

COMMITTEE OF THE FLORENCE COUNTY COUNCIL ON CITY-COUNTY CONFERENCE, THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 2024, 8:30 A.M., IN THE ADMINISTRATION CONFERENCE ROOM, ROOM 802, OF THE COUNTY COMPLEX, FLORENCE, SOUTH CAROLINA

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jerry Yarborough, Committee Co-Chairman
C. William Schofield, Committee Member
Waymon Mumford, Committee Member
Mayor Teresa Myers-Ervin, Committee Co-Chair
J. Lawrence Smith, Committee Member
Bryan Braddock, Committee Member
Kevin Yokim, County Administrator
Hope M. Jones, Clerk to Council

OTHERS PRESENT:

Shannon Munoz, Deputy Administrator
Scotty Davis, Interim City Manager of Florence
Randy Osterman, Former City Manager of Florence
Tyler Fedor, Post & Courier Editor

The notice of the meeting and copies of the meeting Agenda were posted in the lobby of the County Complex and provided to the media and others requesting copies of meeting agendas in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act requirements for notice of meetings.

Committee Co-Chairman Yarborough called the meeting to order. Councilman Mumford provided the invocation and Councilman Schofield led the Pledge of Allegiance.

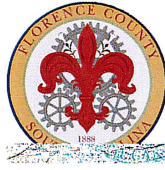
APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Schofield made a motion to approve the Minutes of the August 10, 2023, meeting. Councilman Mumford seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

DISCUSSION

MEMORIAL STADIUM:

Mr. Yokim stated Florence School District One no longer needs the facility. The lease with School District One was \$5,000 a year but as they made improvements that went towards the payment. The lease was through to the year 2035 and now that there are football stadiums at each high school there is not a need. School District One stated they no longer



needed the facility after December 31, 2023. The City might have an interest.

Mayor Ervin stated they needed to find out the owner of the facility. During the process, it was learned the City and County have ownership. There is a youth football league utilizing Byrnes Academy and is interested in using the stadium.

Councilman Braddock stated it is a 50/50 ownership between the City and County. A question was raised if the parking lot was included. Mr. Yokim stated to the east of the driveway, and north of the baseball sign. The parking lot is owned by the airport.

Co-Chairman Yarborough inquired to Mayor Ervin if a lease was given by the youth league. Mayor Ervin state no lease was given because the youth league and School District One were trying to figure out the ownership. School District One relinquished their lease because they were not using the facility and the youth league is already using some of School District's property.

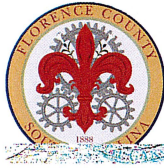
Councilman Braddock asked who maintained the facility. Mayor Ervin stated when it was in operation the maintenance was in-kind work. Councilman Braddock said the maintenance will have to be split with the City and County. Councilman Schofield said he would like to see a cost estimate for maintaining the stadium. Mayor Ervin stated we can retrieve a lot of the information from the school district. Councilman Smith said the expectations with the youth league would be for them to maintain the facility. Mayor Ervin stated it would be in the negotiations to see what is feasible. (Both sides to say their expectations.) Councilman Braddock agreed with Councilman Schofield's sentiment on finding out how much it would cost to maintain the facility and possibly get an appraisal. Mayor Ervin said after the appraisal is complete, let's give the first option to the youth league for purchasing. Let's look at all options, leasing or selling then pursue.

Councilman Schofield mentioned he has met with the Memorial Stadium Commission and they do not want to discuss until the school district is done with the facility according to the Chair of the Memorial Stadium Commission.

Mayor Ervin stated the process started over a year ago in finding out the ownership of the stadium. Councilman Braddock asked would the appraisal cost be split between the City and County and who will take lead on the maintenance cost evaluation? Chairman Yarborough said to start with the appraisal and then move forward. Mr. Yokim stated he would contact the school district to get information on the maintenance. Councilman Smith stated that an evaluation of the field is needed before getting into an lease agreement.

FLORENCE CENTER

Mayor Ervin stated the State is willing to donate hedges for around the ridgeway but will it will not until August. Mayor Ervin inquired if the Committee wanted to do something temporary but there is a commitment from the State from the Keep America Beautiful Funds. The City/ County would be responsible for planting the hedges.



FLORENCE SIGNAGE

Chairman Yarborough stated the Florence sign is on the Florence Interstate. The City is improving I20 and I95. The County would like to work with the City and have joint signage using both City and County seals. Mayor Ervin said that it is feasible. The City, County, Economic Development, and Downtown Development can work together. Hannah with Downtown Development Corporation has started the process. Randy Osterman stated the interest of the City in improving the intersection is predicated on grant funding.

HOLIDAY EVENTS:

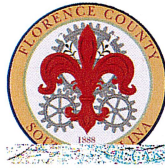
Chairman Yarborough referenced the Christmas and Trunk or Treat events. The County would like to work with the City in coordinating having events on the same date so that the citizens can get the benefit of both. Mayor Ervin said Hannah, with the Downtown Development Corporation, coordinates the events and it is feasible. Randy Osterman said the events for the 2024 calendar have been approved and they will share the information with the County.

HIGHWAY 76 CORRIDOR:

Chairman Yarborough stated this is the corridor from Hwy 52 to Francis Marion University and expanding it from Hwy 76 & Hwy 327 to I95. Mr. Yokim mentioned the County worked with Toole Design as a consultant to assist with zoning from Levy Park to Francis Marion and the intersection of Hwy 76 to Hwy 327 to the interstate. The Planning Department sent letters to the property owners and surrounding properties and signage has been posted. The Planning Commission meeting is on January 23, 2024, and the City is welcome to come to the meeting. Councilman Braddock said he would like the Hwy 76, Timmonsville side included in the process. Chairman Yarborough stated the County is aware and has it to be addressed after they complete the project.

JOINT RETREAT:

Chairman Yarborough referenced the retreat the County Council had in November and thought it was productive. Chairman Yarborough learned the City had a retreat and it was good. Chairman Yarborough thought it was if the City and the County would come together and have a retreat. It would be for one day and the City and the County would come together to discuss their hardships they have in common and it will be an open forum. Councilman Schofield thought the City and the County could form a set of ideas or solutions to problems they both have and both can identify target items they can achieve and to build the cohesiveness even stronger than what is currently. Mayor Ervin stated she believe it is a good idea for the City and County to come together because it will be more of an extension of what the Committee is doing; to have an established agenda and to present items from both areas. All committee members were in agreement of having a retreat. Councilman Braddock suggested having a third-party facilitator for the retreat. Mr. Yokim stated he would coordinate with Mr. Davis for dates. Mr. Yokim asked them to provide names of a facilitator for the retreat.



WATER/SEWER MAINTENANCE:

Mr. Osterman stated he formed a task force of both internal/external water experts. The task force meets every two weeks. A quick root cause analysis narrowed down the cause was the two water plants on Alligator Road and South Florence. We have worked over the last few months to change the entire treatment process at the Alligator Road Plant. South Florence was down due to pumps. The plant should be back up by the end of next week. Mr. Osterman said the water complaints have dropped drastically. Mr. Osterman said we are holding certain people accountable for making sure things are done and it seems to be moving in the right direction.

TAP FEES:

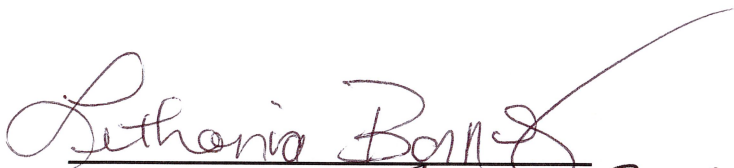
Chairman Yarborough stated the Tap Fees would be the cost between the City and the County residents. Councilman Braddock stated the city/county residents cannot afford it. Councilman Braddock said an item that is an issue is the City with water and the County with roads. The City does not have anything on the budget for road repair and has discrepancies with water tap fees. Councilman Braddock said Water Tap Fees annually equal half a million dollars. The City's budget in order to reduce the amount, Councilman Braddock's suggestion is the County would provide \$500k towards road work in the city. Councilman Braddock believes this would ease some of the tension on these two major issues but it could mitigate the financial loss and on the City side help with road work that we don't have. Councilman Braddock mentioned the County has an avenue with the vehicle fee tax. Chairman Yarborough stated the vehicle fee tax is for the operations of maintenance. Mr. Yokim stated Public Works is solely funded by road system maintenance fees and for maintaining county roads but we can discuss how to pave city roads.


GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Chairman Yarborough asked the committee if there were any other items to be discussed. All Committee members thought the meeting was positive and the City/County moving in the right direction.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Councilman Schofield made a motion to adjourn. Mayor Ervin seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:12 A.M.


Mayor ~~Ervin~~ Lethonia Bains
City-County Conference Committee Co-Chair


Councilman ~~Yarborough, Jr.~~
City-County Conference Committee Co-Chair
Chairman William Schofield