

**JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL  
JASPER COUNTY GOVERNMENT BUILDING  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
APRIL 29, 2009  
2:30 P.M.  
CALLED MEETING AND  
BUDGET WORKSHOP**

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:**

GEORGE HOOD, CHAIRMAN  
LEROY BLACKSHEAR, VICE CHAIRMAN  
HENRY ETHERIDGE, COUNCILMAN  
REV. SAMUEL GREGORY, COUNCILMAN  
HUBERT TYLER, COUNCILMAN

**STAFF PRESENT:**

ANDREW FULGHUM, ADMINISTRATOR  
RONNIE MALPHRUS, DEP. ADM. ADM. SERVICES  
DALE TERRY, DEP. ADM. ENG. SERVICES  
WILBUR DALEY, DEP. ADM. EMG. SERVICES  
WENDY KELLY, DEP. ADM. DEV. SERVICES  
JUDITH FRANK, CLERK TO COUNCIL  
MARVIN JONES, ATTORNEY

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT THE ELECTRONIC AND PRINT MEDIA WERE NOTIFIED.

DURING PERIODS OF DISCUSSION AND/OR PRESENTATIONS MINUTES ARE TYPICALLY CONDENSED AND PARAPHRASED.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

CHAIRMAN HOOD CALLED THE BUDGET WORKSHOP TO ORDER AT 2:30 P.M.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

CHAIRMAN HOOD LED THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

**INVOCATION:**

VICE CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR GAVE THE INVOCATION.

**RESOLUTION:**

**MARVIN JONES – RESOLUTION ORDERING A PUBLIC HEARING TO BE HELD ON THE QUESTION OF CREATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS FOR JASPER COUNTY INCLUDING AMENDMENT OF THE CHERRY POINT FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT, CREATION OF THE RURAL JASPER COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT,**

**AMENDMENT OF THE LEVY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT, CREATION OF THE RIDGELAND VICINITY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT, AND CREATION OF THE HARDEEVILLE VICINITY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT:**

MARVIN JONES EXPLAINED THAT IN ORDER TO MEET A TIME LINE, THE COUNCIL WOULD NEED TO PASS THE RESOLUTION SO THAT THE PUBLIC HEARING COULD BE ADVERTISED. MR. JONES SAID THAT THE PUBLIC HEARING HAD TO BE ADVERTISED THREE TIMES. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF THIS RESOLUTION WAS TO CREATE 3 FIRE DISTRICTS. MR. JONES SAID IT WOULD CREATE 5 DISTRICTS AS THE COUNTY CURRENTLY HAS THREE FIRE DISTRICTS. MR. JONES SAID THE ONLY AREA WITH A SPECIAL FIRE DISTRICT TAX IS CHERRY POINT. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF ANY OTHER DISTRICTS WERE CHECKED TO SEE IF OTHER DISTRICTS SHOULD BE ADDED. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THE OTHER DISTRICTS ARE COVERED UNDER THE RURAL JASPER DISTRICT. MR. MALPHRUS ASKED HOW THE LINES WOULD BE DRAWN TO CREATE THE DISTRICTS. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID MR. DALEY HAS A MAP THAT BASICALLY ADDRESSES THE AREAS THAT EACH STATION COVERS. MR. MALPHRUS SAID IT MAY SHOW THE AREAS, BUT THE MAP IS NOT EXACT. COUNCILMAN GREGORY ASKED WHAT WILL BE GAINED BY CREATING THE DISTRICTS. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT THE THREE NEW FIRE DISTRICTS WOULD BRING IN ABOUT \$670,000.00. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THAT THIS WOULD PUT ANOTHER TAX BURDEN ON THE CITIZENS IN THOSE AREAS. COUNCILMAN GREGORY ASKED HOW MUCH WOULD COME IN FROM THE FIVE FIRE DISTRICTS. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THE TAXES FROM THE CHERRY POINT DISTRICT GOES TO HARDEEVILLE AND THE COUNTY DOESN'T HAVE A SPECIAL TAX DISTRICT, THE SPECIAL TAX DISTRICTS PROPOSED ARE TO COVER THE COST OF THE FIRE CONTRACTS IN THOSE AREAS. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT IT IS LEGAL TO CREATE A FIRE DISTRICT AND A MIL VALUE WOULD BE CHARGED TO COVER THAT SERVICE. COUNCILMAN GREGEORY ASKED IF THE CITIZENS ARE GOING TO BE INFORMED ABOUT THE FIRE DISTRICT TAX AND MR. MALPHRUS SAID THE PROCESS WAS STARTING TODAY BY PASSING THE RESOLUTION TO HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING AND AFTER IT IS PASSED THE COUNTY WOULD HAVE TO ADVERTISE THE ACTION THAT WAS TAKEN. MARVIN JONES SAID THE PUBLIC HEARING WOULD BE ADVERTISED THREE TIMES. CHAIRMAN HOOD ASKED IF THIS WOULD MEET THE MANDATE OF LAW. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THE THREE AREAS UNDER CONSIDERATION ARE THE MOST DENSELY POPULATED AND THEY PAY MORE TAXES. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED WHY THE OTHER AREAS WERE NOT LOOKED AT AND THAT MR. FULGHUM TOLD HIM THAT HE WOULD LOOK INTO A SPECIAL FIRE TAX DISTRICT FOR ROBERTVILLE. MR. FULGHUM SAID HE REMEMBERED BEING ASKED, BUT HE DID NOT REMEMBER PROMISING TO ESTABLISH THAT. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THE CITIZENS OF ROBERTVILLE WANTED MORE FIRE PROTECTION. MR. FULGHUM SAID IT CAN BE LOOKED INTO AT ANY TIME.

MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT REGARDING THE AREAS IN QUESTION, THEY PAY A LARGER PERCENTAGE OF EVERYTHING BECAUSE OF THE POPULATION. VICE CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR MOTIONED AND CHAIRMAN HOOD SECONDED THE MOTION TO PASS THE RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING CREATING FIRE DISTRICTS BE ADVERTISED. THE MOTION FAILED. CHAIRMAN HOOD AND VICE CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR VOTED FOR; COUNCILMEN TYLER, GREGORY, AND ETHERIDGE VOTED AGAINST.

CHAIRMAN HOOD COMMENTED THAT HE HOPED THEY COULD COME UP WITH OTHER WAYS TO PRODUCE INCOME.

**BUDGET WORKSHOP:**

**VERNA GARVIN –TREASURER:**

VERNA GARVIN, TREASURER, TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT SHE HAS TWO FULL TIME POSITIONS IN HER OFFICE. MS. GARVIN SAID THAT ONE OF THE POSITIONS IS VACANT AND SHE WANTED TO HIRE THE TEMPORARY SHE HAS HAD WORKING UNDER CONTRACT. MS. GARVIN STATED THAT SHE WAS TOLD BY THE ADMINISTRATOR AND THE CHAIRMAN THAT IN ORDER TO HIRE THE INDIVIDUAL, SHE WOULD NEED PERMISSION FROM COUNTY COUNCIL. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE DID NOT THINK THE FREEZE ON HIRING INCLUDED ELECTED OFFICIALS. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THAT COUNCIL NEEDED TO MAKE A DECISION. MS. GARVIN SAID THAT HIRING AND FIRING IS UP TO THE ELECTED OFFICIAL AND SHE WAS NOT REQUESTING A NEW POSITION AND SHE HAD MONEY IN HER BUDGET TO COVER THIS POSITION. COUNCILMAN TYLER ASKED IF SHE NEEDED TO HIRE A PERSON FOR THAT POSITION. MS. GARVIN RESPONDED THAT SHE DID NEED THAT PERSON. MS. GARVIN SAID THE INDIVIDUAL HAS WORKED FOR HER SINCE NOVEMBER UNDER CONTRACT AND SHE IS TRAINED. COUNCILMAN GREGORY ASKED IF SHE HAD FUNDS SO THAT THE INDIVIDUAL COULD STILL WORK UNDER A CONTRACT. MS. GARVIN SAID SHE DID NOT HAVE CONTRACT FUNDS, BUT SHE HAD FUNDS IN THE SALARY LINE OF HER BUDGET. MS. GARVIN SAID SHE IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE 2 FULL TIME EMPLOYEES AND ONE TEMPORARY. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT MS. GARVIN HAS A NUMBER OF SLOTS IN THE EXISTING BUDGET AND THAT ONE OF THE SLOTS IS VACANT. MR. FULGHUM SAID HE RESPECTED THE ELECTED OFFICIALS POSITION, HOWEVER, HE FELT THEY ALL SHOULD DISCUSS THIS TOGETHER. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THE COUNCIL AGREED THAT IF ANYONE LEAVES WHILE THE COUNCIL WAS WORKING ON THE BUDGET THAT POSITION WAS TO REMAIN OPEN UNTIL THE COUNCIL KNEW WHERE THINGS STAND. MS. GARVIN SAID THAT THE MONEY WAS ALREADY IN HER BUDGET FOR A FULL TIME PERSON. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THAT IF THE EMPLOYEE IS PAID BY THE COUNTY, IT IS A COUNTY POSITION AND ALL COUNTY POSITIONS WERE TO BE FROZEN. CHAIRMAN HOOD ASKED IF THE COUNCIL COULD MAKE THIS DECISION. MARVIN JONES SAID THE COUNTY COUNCIL CAN PUT A MORATORIUM ON HIRING AND THEY CAN

TAKE AWAY A SLOT THAT WAS AVAILABLE. VICE CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR COMMENTED THAT THE COUNCIL DID NOT VOTE ON A HIRING FREEZE, THEY JUST DISCUSSED IT. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID IT IS NOT VALID, SINCE IT WAS ONLY DISCUSSED. COUNCILMAN TYLER SAID THE ADMINISTRATOR RUNS THE SHOW. MR. FULGHUM SAID HE CAN MAKE A RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL, BUT THE COUNCIL MAKES THE DECISION. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THE POSITION IN QUESTION WILL CONTINUE AND IT IS NOT AN ADDITIONAL PERSON. MS. GARVIN SAID SHE HAD THE FUNDS IN HER BUDGET TO PAY FOR THIS POSITION AND SHE COULD NOT SEE THE PROBLEM. MS. GARVIN SAID SHE WAS NOT ADDING A NEW POSITION; SHE WAS JUST FILLING AN OPEN POSITION. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE FELT THE COUNCIL SHOULD GO ALONG WITH THE ADMINISTRATOR'S DECISION. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID HE WAS NOT AGAINST ANYTHING AND SINCE THEY TALKED ABOUT A HIRING FREEZE THAT IS WHAT HE IS TRYING TO MAINTAIN. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID IF THEY TALKED ABOUT THE HIRING FREEZE AND NOW THEY ARE JUMPING THE FENCE. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE MOTIONED TO ALLOW MS. GARVIN TO HIRE THE INDIVIDUAL. THE MOTION DIED FOR LACK OF A SECOND. CHAIRMAN HOOD TOLD MS. GARVIN THAT SHE HAD HIS BLESSINGS TO MOVE FORWARD. MS. GARVIN TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT IF SHE IS TO OPEN AN OFFICE IN HARDEEVILLE, SHE WILL NEED AN ADDITIONAL PERSON. MR. FULGHUM ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION IF THE HIRING FREEZE AFFECTED ELECTED OFFICIALS.

MARGARET BOSTICK, CLERK OF COURT, TOLD THE COUNCIL THAT SHE ALSO HAD POSITIONS OPEN AND THAT THE HIRING FREEZE SHOULD NOT AFFECT HER. MS. BOSTICK SAID THAT SHE WAS HIRING SOMEONE PART-TIME AND SHE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK PART-TIME AFTER THE NEW BUDGET IS PASSED. MR. FULGHUM ADVISED THE COUNCIL THAT THEY MAY WANT TO HEAR WHAT SHAPE THE COUNTY IS IN AND NOT HIRE SOMEONE THAT THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RETAIN.

**EVANGELIST JACKSON:**

EVANGELIST JACKSON REQUESTED \$5,000.00 FOR THE ANNIE MAE SIMMONS FOUNDATION. EVANGELIST JACKSON EXPLAINED TO THE COUNCIL THAT THE FOUNDATION HELPS TO FEED AND HOUSE PEOPLE IN NEED. EVANGELIST JACKSON SAID THAT JASPER COUNTY DOES NOT HAVE A SHELTER FOR WOMEN AND SHE HAS EVEN HOUSED PEOPLE IN HER HOME. COUNCILMAN TYLER ASKED IF EVANGELIST JACKSON MADE THE REQUEST TO THE ADMINISTRATOR. EVANGELIST JACKSON REPLIED THAT SHE CAME DIRECTLY TO COUNCIL. CHAIRMAN HOOD TOLD EVANGELIST JACKSON THAT THE COUNCIL WAS JUST TAKING REQUESTS.

**BUDGET DISCUSSION:**

MR. FULGHUM COMMENTED THAT THE BUDGET WAS PROVIDED BY RONNIE MALPHRUS AND HE GAVE THE COUNCIL A MEMO REGARDING THE BUDGET. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THIS HAS BEEN A TOUGH TIME

DUE TO THE LACK OF REVENUE AND SHORTFALLS. MR. FULGHUM SAID IT WAS NOT A GOOD PICTURE FOR THIS YEAR AND NEXT YEAR WILL BE THE SAME. MR. FULGHUM SAID THE BUDGET THEY WERE PRESENTING WAS \$3,300,000.00 LESS THAN LAST YEAR'S BUDGET. MR. FULGHUM SAID THEY HAVE NOT RECEIVED ANY INFORMATION FROM THE SCHOOLS. MR. FULGHUM SAID THE BUDGET THEY WERE PRESENTING INCLUDED THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE AT THE LAST BUDGET WORKSHOP. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT IF THE COUNCIL DID NOT DO THE FIRE DISTRICTS, THEY WOULD HAVE TO COME UP WITH AN ADDITIONAL \$670,000.00 AND HE FELT THE ONLY WAY TO COME UP WITH THOSE FUNDS WOULD BE TO CUT EMPLOYEES. MR. FULGHUM PRESENTED A SCHEDULE FOR THE BUDGET ORDINANCE WITH THE FIRST READING ON MAY 18, 2009, SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING ON JUNE 1, 2009 AND 3<sup>RD</sup> READING ON JUNE 15, 2009. MR. FULGHUM SAID HE WOULD PROVIDE THE NUMBERS FOR THE SCHOOLS AS SOON AS HE RECEIVED THEM. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT HE WILL ALSO PROVIDE THE COUNCIL WITH AN OUT OF POCKET ESTIMATE AS TO WHAT THE TAX INCREASE WILL COST THE CITIZENS. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THIS WAS A DIFFICULT YEAR AND HE DOESN'T SEE IT GETTING ANY BETTER NEXT YEAR.

CHAIRMAN HOOD ASKED THE COUNCIL IF THEY WANTED MR. FULGHUM AND MR. MALPHRUS TO WALK THROUGH THE BUDGET FOR THEM. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE QUESTIONED THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES AND SAID THAT HE DIDN'T WANT TO CUT ANYONE'S JOB, BUT THE COUNTY JUST CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY SO MANY EMPLOYEES. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THE BUDGET THEY PRESENTED DID NOT REFLECT ANY PERSONNEL CUTS; HOWEVER, IF THE COUNCIL DID NOT APPROVE THE TAX DISTRICTS, EMPLOYEES WILL HAVE TO BE CUT. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW IF MISMANAGEMENT CAUSED THIS OR THE ECONOMY WAS PART OF IT, BUT THE COUNTY CANNOT PAY EMPLOYEES IF IT DOES NOT HAVE THE MONEY. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT WHEN YOU ARE LOOKING AT DEPARTMENTS THAT MAY HAVE TOO MANY EMPLOYEES, YOU WILL HAVE TO CUT PEOPLE THAT YOU DO NOT WANT TO CUT. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THAT THEY HAD \$670,000.00 IN REVENUE THAT THEY JUST CUT. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED IF THE ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERED FIRE DISTRICTS FOR THE ENTIRE COUNTY. COUNCILMAN TYLER SAID THAT THE ADMINISTRATION SHOULD CONTACT THE HEAD PEOPLE AND LET THEM KNOW THE SITUATION. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THEY MET WITH THE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATORS AND THE ELECTED OFFICIALS AND LET ALL OF THEM KNOW THE SITUATION. COUNCILMAN TYLER SAID THAT COUNCIL CANNOT GIVE WHAT THEY DO NOT HAVE. MR. FULGHUM SAID THEY DID THAT WITH THE DOCUMENT THEY PRESENTED AND NOW THEY HAVE TO GO BACK AND FIND AN ADDITIONAL \$670,000.00 IN POSITIONS. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THEY SHOULD GO THROUGH THE BUDGET LINE BY LINE. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THE BUDGET IS NOW IN THE HANDS OF THE COUNCIL AND SOME PEOPLE WILL HAVE TO BE CUT. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THE

PREVIOUS BUDGET USED \$4,000,000.00 OF THE RESERVE. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID HE WAS LOOKING AT THE PEOPLE WHO MADE THE BIG MONEY, NOT THE PEOPLE MAKING \$24,000.00. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THE ADMINISTRATION WANTS TO REACH INTO THE POCKETS OF THE EMPLOYEES TO PAY FOR INSURANCE AND BY FORLOUGHING THE EMPLOYEES 12 DAYS A YEAR WITHOUT PAY. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THE ADMINISTRATION WAS HITTING THE EMPLOYEES HARD AND THEY ARE NOT THE REASON THAT THE COUNTY IS IN THE POSITION IT IS IN TODAY. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THAT THE COUNCIL NEEDED TO MAKE THE DECISIONS.

CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID THE COUNCIL NEEDS TO TRY WHATEVER IS THE LEAST IMPACT ON THE SERVICES FOR THE CITIZENS. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE DID NOT KNOW HOW THEY WERE GOING TO COME UP WITH \$670,000.00. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID WHEN YOU CUT SOMEONE, YOU ARE CUTTING THEIR ENTIRE LIVELIHOOD, and HE WOULD RATHER ALL THE EMPLOYEES GIVE UP 12 DAYS THAN THEIR TOTAL INCOME. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID THEY ARE GOING TO HAVE TO MAKE SOME HARD DECISIONS. MR. FULGHUM SAID THEY HAVE DONE THAT AND IT CANNOT BE DONE. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE AGREED THAT THEY NEEDED TO GO LINE BY LINE AND SEE WHAT IS THERE AND COUNCIL NEEDS TO COME UP WITH DIRECTIVES FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR.

MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THIS IS A TWO YEAR PROCESS TO GET WHERE THE COUNTY NEEDS TO BE AND BY HAVING THE EMPLOYEES PAY FOR THEIR INSURANCE AND FORLOUGHING 12 DAYS PER YEAR WILL SPREAD THE PAIN AMONG ALL THE EMPLOYEES. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID THAT THEY CANNOT LET FRIENDSHIPS COME INTO THE DECISION MAKING AND MAY NEED TO MOVE SOME TO ANOTHER POSITION AND SOME EMPLOYEES MAY HAVE TO DOUBLE UP ON THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID NO ONE HAS A RIGHT TO A CERTAIN POSITION AND SOME OF THE PEOPLE WHO CAN RETIRE WOULD BE LESS HURT. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID THE COUNCIL NEEDS TO BE CREATIVE AND LESS HURTFUL TO PEOPLE.

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED WHY EACH FIRE DEPARTMENT COULD NOT BECOME A FIRE DISTRICT. MR. FULGHUM ASKED COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE TO MEET WITH HIM AFTER THE MEETING TO DISCUSS THE OPTIONS.

CHAIRMAN HOOD ASKED THE COUNCIL MEMBERS TO GO THROUGH THE BUDGET AND COME BACK TO GIVE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ADMINISTRATOR.

COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THE COUNCIL HAS TO DO WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.

MR. FULGHUM SAID THE COUNCIL CAN GO THROUGH THE BUDGET LINE BY LINE, BUT IT WAS REALLY ABOUT THE COVER SHEET WHERE THE RECOMMENDATION WERE LISTED THAT THE COUNCIL NEEDED TO CONSIDER. MR. FULGHUM SAID THE COUNCIL WILL NEED TO LOOK FOR

OPTIONS TO COME UP WITH THE \$670,000.00 AND THAT WILL INCLUDE LAYOFFS.

MARVIN JONES SAID THAT IF THE COUNCIL DID NOT PASS THE RESOLUTION TO HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING FOR FIRE DISTRICTS THEY WILL NOT HAVE ENOUGH TIME TO CREATE THE FIRE DISTRICTS PRIOR TO THE NEW BUDGET. MR. JONES SAID THE ONLY THING THE RESOLUTION DOES IS TO APPROVE A PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING THE FIRE DISTRICTS.

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THAT TODAY IS NOT THE FIRST DAY THEY DISCUSSED FIRE DISTRICTS, HE HAS ASKED THEM PREVIOUSLY TO LOOK INTO FIRE DISTRICTS IN OTHER AREAS. MR. MALPHRUS RESPONDED THAT ONLY COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED ABOUT IT AND THEY WERE NOT SURE THAT IS WHAT THE OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS WANTED TO DO.

COUNCILMAN GREGORY ASKED WHY THEY DID NOT DO THIS BEFORE. MR. MALPHRUS SAID THEY DID NOT HAVE THE TIMELINE. COUNCILMAN GREGORY ASKED WHY THIS WAS NOT BROUGHT FORWARD AT A BUDGET WORKSHOP. MR. JONES SAID IF IT IS NOT DONE, THE DISTRICTS WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE UNTIL NEXT YEAR. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THE COUNCIL MADE A DECISION NOT TO DO IT NOW IT IS BEING BROUGHT UP AGAIN.

CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT THE MEMBERS WANTED TO DO. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THE CHAIRMAN NEEDS TO STOP TELLING THE COUNCIL MEMBERS WHAT TO DO.

CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID THAT THE ELECTED OFFICIALS NEED TO MOVE FORWARD. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE TAKES ISSUE WITH WHAT IS SAID ABOUT THE ADMINISTRATOR BECAUSE HE WAS AN ADMINISTRATOR AND HE NEVER GAVE THEM THE DIRECTIVE TO MAKE ONE FIRE DISTRICT.

COUNCILMAN GREGORY TOLD THE CHAIRMAN HE ONLY HAD ONE VOTE AND THREE VOTES HAVE THE POWER. COUNCILMAN TYLER ASKED IF HE COULD RECIND HIS VOTE REGARDING THE RESOLUTION.

COUNCILMAN TYLER MOTIONED AND VICE CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR MOTIONED TO PASS THE RESOLUTION ORDERING A PUBLIC HEARING TO BE HELD ON THE QUESTION OF CREATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS FOR JASPER COUNTY INCLUDING AMENDMENT OF THE CHERRY POINT FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT, CREATION OF THE RURAL JASPER COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT, AMENDMENT OF THE LEVY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT, CREATION OF THE RIDGELAND VICINITY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT, AND CREATION OF THE HARDEEVILLE VICINITY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT.

COUNCILMAN GREGORY ASKED IF THAT WAS LEGAL. MARVIN JONES SAID THAT HE CAN MAKE A MOTION TO RECONSIDER.

THE MOTION CARRIED WITH CHAIRMAN HOOD, VICE CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR AND COUNCILMAN TYLER VOTED FOR; COUNCILMEN GREGORY AND ETHERIDGE VOTED AGAINST.

MR. FULGHUM SAID THE STAFF WILL GO BACK AND PRESENT THE SCENERIO FOR FIRE DISTRICTS FOR THE ENTIRE COUNTY.

COUNCILMAN GREGORY MOTIONED AND COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SECONDED THE MOTION TO GO THROUGH THE ENTIRE BUDGET. THE MOTION DID NOT PASS. COUNCILMEN GREGORY AND ETHERIDGE VOTED

FOR: CHAIRMAN HOOD, VICE CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR, AND COUNCILMAN TYLER VOTED AGAINST.

MR. MALPHRUS ASKED THE COUNCIL TO LET HIM KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IF THEY HAVE ANY ISSUES REGARDING THE BUDGET.

COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE DID NOT THINK MANY OF THE EMPLOYEES CAN AFFORD TO PAY FOR INSURANCE AND BE FURLOUGHED ONE DAY PER MONTH. CHAIRMAN HOOD ASKED IF COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE HAD ANY FACTS TO BACK UP HIS STATEMENT. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE HAS LIVED HERE ALL HIS LIFE AND HE KNOWS THE PEOPLE AND THAT IS A FACT. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID HE DID NOT AGREE TO BORROWING \$200,000.00 AND PAYING IT BACK OVER 28 YEARS. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THAT THEY NEED TO THINK AHEAD AS PROPERTY VALUES HAVE GONE DOWN AND THAT MEANS LESS TAXES. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID THE COUNCIL NEEDS TO LOOK AT EACH DEPARTMENT AND THE COUNCIL CANNOT PAY PEOPLE JUST TO SIT HERE. CHAIRMAN HOOD ASKED TO HAVE THE DEPARTMENT HEADS TO LOOK AND SEE IF THEY CUT ITEMS FROM THEIR BUDGET OR EMPLOYEES WILL HAVE TO BE CUT. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID HE FELT ENOUGH CAN BE CUT FROM THE BUDGET SO THAT THE EMPLOYEES WILL NOT HAVE TO PAY FOR THEIR PORTION OF THE INSURANCE OR BE FURLOUGHED. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THAT THE COUNCIL NEEDED TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO WHAT POSITIONS THEY WANT CUT FROM THE BUDGET. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THIS IS NOT A GAME AND THE COUNTY IS NOT MAKING A LOT OF MONEY NOW, AND IF THE MONEY WAS MANAGED RIGHT THE COUNTY WOULD NOT BE IN THE SHAPE IT IS IN NOW. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THIS ADMINISTRATOR SHOULD HAVE BEEN SAVING MONEY AND NOT BUYING UP HOUSES AND NOT SPENDING ALL THIS MONEY. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THE MONEY WAS THERE AND HE SPENT IT AND NOW IT IS NOT THERE. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THE EMPLOYEES SHOULD NOT BE THE ONES TO SUFFER AND PAY FOR THIS. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID HE TAKES ISSUE IF COUNCILMAN GREGORY WAS SAYING THE MONEY WAS MISMANAGED BY COUNCIL. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THAT WHEN SOMETHING WAS BOUGHT, SOMEBODY SHOULD HAVE BEEN PAYING ATTENTION AND LOOKED TO THE FUTURE. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID THAT HE FELT THE COUNCIL WAS GOOD STEWARDS OF THE TAXPAYERS MONEY.

MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT IF YOU CHECK WITH THE ANNUAL AUDIT, THEY WERE RUNNING A SURPLUS LAST YEAR AND THEY DID NOT HAVE A SURPLUS THIS YEAR AND NOW THE REVENUES ARE DOWN. COUNCILMAN GREGORY SAID THE ADMINISTRATOR MADE A RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL TO PURCHASE A HOUSE AND THAT MONEY WAS NEEDED IN THE BUDGET. MR. FULGHUM SAID THAT THEY HAD INCREASED THE RESERVE TO \$7,000,000.00. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID THE INFORMATION WAS NOT FACTUAL. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED MR. MALPHRUS IF ALL CASH CARRY FORWARD IN THE CURRENT BUDGET HAS BEEN SPENT. MR. MALPHRUS RESPONDED THAT IT WAS AND THE ADMINISTRATION IS

SUGGESTING USING \$1,000,000.00 CASH FROM THE RESERVE FUND IN THE NEW BUDGET. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED HOW MUCH MONEY IS NEEDED TO MAKE PAYROLL. MR. MALPHRUS SAID ABOUT \$1,200,000.00. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE SAID IF THEY USE THE MONEY FROM THE RESERVE FUND, THEY WILL NOT HAVE ENOUGH MONEY LEFT TO MEET PAYROLL. CHAIRMAN HOOD SAID A LOT CAN HAPPEN AND BECAUSE OF WHAT HAS HAPPENED IN COLUMBIA AND HE DID NOT WANT TO MISLEAD OR PLANT DOUBT IN THE CITIZENS' MINDS. COUNCILMAN ETHERIDGE ASKED MR. MALPHRUS IF THE INFORMATION PROVIDED TO COUNCIL WAS CORRECT AND MR. MALPHRUS RESPONDED THAT IT WAS CORRECT.

**ADJOURN:**

VICE CHAIRMAN BLACKSHEAR MOTIONED AND COUNCILMAN TYLER SECONDED THE MOTION TO ADJOURN THE BUDGET WORKSHOP. THE MOTION CARRIED WITH ALL MEMBERS PRESENT VOTING IN FAVOR

THE MEETING ENDED AT 4:30 P.M.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

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JUDITH M. FRANK, ccc  
CLERK TO COUNCIL

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DR. GEORGE M. HOOD  
CHAIRMAN