their work is outstanding. Their raises have been minimal. Numbers can be overwhelming and they can be boring, but our summer reading program numbers are monumental. I just checked three of our branches, Cayce/West Columbia, Irmo, and Lexington, and a total of 5,435 kids have signed up for the summer reading program in those three branches alone, and today is the first day of summer. Friday 292 books at Lexington were pulled and held for patrons. This means these books were unavailable upon initial requests. Between 1,200 and 1,300 new library cards are issued each month, which means that is approximately 14,000 to 15,000 a year. Richland County charges \$55 but a lot of our Lexington people use them because we've not been able to keep up our collections. We need a new security system, new almanacs, computer programs, biographies, encyclopedias, tapes, CDs, periodicals, etc. Please don't take the money from the general fund. This means we will be back every year. Please don't give us a half ($\frac{1}{2}$) a mill, we need one (1). One (1) mill is \$6 - \$8 on a \$100,000 house, \$18 - \$24 on a \$300,000 house. That is less than the cost of one book. I truly believe most of you are interested in what is best for our community. I don't know how many of you have library cards or how many of you use our libraries but I do know that when new industries are coming to town, they are interested in our schools and local libraries. I do know that we should be proud of our libraries. We have worked hard for them and we are going to continue to work hard for them. Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it's the only thing that ever has." Please help us to be a part of this change by approving our budget request. You are sharp, bright, and your astute constituents will know what you have done and be thankful. We are sharp and astute and we will be with you next election.

Splawn Davis, 237 Horse's Neck Road, Swansea, SC 29160 - These people have given you such great reasons why you should raise the millage. I am really going to offer you sympathy and I am also going to give you the viewpoint of a teacher because I taught for 40 years in Lexington IV. Since I have retired, I have volunteered at the school library two days a week. I have been retired 19 years. When I first came to Swansea there was no elementary school library and downtown had a couple of shelves in a grocery store for library books and we had the bookmobile that would come once in a while. It bothered me because I had grown up in Greer which had plenty of books in the school libraries and also we had a county branch library and the library was a wonderful place to meet. When we had no books available to the children in school, it bothered me so much that finally I volunteered to be the librarian. That was during the time when the Russians were about to get into space before we were and the federal government was giving money for science and math books. Well, I did that for 15 years and finally we got enough money to hire a librarian at school. But, the point is that we tried to get the children interested in books because a lot of children have no background, nothing at home that helps them see any interest in reading except they just got their reading book and so that is not much of an incentive to try to learn much more than Dick and Jane.

When we get the children to realize what opportunities they have by using the library system then they can keep on learning the rest of their lives. They don't have to think they can stop as soon they finish high school. A lot of children grow up in homes that don't have money for books, they don't have money for computers. And, in this day in age when they have assignments in high school, just finding a book in a library is not going to be enough so they need to have these services so that they can at least keep up with the other students. Now, we have the question of taxes. Everything seems to be collapsing at one time and we have all this pessimistic talk about what sad shape the country is in, how taxes are too high and how we shouldn't be raising taxes. But, I think no matter which side you come out on, you are going to have controversy. And so, what all these elected people need to decide is what will be the thing in the long run that is going to help the citizens of our County. Is it going to be cutting the library services or is it going to be increasing the library services. This money that you want to add now, if we could quit hearing all that doom and gloom about how bad the country is, how bad the job situation is and all that kind of stuff, I think we bring some of that stuff on ourselves when we are so pessimistic. Our country is made of people who are optimistic and that's why we are a great county now because of the optimistic attitude of the people in our country and so I don't think we should get bogged down because it is a bad time to be raising taxes. I am against taxes, and I know what controversy is because I was on the School Board when we had to raise taxes and make our millage the highest in the state so you have to decide what's the best for the citizens in the long run. I really feel sorry for you because all of these people tonight have been giving you good reasons for raising taxes, but you have to decide what is best in the long run so I feel sorry for you because you have to make a decision, but I hope you will consider what is best for the citizens in the long run.

John Warsaw, P.O. Box 1290, Lexington, SC 29071 - Mr. Chairman and members of the Council, I am here on this stormy night along with many others because we support our library and want to see it continue the services that it offers to our community. You, however, must consider all the issues facing Lexington County and must balance our various needs. For example, we have one of the lowest rates of unemployment in the state and one of the highest levels of income. We no longer compete for business and investment by offering a large pool of low wage, unskilled labor. Frankly, those are no longer the jobs we want to attract. Businesses thinking about relocating here may consider our public athletic facilities, our general aviation airport, or Riverbanks Zoo. But they surely will consider the quality of our workforce. The kind of businesses we want to attract will be looking for employees who are ready from the day they are hired and ready to learn once they are on the job. Children learn to read in grades one, two, and three. For the rest of lives, we read to learn. When I was a child, my parents read to me. They helped me want to learn to read. They started me on the path of a lifelong love of reading along with a lifelong love of learning. Unfortunately, many children today don't have parents who read to them. Fortunately, here in Lexington County we do have a public library that offers programs for everyone, from toddlers to school age to adults and even for retired people, like me. Our library helps younger children develop a love of reading. It helps older children learn how to learn as they do their research assignments after school at our public library and it helps adults develop job skills, locate good jobs, and write resumes so they can get those well paying jobs. When our citizens get good jobs, they earn more money. When they earn more money, they pay more taxes. When they pay more taxes, County government is able to provide us with more and better services that improve the quality of life for everyone. Some here tonight may try to tell you that funding our library is a big expense. I believe that view is shortsighted. It is not an expense; it's an investment, an investment in young children reading. It's an investment in older children and adults learning. It's an investment in working people finding better jobs that

pay more. It is an investment in quality of life for everyone and it's an investment in attracting the sort of business we want to bring to our County as we move into the 21st century. Gentlemen, I urge you for the long-term good of our community we must continue funding our library at a level that allows our library to continue the resources, staffing, programs, and hours that already is serving Lexington County so well. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak tonight.

Teresa Mancuso, 165 Bridleridge Road, Lexington, SC 29073 - I am here today to offer my support to the one (1) mill increase on behalf of the Lexington County Public Library. They say that the best things in life are free. Among many things the library gives to Lexington County is a place for parents, like myself, to take their children to play, color, do puzzles, see puppet shows, and read. Young people and adults alike can use the library resources to look for jobs, they can read magazines and newspapers, they can check out videos, books on tapes, and soon, music CD's. There are also internet classes, research classes, old South Carolina books and photographs, and genealogy resources. They can check their e-mail. What the library gives to Lexington County is a vast sampling of the best things in life; art, music, literature, science, religion, culture, history, and the list goes on. They say that the best things in life are free. This hearing proves that they aren't in fact. However, they seem awful cheap to me. A one (1) mill increase for my family will cost roughly \$4 - \$6. If I had to buy every book that we, our family, checks out from the library, rent every video we use, pay for every hour of entertainment that my children have gotten out of the library, we would be much poorer for it and we would have spent more than \$4 to \$6. If Lexington County does not support its library, classes will be cancelled, the bookmobile will be eliminated, evening and weekend hours designed for working families will be reduced, and Lexington County, though trying to save money, will be much poorer for it. So please consider families like mine when you are voting to support the library. Thank you.

Greg Riley, 932 Charlie Rast Road, Swansea, SC 29160 - Council I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you tonight as a former school principal in Lexington County and a former Library Board member. I think I can speak to the positive impact that our libraries have on the citizens of Lexington County. For example, our children's program is second to none. We have some 7,600 students involved in the summer reading program this summer. And of that number about 1,000 students are middle-school age students. And, I think that is truly significant in that these middle school students have chosen to be involved in the summer program. It shows the effectiveness of this program. Our library staff works hand-in-hand with our school people to provide enriching educational opportunities for our students. What about other age groups in Lexington County? Our seniors and other adults. I think if we surveyed the citizens of Lexington County they would ask us to expand and improve on library programs and services and certainly not cut back on present levels. I ask that you support the one (1) mill increase so that we will not have to cut back on present levels and maintain what we are doing in the area of library programs and services. This is good for Lexington County and this is good for the citizens of Lexington County.

Rebecca Sinclair, 218 Silvercreek Drive, Lexington, SC 29072 - Andrew Carnegie said, "That the man who enters the library is in the best society this world affords, the good and the great welcome him, surround him, and humbly asks to be allowed to be his servant." Seven years ago when I moved from Oconee County, the librarians there told me they were sorry to see me leave. They were used to me coming in every week and checking out 25 to 30 books for my three children who were ages ten and younger at that time. When we moved to Lexington, I was thrilled to see that this County had the vision and the insight to build a beautiful facility to meet the needs of this growing

community. You see my father grew up in a little shack on the banks of a creek in Darlington County in the woods in a not very ideal situation. But he had a loving mother, loving teachers and loving Sunday school teachers that encouraged him and his five siblings to read and to learn and to grow. And so today, these six children rose out of their poverty to become very well educated adults who have served their various communities in a very meaningful way. My dad taught me that if I could read, I could learn almost anything and he and momma really passed this legacy on to me to love to read and love to learn and I in turn am also trying to pass that legacy on to my children. I believe that the public library can become a great equalizer in this country. Anyone, regardless of age, or race, or social economic status can come in and can learn many, many things. Home things, knitting, sewing, cooking, budgeting, tax preparation, vocational things. They can learn how to speak another language and even people that have difficulty reading can check out the books on tape and the videos and can see how other people live in other countries. Andrew Carnegie once stated, "That a library was the best possible gift for a community since it gave people the opportunity to improve itself." This past year I have been a politically correct mom with one child in public school, one child in home school, and one child in Christian school and the library has benefitted all three types of education in quite a wonderful way. So I urge you to please pass this increase.

Janet Altman, 809 East Main St., Lexington, SC 29072 - I am here to represent the residents of Agape Senior Community. We have two campuses in Lexington County and the bookmobile comes to us twice a month and our residents, through various means, go to the bookmobile and they check out books. We would like to see that continued. We all know that reading is a life long pursuit and you really just can't go wrong keeping your mind active during those senior years. So, I am here to say, please let the bookmobile keep coming to Agape Senior Community so our residents can continue to read to stay active, to be happy, and to enjoy all that is out there in printed matter. Thank you very much.

Robert Baird, 2010 Stratford Road, Cayce, SC 29033 - I came out here with my children tonight to show my support for the Lexington County Library and wanted to just impress upon the Council the importance what the library is to my family and how well it has served us since we moved to Lexington County a couple of years ago. For my wife and I, job searches can be done through the library. Things that we need to expand our own knowledge for the sake of job searches can be found in the library. My children are thrilled by, not just the entertainment that we get from the library, but they are just delighted and show a joy for learning and new things and there is just no way without the resources available at the library system that I can possibly give them everything they need and feed these minds, these hungry little children that I have. So just as a citizen who is speaking on a personal level, just the services that it provides to us are invaluable and I'm sure, of course, my situation is not unique in Lexington County but I did decide that I feel compelled to let you all know that and thank you very much.

Bob Knauss, Lexington - Due to time, I withhold presenting a formal comment but the comments that I have heard already this evening are well presented are heartfelt, sincere, and I just want to add my endorsement to those comments you have already heard.

Ray Spires, 195 North Bartow Ave., Swansea, SC 29160 - I am the mayor of the Town of Swansea. I am here in support of the libraries here in our County but also I would like to speak on behalf of our Town Council, the citizens of Swansea, and the people of the Swansea community. The Swansea Library plays a big part in our town. We are a small town but we are a growing town.

We got a lot to look forward to in the future and our kids are very important to us. I have kids come to me on the streets asking me from four years up saying “are we going to get a new library, we love our library” and I said children I am going to do what I can. So here tonight, I am just asking you, if you can, we are in support of the millage increase and the kids of our future. A few dollars go a long way in providing the education and knowledge that our kids need. So I just wanted to say that we are in support of this.

Myra Guase, 531 Lockner Road, Columbia, SC 29212 - On behalf on my three grandchildren, I support this increase.

Caitlin Snowberger, 300 Stirlington Road, Columbia, SC 29212 - Hello Lexington County Council members. Thank you for allowing me to speak. I am twelve years old. The library is a very important part of my life. The library is literally a home away from home for me. There are a lot of educational programs for all ages. There is a reading program for the summer, which I’m doing. There is story time, arts and crafts, and a lot more. The librarians are great. I am really interested in the series called Mandy and one of the librarians got for me a whole lot of the Mandy books that they do not have. Librarians know and can find almost every book that you want to find and if they don’t have it, they will get it for you one way or the other. Right now I am volunteering at the library every Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and it has been a really good experience for me. It has helped me with my alphabetizing and I am able to find books that I didn’t even know that existed. I’ve come out with three or four books that I have found. It’s great. Without the library I wouldn’t be able to get the books that I enjoy reading. Thank you.

Nancy C. Amick, 706 Lewie Road, Gilbert, SC 29054 - In the interest of time as a mother, as a part of the educational system, and an avid reader myself, I support the millage increase.

Bettie C. Amick, 636 Lewie Road, Gilbert, SC 29054 - I am a teacher and I support the millage increase.

Representative Ken Clark, 424 Cedar Creek Road, Swansea, SC 29160 - I represent the large part of the southern part of Lexington County; Gaston, Swansea, Pelion, Boiling Springs, Fairview, Pond Branch, etc. All of these towns are small rural and by no means affluent and to us our libraries are absolutely crucial to us and I have had dozens upon dozens, if not hundreds, of people coming to me telling me how important it is that we continue to operate our libraries at a level where they can be fully used. I understand that most of them are only at 30 hours now and if we don’t get this millage increase, it will mean a reduction in hours and it will also mean laying off some really fine library staff. And everyone gets to use these libraries. The preschoolers, students, parents, and the senior citizens and they are absolutely crucial in our effort to improve the education of our children in this County and this state, therefore, I strongly urge you approve the recommended millage increase.

William Kitching, 190 E. Craft Street, Swansea, SC 29160 - Mr. Chairman, Council members most of the previous speakers are a lot more articulate than I am, I would just like to agree with most

of the previous speakers and support the millage increase and urge you strongly to support it also. Thank you.

Dalton Galloway, 1550 Barnes Street, West Columbia - I used the public library and at school I did my research. Mr. Dan McNeill stated that Dalton did his research at the Lexington main library on cheetahs and did his poster and got an A+.

Jane Hiller, 501 Topknoll Court, Columbia, SC - As a teacher and as a mother and life long learner, I would like to ask you to please keep our libraries at the quality that they are now and I would really like to thank, especially the Irmo Library for the wonderful, wonderful job they do.

Mary Creech, 224 Tram Road, Columbia, SC 29210 - I just need to speak as a private citizen for my children, grandchildren, and neighbors. The greatest thing that I was given when I was child was the ability to read by my first grade teacher. She taught me and I have inhaled the books ever since. I remember begging neighbors to read to me after my mom and dad gave out, because they had read to me so much. I have used the library system in Lexington County for many years now. And if you haven't read books on tapes, you need to start doing that. I can read two or three books a week now because I can read, I have my tapes in my car, as I'm doing other things. I always am reading a book tape and a book at the same time. And it has meant so much to me in my years in this life. I beg you not to decrease the services of our libraries.

Weaver Grayson, 121 Penny Lane, Lexington, SC 29073 - I am a retired police officer of 60 Ward and have paid my taxes ever since I moved here in '72 in this County. I do not have children, and I support the Lexington County system, their tax increases and also the library services. I have never had a dealing with a child in 30 years of law enforcement that had a library card.

Rev. Mark Mancuso, 165 Bridleridge Road, Lexington, SC 29073 - I would just like to say as a taxpayer I support the millage increase for the library and also as a pastor of a growing church community in Lexington County. Thank you very much.

Scott Broam, 243 Mockingbird Circle, Lexington, SC 29073 - As a card carrying library member, father of three, and a husband of a librarian, I support this millage increase because I think it is a wise use for our tax dollars and provides a good return to our families and our communities.

Ray Sharpe, 506 Moss Creek Drive, Cayce, SC 29033 - We have heard a lot about the library today and about the children's programs. My children love the library, not only do they excel in sports, but one of the main things they love to do, is to go the library. We heard great things about the reading program, but I think it is most interesting since I have been a member of the Library Board, that I have gone to different libraries and talked to some of the citizens of Lexington County. I was in the Cayce/West Columbia Library recently and saw a fellow I grew up with, an older man, that lives on the Avenues in Cayce. I said, "What are you doing, I didn't know you were internet savvy?" And he said, "I'm trying to research a plumbing project for my home." And I said, "I didn't know you were a plumber." And he said, "Well, I can't afford to pay a plumber and I can't afford

the manual so I'm getting this librarian to help me with this plumbing project." I chatted with him and said that's great. Talked to another guy in the Lexington Library who was going to law school and he didn't want to have to purchase the expensive books and he was doing research in the Lexington Library. We ate at Zobra's one day and the kids had to go by the Irmo Library and I went into the Irmo Library and saw some friends from Irmo and they were part of the children's reading program and the mother of these children in Irmo said we save a lot of money with the library because they utilize the books, the reading programs and we do not have to purchase books. I left that day and told my wife, I said, "the library saves our citizens so much money." The library is not fluff. The library is enriching our community and enriching the lives of, not only children, but senior citizens, middle-age folks, like me. I urge you, urge you to continue to enrich the citizens of Lexington County, the citizens in Swansea, Cayce/West Columbia, Irmo, Lexington, all around the community. This is a very small increase and we are just trying to maintain. We appreciate so much each of you for supporting the Lexington County Library and we appreciate what you mean to us and ask that you prayerfully consider this small increase and we thank you.

Chairman Davis stated this concludes all who had signed up in favor for the millage increase for the Lexington County Library.

Chairman Davis opened the meeting for comments from those in opposition.

Carl Kaney, 1221 Decatur Street, Cayce, SC 29033-1803 - Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am here to oppose this millage increase for several reasons. People, as you said on television, Chairman Davis, your people were taxed to the max. I remember your quote because I happened to see you. I would like to direct my statements and questions to all of you, but to Mr. Rucker in particular.

Mr. Rucker, according to the media, you are requesting funds for a new library building in Swansea to replace the small library. They have a small library there and you are not requesting funds for extra personnel, books, and other equipment that may be needed. This will give you three libraries in your district. Are you planning to come back to the table again and ask for extra funds to fill the new buildings needs? Mr. Rucker, have you read the latest census numbers and projected growth in your district? Well, here they are plus the figures for one library that serves three County Council seats very well. In your Gaston/Swansea seat, the census of 1990 was 7,499. In 1995 they estimated 8,305, 11 percent increase. By 2015, that is 10 ½ years from now, the estimate would be 11,485 and that includes men, women, and children of all ages. In the meantime, Cayce/West Columbia and Springdale that represents three Council seats, in 1990 had 50,022 in population, 1995 estimates were 53,110 and 2015 estimates, 10 ½ years from now, will be 67,210, which is a 34 percent increase over 1990. And Joe, thank you for not bringing anything up for that. Evidently, he's got some people who know how to use the money. And I suggest that the rest of you, if you don't have somebody that knows how to use their money, to get them quickly as possible. I want to ask you too, since your district already has the highest millage in the County, Mr. Rucker, have you told your constituents that their taxes will be increased to help pay for this? Also, have you explained the two referendums on the November ballot that raises the taxes again and next year the County will send them a reassessment tax bill. Another tax increase in taxes. So that's three times plus what you are

considering here. Or have you told your constituents, and this goes for all of you, look what I've done for you. You folks sometime are strange Santa Clauses. You deliver the presents and then send them a bill for the gifts. Thank you.

Mr. Davis stated he would like to encourage anyone that is speaking not to try a personal attack on any individual or group. We are here to hear about issues and your feelings about a particular tax millage. However, if personal attacks continue, then we will ask you not to speak.

Marie Horne, 501 S. Eden Drive, Cayce, SC 29033 - As a former Board member, I am opposed to what I read in the paper the other day. It said, "library operation and future construction" is what this millage increase would be. I will also specifically address the new library in Swansea that if you are asking that the new construction be included in this millage, then we already have two new libraries in Swansea. If there are about 15,000 residents per district, then that means that three libraries will be serving 15,000 people. So in April, the three libraries in District 1, Gaston, Swansea, and Pelion had a circulation of 8,262 but the regional library, which is in Cayce/West Columbia, had 19,430 items. So Swansea being the smallest library that we have was also in a downward slide for many years until someone said if you will get us a friends group, we will get you a new library. I do not believe it is fair for the other taxpayers in Lexington County that we build three libraries in one district. Bobby Keisler's District, number 5, has no library. Todd Cullum's District 9, has no library but we have a population or, one figure I saw, we served as many as 65,000 people but if you just went by the 15,000 that would be 45,000. We have to travel five miles to a library and I am glad to attend or to go to a regional library and I feel like that it serves this district, these three districts adequately. Building a library in Swansea is going to be a reoccurring expense. It is not just a one time deal. It will include more employees, books, furnishings, and maintenance. Our existing libraries, which we built with the bond money, as they age will need repairs. They will need new equipment. Increases in employee health insurance has been a big impact on our operating budget. County Council passed that bond issue without adding anything for the expanded operation. If we expand government, it is just going to cost us more. When you are working twelve hours a day in a new business and new taxes come along, it becomes an added burden and as my son said as he and his dad went into business about four years ago, he said, "Dad, they are going to nickel and dime us to death." And you know it may just be three or four dollars but it is also a tax on your car, boat, or anything else that you possess. If you are trying to have an investment and I have invested a lot of years in Lexington County libraries, and I will continue to because I use them, I enjoy them, and I want to be a part of a fine library system.

James Bundrick, 217 Palmer Drive, Lexington, SC 29072 - I am not against Council on the Aging and I am not against the libraries and I am not against the leisure centers even though I have never had time to go to either place. I have been too busy working to pay my taxes. I intended to retire at age 62 on my social security, which I get a little over \$1,000 a month. I'm over 64 now and still not retired. I run a small business, like Ms. Horne said, and small businesses don't get any breaks. All the big businesses get breaks. We get nickeled and dimed to death like she said. I haven't drawn a salary from my business in the last 12, 13, or 14 years. I have forgotten how long. I am just keeping the doors open. The last reassessment we had about three and one-half years ago, we pay

on about 11 acres of land, that is including my half acre where I live, and seven and one-half acres of commercial property that I purchased. Owning a business, a small business you don't have a retirement plan. So, I said I will buy this commercial land and that will be my retirement. I will live off of it, rental income. So when they did this reassessment on this seven and one-half acres it went up from \$3,200 to over \$11,000. That is a 360 percent increase at one time. That is unfair. I am still fighting. But between those 11 ½ acres we pay over \$28,000 a year in taxes so that is the reason why I don't have time to go to libraries and I don't have time to go to leisure centers. I am too busy working. I haven't retired yet and I can't retire because I am too busy working and saving my money from January through December, my wife and I, to pay our taxes and insurance. So, I am not against these things. There is just going to have to be some other way and some other means to come up with the money rather than taxing us to death every time something comes along. We can't stand it. I lost a tenant about the time my taxes went up 360 percent. I lost a tenant on my property so I only have two tenants left. Something has to happen. I mean, we can't continue to be going at this rate. My suggestion is everybody needs to call their representative and raise Cain and do like some of these other states are doing. A lot of tourists come into our state. They need to go up two cents more on our sales tax, two and one-half more on our sales tax and do away with the property tax and let that include a lot of these things that we are needing, you all need or whoever needs. I can't use it because I don't have time. Thanks a lot.

Rebecca Fagg, 127 Pine Point Drive, Lexington, SC 29072 - I am Rebecca Fagg of Lexington County Association of Taxpayers and may I also add, my husband and I are small business owners. I would like to first thank those of you on Council who have said you would not raise our taxes. For those of you who are undecided, my I speak for those Lexington property owners who are caught between rising taxes and declining incomes. You know, of course, that the consumer price index is now going up at an annualized rate of more than 5 percent according to the labor department. We have just learned that wholesale price increases were in almost double digits last month. Persons on social security got a 2.1 percent cost of living increase in their pension checks at the first of the year. But their medicare premiums, that they must pay, increased 14 percent. As you can see, their purchasing power has been hurt. A large percentage of the social security checks received in this County are well under \$1,000 a month. Those who count on income from their savings account to supplement their income have been hard hit in the past two years or so from extremely low interest rates. To make it worse many property owners, old and young, have seen real estate inflation, we know that reassessment drives the market value of their property very high. This leads directly to higher taxes. Wealthy property owners may have some flexibility in paying higher taxes but a large number of people in this County, in the middle and the lower income groups, are seeing their real income go down and taxes rise with no relief in sight. This is all the more reason that this Council must treat every nickel of taxes that it takes in with extreme care and budget as frugally as possible. You are about to consider overriding the statutory limitation on millage increases above the rate of last year's consumer price index which was 2.3 percent. Please ask yourself, where will people get the extra money. Inflation is pushing them backwards, even those lucky enough to have pay adjusted to cost of living have fallen behind. And what of the thousands in this County who don't have cost-of living increases, where will they get the additional money you propose to demand. If taxpayers cannot insulate themselves from the harm caused by the hidden tax of inflation, and inflation is a tax,

then local governments should not add to their pay with even higher tax increases. Therefore, we ask you tonight not to further reduce our living standards by raising the millage rate. Thank you.

Ed Phillips, 118 Mark One Road, Lexington, SC 29072 - Mr. Chairman, members of Council, friends and neighbors. I know there are a lot of well intentioned people here tonight that would like to see more money for our libraries. Others that are eager to see more people employed by our government so that we can improve public services. Me, I am simply here because my son needs braces. My truck needs a new exhaust pipe and my mortgage escrow account was just raised again. And quite frankly, I can't afford anymore property taxes. There is nothing that I would like better than to go to my boss and say I need more money. I got to pay for my son's braces; I got to fix my truck; I got to pay for my higher mortgage. But, unfortunately, gentlemen, things on Main Street aren't going quite as well as they are on Wall Street and my chances of getting that extra money are going to be slim to none. So, I've got to do it the old fashion way. Save a little here, scrimp a little there, and watch every nickel, dime, and penny that I spend. Does that sound familiar? How many of you citizens out there are doing more work than you were doing a year ago for the same money? How many times have you heard the words multi-tasking? How many of you out there are still trying to stretch last year's dollar to pay this year's bills? Ever notice that you never hear anybody sitting up here on Council saying anything like that much less doing anything that even resembles tightening a belt or making do with less. It is unfortunate that most of our elected officials, once duly sworn in, kind of enter a land of oz where a simple click of their heels in one of these meetings is all they need to solve problems to get the tax revenues rolling in. Well, ladies and gentlemen, I think it is about time that we took most of these members of Council back to Kansas for a healthy dose of old fashion reality. I want to hear more talk about how to improve the budgeting process. How to trim fat and waste. Yes, and how to scrimp and save. I want to hear more about such things as getting more bang for our buck, increasing efficiency and productivity, and squeezing every taxpayers' dollar until it screams. Of course, if you gentlemen did that, you would start sounding like us, the people who you are suppose to be representing. There is one more thought, and this is kind of a scary one. When your homes are reassessed next year, and I remind you at fair market value, your property taxes are literally going to go through the roof and gentlemen every one of you sitting up there knows exactly what I am talking about. You also know that there are some faces in here tonight that likely you won't be seeing next year because they will no longer have any property left to tax. If this Council sees fit to raise our taxes in light of what lies before us, if they can raise our taxes knowing what each one of them knows, well to be quite honest with you, you may want to start looking for a very good real estate agent. Thank you.

Doug Bouknight, 119 East Circle Drive, Lexington, SC 29072 - I am here because I have had enough with the tax increases. From 1999 to 2003, my taxes have gone up 76 percent on the same house. I am out in the County, I happen to live across from the lake, and, of course, I am suppose to be a rich person because I live close to the lake. But, that's not the case. It is taking more of my income to pay property tax now than it did five years ago. I paid twice as much property tax last year as I did in State income tax. Enough is enough. A mill here, three mills there, four mills here, pretty soon you have a big tax increase. Yes, we have reassessment coming up. The last reassessment my property tax doubled. Something has got to give. Yes, it is nice to have nice libraries, its nice to

have this but I realize its all got to be paid for. Why don't we try something new. If people want to use this stuff, then they need to start paying fees for using it. It shouldn't be free anymore. I would like to use the library, it's not an option. So, if the library wants to add all this other stuff, unfortunately, maybe we need to start charging a fee to use the library. It is like that for anything else. Life isn't free. You go to Wal-Mart you have to pay for the stuff. Use County services, you need to pay for it.

Ed Trasak, 102 Huntsman Circle, Lexington, SC 29072 - I just want to ask two questions. I moved here from another state to get away from high taxes. My house was taxed when I built it, about \$6 - \$7 a year. Within five years, I was up to \$5,000 because of waste, spending waste. The people that were sitting down there, it wasn't the County Council like this, it was other people. They would go and put anything in and when it came time to pay taxes and they were off their seats, they moved down South where it was cheaper. That was it. Everybody else got stuck but I moved with them. I came down here, heck, I came down here. I owned a 170 acre farm in Saluda. I was paying \$800 a year taxes there. I moved over here to Lexington because I got disabled. I had surgery for cancer and I can't work any more so I sold the farm and bought a house for the same value that I sold the farm for. The taxes I am paying, what I get now is \$1,000 from the government for retirement and I am paying for what I have. My automobile is \$5,000 a year in Lexington. Lexington was the highest taxes in the state when I moved here. I mean, this is wrong. I'm not against the library but we should take a survey, get a poll of the people. I worked for the state where I moved out on account because people were raising taxes and raising all kind of We need to take a survey of Swansea. I don't know much about Swansea but I rode through it. I know you hit the town and within two minutes you are out of it when you are driving to Springfield when I go to Springfield. That is where my wife is from. We should take a survey. We have two libraries down here, do we need another one. Are these packed so children can't go in it. But if you need, build it. I wrote letters to the editor about school taxes, etc. Get a two percent sales tax and take the rest out of the lottery money if we need it, not all of it. It will be a better way. Take the taxes away from the people. These children up there, where I moved from where the taxes went so high, after they got out of school, they raised the taxes to build schools and better schools. When they got out of school, they couldn't afford to pay the mortgage payment and pay the taxes because it was so high. Some of them are paying \$25,000 a year taxes right now. It's coming here. I'm 45 years ahead of you because I have seen it. I was sitting down like you people back then trying; tried to fight with everybody to stop the taxes, but they wouldn't listen. But, these children who get this education it's going to be no good to them when they get ready to get married and have children. They are not going to be able to afford a tax because the taxes are going to be so high. You understand where I am coming from? I would like to ask you something else. About a conflict of interest. When you are sitting down in these chairs and you get voted in, and say a construction job comes up, and you people own a business, like I don't know if you own a business or what you do if you work for somebody else. Mr. Davis I am talking to you because I voted for you when you first ran when we voted out that other crew about ten years ago. And say you own a business and you are a mason and you have a business putting brick up. When this library comes in or courthouse, is it a conflict of interest for you to bid on this job and do this work.

Mr. Davis replied, no, sir. He stated our procurement system allows you to place a bid but it does not allow you to vote on the expenditure of the dollars and a bid is a bid.

Mr. Trasak replied, it is always a conflict of interest where I came from. I was a supervisor on many jobs and I was a supervisor on most jobs and all the jobs where they expanded, they made money. They built a bigger business. Lexington County has a lot of buildings coming in, houses and everything. I can't understand why there is no more money. I mean, all these houses. You see them all over here coming up. Where is the money going? I mean, got more money coming in. That is like expanding a business. What is happening with the money?

Mr. Davis advised Mr. Trasak that he would respond to his questions.

David James, 709 North Eden Drive, Cayce, SC 29033 - I know that you are really shocked that I am coming here to testify against a tax increase. I would like to mention a couple of points here. First of all, I wanted to mention to those who I served on Council with and those of who didn't to tell you that we did a performance audit back in 1995 to determine the most efficient way to run the County. One of the recommendations of that performance audit was to have a regional library in the Swansea area and I'm disappointed to see that not only has that not happened over the years but apparently part of the millage increase is intended to build another library there that actually delivers services to the people in that area in a less efficient way, and I would hope that you would consider that when you vote. Another thing I wanted to talk to you about was the a couple of years ago there was a recreation referendum, a referendum for the recreation commission in the Irmo/Chapin recreation district and it was kind of held on a Saturday in the middle of May, or something like that. And there were a lot of people that were really angry about the way that referendum was pushed through and it did succeed in raising the taxes at that time. They got away with it, pretty much what happened. Well, after that happened, there was a referendum on a bond issue for the fire service that came up. Well, when that happened, the people who remembered what had happened with the recreation commission came out, it seemed to me that there was a backlash, and a really needed referendum for fire service was voted down. So when you think about raising taxes for something like the library, recreation commission, remember the whole County and that you have these other issues, not just that you have that money to spread around, and keeping the goodwill of the people to provide the services with the amount of taxes that are needed, you are going to have that backlash if you use a tax increase and talk about closing down libraries and things when we are really building libraries when that question comes up for the necessary human services like fire service and law enforcement and things like that. And if you go through with this tax increase, you will stand alone with the school districts in doing so because the federal government has cut our taxes, the state government has held the line on taxes this year and you alone, the school districts, of course, will be raising taxes on the poor property owners. One other thing that I would like to mention is that I heard somebody mention something about having a survey. Well, that used to be the law in Lexington County that before you could raise taxes that you had to go to the people and hold a referendum. And what a good idea that would be this year with a service, that is not a vital service like law enforcement or fire service, to go back to the people and hold a referendum and if we are going to have to cut our budgets, so you have to cut yours, well, let's go ahead and ask the people

in a referendum if that's what we really want to do. Thank you.

Chairman Davis stated this concludes all who had signed up in opposition of the millage increase for the Lexington County Library.

Mr. Davis opened the meeting for public comments from those in favor and in opposition of the one (1) mill increase for the Lexington County General Fund.

The following chose not to speak but stated they support the one (1) mill increase.

Bob Rightsell
Connie Breeden
Esta Wetherley
Barron Hite
Pamela Dukes
Sherin Lindler
Cherry Cato
Debbie McDaniels
Teresa Akins
Rick Hubbard
Jeff Burkett
Zeddie Crouch
Gale Crouch
Jonathan Harling
David Reynolds
Shannon Yerace
Angie Wadekind
Bobbi Dawn Inabnit
John Shutt
Stephen Burn
Marion Moses
Larry Wedekind
Matt Martin
Rob Madsen
Ann Davidson

Donald V. Myers - I made a report to the Justice Committee on May 11 to outline to them where we were, what problems we had. Fifth largest County behind Charleston, Columbia, Spartanburg, and Greenville. Some of the smaller counties have a staff that we are envious of. And I told you, it's not your fault, it's our fault because we haven't asked for resources over the years. And we have been trying to keep our head above water and get a little air now and then but it's passed that now. We are sinking and we are sinking fast. We can only provide the services that we have the resources to commit to. I heard the words tonight "fat and waste." The only fat the Solicitor's office has is my

stomach and the only waste is the hair coming off my head because that is how it is. We are working people pretty hard even though we have units, our family court staff disposes more cases than Richland County but I can't ask these folks to keep doing that. We are going to have a new docketing system coming out. It is going to call on people working putting together files, communications; I tell you right now we are not complying with the Victim Witness law because we just don't have the staff. We just don't have the resources. Here again, it is not your fault, it is my fault. And I can't ask them anymore to work as they have been because they are putting in the hours, they are putting in the time, I don't want them to turn out like I am; fat, bald, and people say I'm looney as a bedbug. I want them to keep their sanity. But, I wish some of those folks would have stayed here earlier because we've prosecuted cases of unborn children as victims. The last death penalty case we prosecuted, a four-month old baby was murdered. Had a case out of Batesburg/Leesville a woman 87 years old murdered. That is just the death penalty cases. That's not the other crimes. We represent them from birth to the grave, young and old, male/female, black or white. From Swansea and Pelion to Irmo and Chapin. From Batesburg/Leesville, Cayce/West Columbia and all in between it's our job. We are just asking and begging from you for the resources to carry out our responsibilities to these victims that these victims truly desire. Everybody wants cases disposed of in a rapid manner and they are entitled to that. We can't do that right now folks. We have a tremendous backlog that we are going to attack, we have a lot of victims that need their day in court and we humbly ask for your assistance to allow us to do that. Thank you so much for your time. Thank you so much for your patience. I know you have tough decisions whether it is a millage increase or whether it is reserve. But, with your help we will do it. I know tough decisions have to be made but we are doing some tough things on our own right now. Thank you.

Anthony Davis - I am here on behalf of my mother-in-law, Pearl McNeil, she was murdered September 23, 2002 and we haven't had justice yet and we support the millage increase.

Bob Wolf, Calks Ferry Rd., Lexington, SC 29073 - My wife was shot and killed three years ago along with two others and justice was served last month and I just want to say that Pam Dukes and Solicitor Myers did a real fine job in helping my family and I and I do support them.

Rita Davis, 994 Meadowfield Road, Gaston, SC 29053 - My mother was murdered September 23, 2002. I am Anthony Davis' wife and I am waiting for justice and I am very thrilled to have Donnie Myers and his team backing us up because I know justice will be served eventually.

Jana Baxley - In 1997 a Lexington County Sheriff Deputy Coroner stood in my home telling me my 18 year-old son, Corey Sovick, had been murdered. Fortunately, the murderer was in custody and one of my requests to them was "when will we go to trial." I vividly remember the shocking reply of three to four years, if you are lucky. And we were thrown into that unknown to us "world" of the judicial system. I can't believe I would ever say thank God Corey was murdered in Lexington County, but I said those words. You must know how fortunate we are to have Donnie Myers, one of the very best prosecutors in this whole country, and his hardworking and dedicated most excellent staff. They probably have the most stressful jobs and the most important jobs of any jobs that I have ever known. Earlier we stood in here and pledged our allegiance to the United States of America

and spoke the words “with justice for all,” and as a crime victim I can’t tell you how much that means to be able to receive that justice. You must protect the citizens of Lexington County and get these criminals off the streets. You or your loved one may be next victim. Thank you.

Chairman Davis stated this concludes all who had signed up in favor of the millage increase for the Lexington County General Fund.

Chairman Davis opened the meeting for comments from those in opposition.

Doug Bouknight, 119 East Circle Drive, Lexington, SC 29072 - Stated he would use his previous comments that he presented during the Lexington County Library millage increase request.

Chairman Davis stated this concludes all who had signed up in opposition of the millage increase for the Lexington County General Fund.

Chairman Davis opened the meeting for comments on the Indigent Care Fund. He noted that no one had signed up in favor or in opposition to the proposed millage increase. Chairman Davis stated that these monies were mandated by state law and for fiscal year 2004-05, the increase necessary to fund the Indigent Care Fund was over the consumer price index amount.

There being no one to speak in favor or in opposition to the proposed increase, Chairman Davis closed the comment period.

Consideration of Millage Increases:

Lexington County Library - Chairman Davis opened the meeting for motions regarding the Library millage increase.

A motion was made by Mr. Wilkerson and seconded by Mr. Rucker that the Library millage be increased by one (1) mill.

Chairman Davis opened the meeting for discussion.

Mr. Rucker stated that he believed the only two people currently on Council when the bonds were issued were Mr. Wilkerson and himself. He stated that at that particular time, Council was told that the bonds would be issued to improve or build libraries - new libraries in Lexington and Irmo, perhaps one in Gilbert, expansion in Batesburg. Mr. Rucker stated that he was told that one library would be constructed in Gaston, which was done and was also told that when the money became available a library would be built in Pelion and later on one in Swansea. He stated knowing that County Councils change, you don’t always get those votes when it comes time, however, that was what was agreed to and he would have to stand by that commitment. Mr. Rucker stated that the one mill increase was not to build a library in Swansea, it was to operate the current library system, the increase would not be used to build any new or additional libraries. He stated that if any new or

additional libraries were to be built it would have to occur at a different date and a different time.

A motion was made by Mr. Owens to amend the motion to one-half mill. He stated the library caretakers appeared before Council and indicated that \$318,000 was needed to carry on the services being provided and one-half mill would produce the \$318,000. The amendment was seconded by Mr. Cullum.

Chairman Davis opened the meeting for discussion on the amendment.

An amendment was offered to the amendment by Mr. Derrick that \$150,000 be appropriated from fund balance for FY 04-05 to fund books or technology, whichever was needed by the system. He stated that the state continues to cut the library funding which has placed the system in a bind. Mr. Derrick stated that a lot of what Council was being asked for was directly attributable to funding that had been received from the state; monies that were there at some point in time and trimmed and cut and aid to the library was one of those things. Seconded by Mr. Cullum.

Mr. Owens asked if this was in addition to the half mill.

Mr. Derrick responded yes.

Mr. Rucker stated that according to state law if the county funds the library an additional half mill and \$150,000, \$300,000 or \$500,000, the county will have to fund the library at the same level next year or the library will be cut by the state. Therefore, if we fund them a half mill this year and \$150,000 then we would have to continue the half mill plus the additional \$150,000, or whatever it takes to make that budget.

Mr. Cullum stated that was the very question he raised during Council's last meeting. He said he was assured that that was not true but that it applied only to the Sheriff's Department budget.

Mr. Rucker stated there are two different issues here. First you cannot cut the Sheriff's budget, you don't have that option, but you do have the option of not funding the library.

Mr. Cullum replied, he understood. However, as he understood from Mr. Rucker that he has the option of not funding it next year.

Mr. Rucker replied, that's right.

Mr. Cullum said he again asked if Council funded the library at a certain level does that have to be maintained forward and was assured at that time, no.

Mr. Rucker stated if we don't fund it at the same level, then the state will more than likely, can, or will cut the funding.

Mr. Cullum asked when did that revelation come about.

Mr. Rucker stated it is law. He did not know if it was a revelation.

Mr. Cullum stated it was a revelation to him because he has never heard it.

Mr. Wilkerson stated when the libraries were built seven years ago, Council promised the library if they used their fund balance and when the time came they needed an increase that Council would live by their word and give them the increase they needed. He said things have changed and members of Council have changed, but there are some members still on Council who were on Council at the time the promise was made. He stated he was not going to go back on his word and he will not vote for any of the amendments. They have done what we have asked them to for seven years and they have done a great job. They do a lot now with less and we shouldn't keep giving them less and less. They are asking for one (1) mill which is about \$7 - \$8 on a \$100,000 house and he did not think the request was unreasonable. He stated he doesn't like taxes anymore than anybody else and said if he votes for the increase, he will have to pay the tax increase as well, but, would not go back on his word and feels the one (1) mill is needed.

Mr. Owens stated if \$150,000 was approved that it would be close to the one (1) mill that was requested.

Mr. Cullum stated that would be a one time expenditure but needed clarification if it is for a one time expenditure or continuously.

Mr. Derrick replied, one time expenditure but asked for an explanation of the law.

Mr. Anderson, County attorney, stated state regulations indicate that if you provide funding one year in the subsequent year they possibly can reduce state funding if you don't provide it, whether it is by mill or through fund balance. In the state regulation, the state funding says that you shall provide it at no lesser rate than the second proceeding year, indicating they won't give you the state funding.

Mr. Derrick withdrew his amendment; Mr. Cullum withdrew his second.

Mr. Cullum stated during comments received for the library, he did not recall anyone asking Council to build additional libraries but did hear that several municipalities in the County share one library and would be in support of a regional library in that area of the County. He said he did not know that he could support two independent man-run operations in that area of the County. He said he realizes there were previous promises made but he would rather use taxpayers' money to make a regional library in that area and made that known earlier. He said he supports the library system and its members but was told they needed enough money to stay solvent to operate without cutting services and said he did not believe it would be a good use of taxpayers' dollars to build independent libraries in every small community but would be in support of a half mill to keep their operation intact.

Mr. Carrigg stated he was not on Council at the time the bonds were issued but was on Council during the library construction and recalls the Library Board requesting from a five (5) mill increase to operate the libraries. He stated Council at that time asked the Library Board to spend the fund balance first in hopes that growth and the increased tax base would eventually fantail together, which it about did because the request is for one (1) mill as opposed to the five (5). Mr. Carrigg congratulated the Board members, present and prior, for their excellent conservative job and said he remembers Council promising the Board members that when the time came they would support them and would stand by that commitment. Mr. Carrigg stated what concerns him is this increase has been tied by its opponents to a building project in the County but has been assured that is not the case and the money is needed solely to continue operations at the current level, therefore, he will be supportive. He stated if that were not the case, those in opposition would have a good point about increasing millage to build another library because that was done with the bonds and he stated he feels the citizens will support the library's ongoing operations but not for building projects with millage.

Mr. Owens stated a half mill would exceed the amount they said would be required, \$318,000.

Mr. Davis stated there was an amendment of one-half mill for operations of the library and called for the vote.

Vote on Amendment - one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) mill

In Favor:	Mr. Davis	Mr. Owens
	Mr. Cullum	Mr. Derrick
	Mr. Keisler	

Opposed:	Mr. Rucker	Mr. Wilkerson
	Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Carrigg

Vote on Motion as Amended - one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) mill

In Favor:	Mr. Davis	Mr. Derrick
	Mr. Keisler	Mr. Owens
	Mr. Cullum	

Opposed:	Mr. Rucker	Mr. Wilkerson
	Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Carrigg

Mr. Davis stated the next issue was the General Fund concerning the Solicitor's office.

A motion was made by Mr. Owens and seconded by Mr. Carrigg to fund the necessary amount out of fund balance.

Mr. Davis indicated that more departments were involved than just the Solicitor's - included were recommendations from the Planning and Administration Committee, the Justice Committee, and

Health and Human Services Committee.

Mr. Carrigg withdrew his second.

Mr. Davis asked if Council wanted to consider individually.

Mr. Carrigg commented that he was just withdrawing his second.

Mr. Owens withdrew his motion in order to consider items individually.

Mr. Owens stated that because all the items were tied to the General Fund, he would make a motion to use General Fund money to fund the items.

Mr. Davis asked Mr. Owens if the number was \$1,063,789.

Mr. Owens responded, exactly.

Mr. Davis commented, from the fund balance.

Mr. Owens stated that would be about 20% of the fund balance.

Mr. Davis replied, that is your motion.

Mr. Wilkerson asked to speak.

Mr. Davis replied, we don't have a second.

Mr. Wilkerson replied, never mind.

Mr. Derrick stated for clarification he was under the impression Council voted during the last Council meeting to approve the EMS items out of fund balance, \$237,500. There were capital items to be taken out of fund balance and asked whether that was approved as part of the minutes.

Mr. Wilkerson replied, he didn't make that motion, but thought that was correct.

Mr. Davis asked if it was done in committee or here.

Mr. Wilkerson replied, no, it was done out here.

Mr. Cullum replied, full body.

Mr. Davis asked for a review of the minutes.

Mr. Porth replied, all the items that you considered under Council are here not knowing whether you are to consider any of these out of millage or fund balance. You still have to have a final vote on the budget.

Mr. Derrick replied, he thought we already addressed EMS.

Mr. Porth replied, you did that as a Committee of the Whole. I just didn't want somebody tonight to say something should have been a millage action and not be on the agenda.

Mr. Davis replied, we are going to reconsider it tonight.

Mr. Owens withdrew his motion.

Mr. Owens made a motion, seconded by Mr. Carrigg to fund \$535,000 for the Solicitor's office out of fund balance.

Mr. Jeffcoat asked what are we going to do about the rest of the items.

Mr. Owens replied, we are going to vote as we go along.

Mr. Jeffcoat replied, alright.

Mr. Cullum asked if the \$535,000 is the total of personnel.

Mr. Jeffcoat asked Solicitor Myers if that is for (1) one attorney and seven (7) case managers.

Solicitor Myers replied, we requested three (3) lawyers, reduced to one plus (2) victim witness positions, reduced to one and seven (7) case managers.

Mr. Owens asked if the \$535,000 figure is correct.

Mr. Porth replied in that figure is the one (1) attorney position that came out of the committee and seven (7) case managers.

Mr. Carrigg replied, that's right.

Mr. Jeffcoat replied, no victim witness person, which is how much.

Mr. Carrigg commented that he was under the impression that Victim Witness was carrying its own.

Mr. Porth replied the two (2) victim witness counselors requested out of the general fund is about \$100,000.

Solicitor Myers stated, budgeted for two (2) victim witness and we dropped that down to one.

Mr. Jeffcoat replied, right.

Solicitor Myers stated, three (3) attorneys dropped it down to one.

Mr. Jeffcoat replied, right.

Solicitor Myers stated, seven (7) case managers. He stated he did not know the figures but that is the total number of personnel.

Mr. Rucker commented if we are going to take it out of fund balance then we are going to hire these individuals, correct.

Solicitor Myers replied, we would love to hire these people.

Mr. Rucker asked what are we going to do next year, take it out of fund balance again?

Mr. Owens replied, it depends on what the fund balance is. Do you know what it is going to be?

Mr. Rucker replied, no, I don't know what it's going to be. Mr. Rucker stated we could be taking money out next year and it could be worse than it is right now.

Mr. Owens replied, well then we deal with that then.

Mr. Wilkerson stated Council talked about this the other day and stated he is strictly against using fund balance for reoccurring costs because if you look at other governmental entities you will find out that that is why they can't balance their budget now because they keep taking money they don't have and they keep saying we will find it later and then when later comes, there is none to find. A prime example of that is what we just talked about a few minutes ago, the library. They have been using their fund balance for five or six years. Guess what? There is no money left now then they come and ask for a mill; we can't do that for them. He stated he is strictly against using fund balance money for costs that are reoccurring. He stated fund balance is great to use and we need to use it but we don't need to use it for personnel costs, etc. because in the next few years if you continue to do that, this County is going to be broke.

Mr. Carrigg stated the only reason he would support this is because this is a new program that is being implemented by the state. Mr. Carrigg stated the Solicitor has asked us to fund it and we do have undesignated reserve funds and we should at least deplete those prior to enacting a tax increase on the taxpayers. Therefore, I would be more in favor of depleting some of those funds for a year or two before passing on this cost to the taxpayers. He stated this may not be the best management in the world but it is not a matter of looking for the money; we know it's there and we know where it is. He stated we should spend at least some of that before we pass on any increase to the taxpayers.

From his understanding this is a court administration mandated program for the Solicitor's office, which is fast-tracking of criminal cases in order to get the backlog of cases down in Lexington County. Maybe there will be some alternate funding next year, maybe there won't, but we have the money right now to afford it and we don't have to pass it on to the taxpayers at this time.

Mr. Owens commented this \$535,000 represents less than 10 percent of what I have been told is fund balance. It has never been under \$7,000,000 according to the CAFRs he has looked at. So, we are talking about less than 10 percent and asked why would you want to pass along a tax increase when you have money there. He stated if we don't use it, let's send it back to the people. It's too much money there; we don't need that much money.

Mr. Derrick stated prior Councils were frugal and did an excellent job in accumulating the funds over a period of twenty years. He stated there are a couple of landfills in the County right now that there is a strong possibility that a large amount of money will have to be spent on them to close them out or remediate and agreed with Mr. Owens if we want to spend the fund balance then we need to pay down the library, detention center, new courthouse, etc. but let's not spend it on reoccurring expenses that we know we will have in four or five years. We know it going to happen.

Mr. Owens stated he sees very little difference in raising taxes when you need to raise taxes than what is going on now. Why let that money stay in reserve and raise taxes. Obviously, you don't need it, you wouldn't have it in reserves. He stated if you need to raise taxes to acquire some reserve do it then. Why tax people now when you have \$6 - \$7,000,000 sitting in fund balance that is doing nobody any good. If you don't use it for services, send it back to the people.

Mr. Davis stated the motion is \$535,993 for the Solicitor's office out of the fund balance.

In Favor:	Mr. Owens	Mr. Carrigg
	Mr. Keisler	Mr. Jeffcoat

Opposed:	Mr. Davis	Mr. Derrick
	Mr. Rucker	Mr. Cullum
	Mr. Wilkerson	

Motion fails.

Mr. Davis asked for a motion on the Coroner's budget.

Mr. Jeffcoat stated this needed to be settled and asked if one and one-half (1 ½) or two (2) mills were needed.

Mr. Davis replied the millage needed for the Justice Committee recommendations was 1.35.

Mr. Jeffcoat made a motion, seconded by Mr. Keisler to increase the millage 1.35 to support the

Solicitor's Office, the Coroner's office, Probate Court, Magistrate Court Services, and Circuit Court Services.

Mr. Davis opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Jeffcoat Mr. Owens	Mr. Keisler
Opposed:	Mr. Davis Mr. Derrick Mr. Carrigg	Mr. Rucker Mr. Wilkerson Mr. Cullum

Motion fails.

Mr. Davis stated in the Planning & Administration Committee is the Treasurer, Registration & Elections, and County Council \$5,430 and asked for a motion.

Mr. Davis stated EMS has a request of \$237,500 for capital items.

Mr. Wilkerson asked, we have already taken care of that, haven't we.

Mr. Davis replied, we have to vote on that tonight.

Mr. Davis asked for any motions to be considered.

Mr. Derrick made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cullum to take the money out of fund balance for the capital items for EMS.

Mr. Davis opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Davis Mr. Derrick Mr. Carrigg Mr. Cullum	Mr. Rucker Mr. Wilkerson Mr. Owens
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Opposed: Mr. Keisler

Abstain: Mr. Jeffcoat

Motion carries.

Mr. Carrigg made a motion to fund the committee recommendations from fund balance. The other committee recommendations aside from EMS.

Mr. Owens asked what is that.

Mr. Davis asked, Justice Committee and Planning & Administration?

Mr. Carrigg replied, correct.

Mr. Owens made a second.

Mr. Davis replied to fund from fund balance. A total of \$826,000 from fund balance.

Mr. Davis opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Carrigg	Mr. Owens
	Mr. Keisler	Mr. Jeffcoat
Opposed:	Mr. Davis	Mr. Derrick
	Mr. Rucker	Mr. Wilkerson
	Mr. Cullum	

Motion fails.

Mr. Davis asked if there are other motions for consideration.

Mr. Jeffcoat asked is there absolutely no way we are going to fund the departments' needs. He stated we are not going to spend the money we have on hand; we are not going to raise taxes and we have people crying for help. He stated the best and most popular thing to do is to vote no on everything.

Mr. Davis asked if Council wanted to consider separately the Coroner's Office, Probate Court, and Magistrates Court Services.

Mr. Wilkerson asked to move forward to the Lexington County Recreation and Aging Commission and come back to this budget.

Mr. Davis replied, we can.

Mr. Davis opened the floor to consider a motion for the Lexington County Recreation and Aging Commission.

Mr. Cullum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wilkerson for a one (1) mill increase.

Mr. Davis opened the meeting for discussion.

Mr. Derrick made a motion to amend the motion that the one (1) mill be used for Meals on Wheels

programs first with any remaining amount to be used for anything else.

Mr. Owens commented, he didn't think Council could control that. He stated this body is appointed by the Delegation.

Mr. Carrigg seconded the motion for discussion.

Mr. Carrigg stated he agreed. He said we fund them and they can follow our advice or not.

Mr. Derrick stated he would like to give them the advice because all the comments he received tonight including Senator Knotts were about Meals on Wheels.

Mr. Wilkerson replied, most were.

Mr. Derrick replied, you are right. He said a few did speak on sports, etc. but wanted to make sure that he did not get calls from individuals who are hungry and we are still doing other things.

Vote on Amendment:

In Favor:	Mr. Davis	Mr. Derrick
	Mr. Cullum	Mr. Rucker
	Mr. Wilkerson	Mr. Keisler
	Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Carrigg
	Mr. Owens	

Vote on Motion as Amended:

In Favor:	Mr. Davis	Mr. Cullum
	Mr. Wilkerson	Mr. Rucker
	Mr. Derrick	Mr. Keisler
	Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Carrigg
	Mr. Owens	

Senator Knotts stated Council's wishes will be carried out by the Lexington County Recreation and Aging Commission.

A motion was made by Mr. Owens, seconded by Mr. Cullum to approve .44 mill increase for Indigent Care.

Mr. Davis opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

Mr. Owens stated to his understanding Council has no control; this is by State statute.

Mr. Davis replied, it should be done by millage because it is reoccurring and asked if that is the motion.

Mr. Owens replied, yes.

In Favor:	Mr. Davis	Mr. Owens
	Mr. Cullum	Mr. Derrick
	Mr. Keisler	Mr. Jeffcoat
	Mr. Carrigg	

Opposed:	Mr. Rucker	Mr. Wilkerson
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Motion carries.

Mr. Jeffcoat made a motion, seconded by Mr. Keisler to approve one (1) mill for the Solicitor's Office and fund Magistrate Court Services out of Fund Balance.

Mr. Owens asked we are going to take one (1) for the Solicitor (\$535,000).

Mr. Jeffcoat replied, \$600,000. He stated Solicitor Myers has asked for one (1) victim witness which was not included in the \$535,000. He stated the Solicitor asked for two (2) but reduced it down to one (1).

Mr. Owens asked the Magistrates is \$162,000.

Mr. Cullum asked what Council is going to do with Circuit Court, Probate, and Coroner. Are we going to address it or leave it on the table.

Mr. Davis replied, we can address it after this motion or amend this motion.

Mr. Cullum stated he was asking what Council was going to do with the remaining items in the Justice Committee.

Mr. Jeffcoat commented, we are going to come back to that.

Mr. Cullum asked if Magistrate Court Services is out of fund balance.

Mr. Davis stated that is the motion and a one (1) mill increase for the Solicitor.

Mr. Cullum asked if he could amend the motion.

Mr. Carrigg stated during the Justice Committee he had Victim Witness as being zeroed out. He stated the committee did not recommend a new victim witness position.

Mr. Davis replied that Mr. Porth has confirmed that being the committee recommendation.

Mr. Carrigg stated he has supported the Solicitor's office but if the Committee did not recommend the victim witness position why would we be funding it now.

Mr. Jeffcoat asked Mr. Carrigg to restate his comments.

Mr. Carrigg stated at the committee level, according to his notes, the victim witness request was zeroed out. He stated he had checks beside everything that was recommended by the committee for funding and zeros by items not approved and victim witness was not recommended to full Council.

Mr. Jeffcoat replied, cut it out. Take that off my motion.

Mr. Davis replied, your motion is for a one (1) mill increase.

Mr. Carrigg replied, general millage would have to be increased by one (1) because there is no "Solicitor's millage" right now.

Mr. Jeffcoat replied to make sure the position (victim witness) was cut out you can give the Solicitor \$535,993 and the remainder to the Coroner's budget.

Mr. Keisler seconded.

Mr. Cullum asked for clarification of the motion.

Mr. Davis replied, Mr. Jeffcoat is asking for one (1) mill for the Solicitor's budget, Coroner's budget, and take Magistrate Court Services out of fund balance.

Mr. Jeffcoat replied, that's correct.

Mr. Carrigg asked about Probate Court and Circuit Court Services.

Mr. Davis replied that's not in the motion.

Mr. Davis asked if there was further discussion on the motion.

Mr. Cullum stated Solicitor and Coroner.

Mr. Davis replied, right.

Mr. Jeffcoat replied and Magistrate Court Services.

Mr. Davis replied, raising taxes by one (1) mill and taking \$162,000 out of the fund balance.

In Favor: Mr. Jeffcoat Mr. Keisler

Mr. Wilkerson	Mr. Carrigg
Mr. Owens	

Opposed:	Mr. Davis	Mr. Derrick
	Mr. Rucker	Mr. Cullum

Motion passes.

Mr. Carrigg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Owens to fund the remaining committee recommendations out of fund balance for Circuit Court Services and Probate.

Mr. Davis opened the meeting for discussion.

Mr. Cullum replied Circuit Court Services and Probate out of fund balance and stated Probate is reoccurring personnel expense.

Mr. Davis replied, that's correct.

Mr. Carrigg replied it is a theoretical hypocrisy according to the way we have been voting but in order to finish the budget....

Mr. Davis asked if there was further discussion on the motion; none occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Carrigg	Mr. Owens
	Mr. Keisler	Mr. Jeffcoat

Opposed:	Mr. Davis	Mr. Rucker
	Mr. Derrick	Mr. Wilkerson
	Mr. Cullum	

Motion fails.

Mr. Davis asked if there were any additional motions for Coroner and Circuit Court Services. If not they will be left out of the budget.

Mr. Cullum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Derrick to fund \$3,000 for Circuit Court Services out of fund balance. He stated this is an expense for materials to operate Circuit Court Services.

Mr. Owens replied, it's reoccurring expenses.

Mr. Davis opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Cullum	Mr. Derrick
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Mr. Davis	Mr. Keisler
Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Carrigg

Opposed:	Mr. Rucker	Mr. Wilkerson
	Mr. Owens	

Motion carries.

Mr. Carrigg made a motion, seconded by Mr. Owens to fund committee recommendations from fund balance.

Mr. Carrigg stated the previous vote on Magistrate Court Services of \$162,000 had approximately \$40,000 in reoccurring costs.

Mr. Derrick stated he was sure that Magistrate Court Services would run either way.

Mr. Jeffcoat asked as far as Magistrate Court Services is concerned that he would like to see that as a dead issue for the time being.

Mr. Jeffcoat asked for a repeat of the motion.

Mr. Davis replied the motion is to take \$36,621 for Probate Court from fund balance.

Mr. Davis called for the question.

In Favor:	Mr. Carrigg	Mr. Owens
	Mr. Keisler	Mr. Jeffcoat

Opposed:	Mr. Davis	Mr. Derrick
	Mr. Rucker	Mr. Wilkerson
	Mr. Cullum	

Motion fails.

Mr. Cullum asked if there is a motion for the Treasurer and Registration and Elections Commission requests totaling \$5,430.

Mr. Cullum asked if the requests are for non-personnel items.

Mr. Davis replied, correct, most of them.

Mr. Cullum stated Registration and Elections Commission is for a part-time employee.

Mr. Davis replied, you are right. A part-time person.

Mr. Derrick made a motion, seconded by Mr. Carrigg to fund the Treasurer and Registration Elections Commission from fund balance.

Mr. Davis opened the meeting for discussion.

Mr. Jeffcoat made an amendment to the motion to include \$3,000 for an expense account for incidental costs for the Lexington Delegation; seconded by Mr. Carrigg.

Vote on the Amendment:

In Favor:	Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Carrigg
	Mr. Keisler	

Opposed:	Mr. Davis	Mr. Derrick
	Mr. Rucker	Mr. Wilkerson
	Mr. Owens	Mr. Cullum

Amendment fails.

Original Motion

In Favor:	Mr. Davis	Mr. Derrick
	Mr. Carrigg	Mr. Wilkerson
	Mr. Keisler	Mr. Jeffcoat
	Mr. Owens	Mr. Cullum

Opposed: Mr. Rucker

There be no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy K. Black
Clerk

George H. Smokey
Chairman

Diana W. Burnett
Asst. Clerk to Council