



**JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL  
J.C. GOVERNMENT BLDG.  
358 3<sup>RD</sup> AVE., RIDGELAND, SC**

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**COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
SEPTEMBER 15, 2014  
MINUTES**

**OFFICIALS PRESENT:** Chairwoman Barbara Clark, Vice Chairman L. Martin Sauls, IV, Councilman Henry Etheridge, Councilman Theodus Drayton, Councilman D. Thomas Johnson

**STAFF PRESENT:** Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Clerk to Council Judith Frank, Director of Administrative Services Ronnie Malphrus, Director of Emergency Services Wilbur Daley, Director of Engineering Services Dale Terry, Planning Director LeNolon Edge

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-** Chairwoman Clark called the Workshop/Meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

**Workshop pertaining to the Ordinance adopt Section 6-72 of the Jasper County Code of Ordinances so as to exempt from fees certain permits for the reconstruction of churches following destruction by fire** – Mr. Jones explained that he and Mr. Edge prepared questions regarding the ordinance and he requested that the Council’s responses would clarify the issues that needed to be resolved. Mr. Jones said he had concerns regarding the separation of church and state and if this exemption applied only to churches he could not recommend approval. Mr. Jones suggested the inclusion of non-profits and Councilman Etheridge asked for a definition of non-profits. Mr. Jones provided Goodwill as an example and added that most non-profits do not own the buildings they work out of. Vice Chairman Sauls said he wanted to try and help the situation; however, he did not want it to get out of hand. Vice Chairman Sauls said the Council wants to help, but there is a need for special guidelines. Councilman Drayton said this was presented for Churches only, and that was what he wanted to deal with. Councilman Sauls asked for a definition of a church and Mr. Jones said he was uncomfortable defining what a church is and Councilman Johnson said other agencies needed to be added to make it legal. Councilman Johnson said he was inclined for it to be limited to 503-2-C agencies or an eleemosynary entity that offers services to pass scrutiny and all the Council agreed. Mr. Jones asked about including natural sources of destruction. Councilman Etheridge said he felt that fire, natural disasters and an act of God should be included. Mr. Jones asked about Hurricanes and that many claims my result from that and if the insurance does not pay they would come to Council for fees to be waived. Chairwoman Clark said the ordinance is for complete loss, not damages. Mr. Edge said some insurance companies will pay for permits. Vice Chairman Sauls said that is not correct 100% of the time. Councilman Etheridge said the County should be able to recover the amount the insurance company will pay. Rev. Chavers said his insurance for his

church would pay up to \$2,500. It was the consensus of the Council that the building would have to be in use at the time of the incident for the purposes that are subject to the ordinance. Chairwoman Clark said the current size of the building is all that is covered; if they want to build it larger they would pay the difference. Councilman Johnson said this ordinance only applies to a complete loss by a natural disaster. Mr. Edge said the ordinance would cover any incidents back to January 1, 2014. Chairwoman Clark said the churches should have to provide their charter number and ID numbers. Mr. Jones said he would come up with a definition of what constitutes a church. Mr. Edge said that there are two eligible properties.

The workshop ended at 4:45 p.m.

**Overview of the 2006 Clemson Study and Consideration to Update** – Mr. Edge requested that the Council consider an update since the original study was done in 2006 and the document is out of date. Dr. Molnar and Dr. Carey provided a video explaining the items in the 2006 study. Dr. Molnar said the projected growth did not materialize. Dr. Carey said a 2 stage modeling technique would be used for fiscal analysis. Dr. Carey said they would look at the past patterns. Vice Chairman Sauls said the over inflated figures in the last study are flawed and he is not sure what the future holds. Vice Chairman Sauls said he did not put much faith in speculations and they needed to look at the building permits to get a good indication of what is happening. Councilman Johnson compared the study to a weather report or a comparison of if you did this, that would happen. Mr. Edge commented that now is a good time to decide the scope of the study. Mr. Fulghum added that he wanted to get together with the staff and some of the Council members to come up with the scope for the study. Mr. Fulghum said they needed to know the cost of the growth and it needs to be based on what was vested and permitted. Mr. Fulghum said they over planned and going forward they can figure what it is going to cost. Vice Chairman Sauls asked did Mr. Fulghum mean the cost would be based on the current numbers or projected numbers. Mr. Fulghum said they can decide on what the cost is regardless of the population and they needed to know the cost of providing services to the households. Chairwoman Clark asked if anyone had any questions. Ridgeland Town Councilman Tommy Rhodes said that before this moves forward they would like to know what they will get from the study and the staff needs to work together and no one knows what it will be 20 years from now. Mayor Malphrus said they needed to proceed cautiously. Mayor Bostick said they need to research and know what the cost will be. Mr. Phillips commented that he would like it to be careful and mindful and the area is in an exceptional position and it is just going to get better. Mr. Phillips said they needed to do what needed to be done and they moving out ahead of a lot of other places. Ms. Snowden said that she and Mr. Edge have been here for the entire time and she is ready to work together to see what has happened in the past 9 years and she added that there are a lot of new people which is a good combination. Councilman Johnson said he was looking forward to seeing information that is more realistic and what kind of practical application can be applied. Hardeeville City Councilman Spisso said that Sun City is building about 200 homes a year and he said a lot of retired people are moving into the area that need services, but they don't need school. Councilman Spisso said a lot has changed in Jasper County since the 2010 census. Kim Thomas, J.C. Planning Commission Chair said that they have proven the spirit of cooperation and they have worked together, but they needed to move forward

cautiously. Ms. Thomas said a lot of development has been lost and there are problems with the roads and she felt going to the State may have more of an impact than going alone for funding to repair the roads. Rep. Bill Bowers commented that there was a lot of energy with this group of people and they are working together to move forward and develop a plan. Councilman Etheridge said that Rep. Bowers needed to go to Columbia and get them excited about Jasper County. Rep. Bowers said the new Speaker is taking roads very seriously. Chairwoman Clark thanked everyone for attending. Chairwoman Clark said that something needed to be done so the County can be prepared.

The presentation ended at 5:45 p.m.

### **Dinner Break**

**Call to Order-** Chairwoman Clark called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance-** Councilman Drayton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Invocation-** Councilman Etheridge gave the invocation.

**Approval of the Minutes of the 09/02/2014 Council Meetings – Vice Chairman Sauls moved and Councilman Drayton seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.**

**Approval of the Agenda- Vice Chairman Sauls moved and Councilman Etheridge seconded the motion to approve the agenda. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.**

### **Presentations**

**Barbara Johnson – Public Hearing regarding the Home Consortium-**Ms. Johnson provided a summary of the projects that have been completed and the ones that are underway. Ms. Johnson said the public hearing is to get input of what is needed in the community. Ms. Johnson said a 2<sup>nd</sup> public hearing will be held on Sept. 25, 2014 at LCOG. Councilman Etheridge said this program works and it helps a lot of people in the County. Vice Chairman Sauls said the program helps to sustain the quality of life for some of the citizens of Jasper County. Chairwoman Clark thanked Ms. Johnson for the presentation. Councilman Johnson encouraged Ms. Johnson to keep up the good work and Councilman Drayton said he would contact Ms. Johnson regarding a project he reviewed.

**Rusty Cooler – Hospitality Taxes-** Mr. Cooler explained that he was unaware that he had to pay hospitality tax and when he found out he started paying it as required. Mr. Cooler said he was asked to pay the tax for the last three years and he did not feel it was fair since he did not know he had to pay it. Mr. Malphrus said that he understands, but it is the responsibility of the business owner to know what taxes are due and based on the ruling of the Attorney General the County cannot forgive those taxes that are owed. Mr. Malphrus said an audit was done and that is how the County discovered that taxes were due. Mr. Malphrus said any prepared item is taxable and he gave the example of hot dogs, coffee, etc. and he said that several other businesses were also cited and they have paid. Mr. Malphrus said that when the ordinance was

passed, it was advertised in the newspaper. Mr. Malphrus said he would work on a payment schedule for Mr. Cooler.

**Kevin Karg – PASS Test Results Rebuttal** – Mr. Karg explained that he has been living in Jasper County for two years and he has been researching what is happening in the Jasper County Schools and he is very concerned. Mr. Karg said that only 24% of the students are passing math so he volunteered at the High School to work with the students. Mr. Karg said it took him 4 months to get placed and he felt he was offering help to the students who needed help, but did not want help. Mr. Karg said that he studied the test results and he felt the people should know what is really going on. Mr. Karg said the report presented by the school district was presented so the people would only see the good news and the bad news was tucked away. Mr. Karg said the problems are masked away in order to divert the attention from the negative results. Mr. Karg said when raw data is used, 2 pictures can be drawn. Mr. Karg discussed the decrease in the test results in Jasper County. Mr. Karg told the Council that 1,200 Jasper County students took the test this year and only 419 passed which is 35.2 %. Mr. Karg added that on the state level 72.6% passed. Mr. Karg told the Council that last year 38% of the Jasper County Students passed. Mr. Karg provided information and comparisons on all areas of the testing. Mr. Karg said the reason for his concern is the 74% of the Jasper County Students failed. Mr. Karg said that students count on their fingers to answer the question  $15-8=$  and he said it breaks his heart. Mr. Karg said the School District is hiding the information and millions of dollars are being spent that could be spent better elsewhere to help the students. Mr. Karg told the Council that this morning he found out that he was dismissed from volunteering at the high school, but this afternoon he opened an email from the Superintendent of State Education saying he agreed with Mr. Karg. Mr. Karg said he will wonder tomorrow what he can do to help. Vice Chairman Sauls said that he was almost at a loss for words after hearing Mr. Karg's report and that Mr. Karg devoted his time to help as a valuable resource to Jasper County. Vice Chairman Sauls said it was admirable that Mr. Karg went into the schools to help mentor the children and that he was proud to hear Mr. Karg this evening and that he wished there were more people like Mr. Karg in Jasper County. Councilman Johnson thanked Mr. Karg and said he believed that sunlight is the best disinfectant and it is gratifying to see the State Superintendent validate his report. Councilman Johnson said that it shows the importance of an education and that people need to make up their own mind and not just accept what someone tells them. Councilman Drayton thanked Mr. Karg for his presentation. Councilman Drayton added that two people can look at the same report and come up with different reports and not be able to come up with the real deal. Councilman Drayton suggested that the two people who did the reports get together. Councilman Etheridge said he appreciated what Mr. Karg did to help the children and that the State knows what is happening. Councilman Etheridge said the School Board needs to change if the Schools are going to move forward. Councilman Etheridge said the School Board cannot continue to put the children in the back and they are doing things that are not helping the children. Chairwoman Clark said that if people want to be placed on the Council's agenda, they need to contact the Clerk to Council and she will get the information to the Chairman. Chairwoman Clark said the public is welcome to make presentations and this Council is going by the book. Chairwoman Clark said this Council has requested twice to sit down with the School Board and she was asking again publicly that they work together and be

sincere about it. Chairwoman Clark pledged to help get the message out and the Representatives in Columbia need to bring this situation to light at the State level. Chairwoman Clark said that the money needed to be spent on the children, not a new administrative building. Chairwoman Clark said she is a retired educator with 35 years of service and that until the doors are open and people work together nothing will happen. Chairwoman Clark said that there have been great students from Jasper County and there are still good students in the Jasper County Schools, there are some good teachers and good principals that are trying to make things happen, but they do not have the last say. Chairwoman Clark said that two graves needed to be dug, one that says white and one that say black and until this County buries the white and black issues, nothing will change and they will not get anywhere.

**Ordinances-** There were no ordinances.

### **Resolutions**

**Andrew Fulghum - Resolution Establishing a Human Relations Committee in Jasper County –** Mr. Fulghum explained that the Legislature has mandated that a Human Relations Committee be established in each County. Ms. Saundra Ligon suggested that each Council Member nominate 2 people each to serve on the Board. Ms. Ligon said it needed to be a diverse group that represents the public and they will also be working with young people. Chairwoman Clark thanked Ms. Ligon and asked the Council to bring their nominations to the next meeting. Councilman Drayton moved and Councilman Johnson seconded the motion to pass the Resolution Establishing a Human Relations Committee in Jasper County; the motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

**Councilman Johnson - Resolution of Appreciation of the Jasper County Legislative Delegation Members-** Councilman Johnson read the resolution and Councilman Etheridge moved and Vice Chairman Sauls seconded the motion to pass the Resolution of Appreciation of the Jasper County Legislative Delegation Members. The motion carried with Chairwoman Clark, Vice Chairman Sauls, Councilman Etheridge and Councilman Johnson voting for; Councilman Drayton voted against. Chairwoman Clark presented the resolution to Representative Bowers and she thanked him and the other members of the Delegation for dedication and commitment to Jasper County. Representative Bowers thank the Council on behalf of the Delegation.

### **Old Business**

**Wilbur Daley – Update on Tankers and Request for Additional Equipment –** Mr. Daley explained that the tankers were being worked on and that he would like to add additional equipment now, rather than later. Mr. Daley said the equipment would cost \$26,750 and he asked to be able to use the funds that were budgeted for the fire study. Councilman Johnson said that originally the Council approved the tankers to be used to carry and dump the water. Mr. Daley said the ISO requires the shuttle and a hose needs to be attached to the tanker to pump the water and when the shuttle is properly equipped the ISO numbers will come down. Councilman Johnson asked the cost of a hydraulic lift and Mr. Daley said \$500. Councilman Etheridge said that he and Vice Chairman Sauls serve on the Emergency Services Committee and they met with Mr. Daley and Mr. Fulghum regarding this. Councilman Etheridge said the

funds are available. Councilman Etheridge moved and Vice Chairman Sauls seconded the motion to approve the \$26,750 to equip the tankers and to get the trucks here and in use. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

## **New Business**

**Dale Terry – Approval of Bid for the Resurfacing of Industrial Park Road and the Apron at Wellington-** Mr. Terry informed the Council that he received two bids and requested approval of the low bid from Lane Construction in the amount of \$89,810. Councilman Etheridge moved and Vice Chairman Sauls seconded the motion to approve the bid from Lane Construction in the amount of \$89,810 for the Resurfacing of Industrial Park Road and the Apron at Wellington. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

**Dale Terry – Approval of Bid for the Levy Community Center Roof** – Mr. Terry said no bids were received and he was going to advertise again.

**Committee Reports** – Vice Chairman Sauls said he attended the Hardeeville Meeting and he provided an update of the events scheduled in Jasper County.

**Administrator’s Report** – Mr. Fulghum said that he needed the Council to take action on a grant in the amount of \$59,512 for the Hardeeville Commerce Park. Mr. Fulghum said the grant must be accepted and returned within 14 days. Mr. Fulghum said he has received phone calls regarding Green Acres Road and Mr. Edge will respond to them. Vice Chairman Sauls moved and Councilman Drayton seconded the motion to accept the grant in the amount of \$59,512 for the Hardeeville Commerce Park. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

**Open Floor to the Public- Per ordinance 08-17 any citizen of the County may sign to speak before the Council on matters pertaining to County Services and Operations. Presentations will be limited to three (3) minutes and total public input will be limited to 30 minutes-** Chairwoman Clark opened the floor to the public. **Richie Reed** said that it was time for Jasper County to find the ways and means to provide a source of pride for the young people in the County. Dr. Reed asked that there be an end of the politicizing education in Jasper County and everyone knows about the negative data and the corridor of shame. Dr. Reed said there is good and they needed to work on the good to produce more good. Dr. Reed said that the High School received the Palmetto Gold Award for improvement. Dr. Reed said that business rewards students who excel and she was asking for a committee to work together and advertise the achievements of the children. Chairwoman Clark asked Dr. Reed how they won that award and Dr. Reed said that schools who showed improvement won the award. Chairwoman Clark said the people need to know what is going on and there has been some growth, but the Palmetto Award was based on the time when Ms. Cassandra Jennings was principal. Dr. Reed said the Palmetto Award was going in the spring of 2014 for the 2012-2013 school year. Amanda Cox, president of the Ridgeland Elementary School PTO, said she is often questioned why her children go the Ridgeland Elementary School and she said the teachers and staff family are interested in her children. Ms. Cox encouraged the people to come to the schools and volunteer to help the children because the children want to learn. Ms. Cox said that by volunteering you get a sense of understanding of the school. Ms. Cox challenged the people to

be part of the solution, not part of the problem. Ms. Cox said she can only talk about her children's education and they are doing very well. Chairwoman Clark said the teachers and the principals are trying and when you try to volunteer they are not able to. Chairman Clark said that she knows what she sees going on there and the community needs to come together and the parents need to be involved. Being no further comments, Chairwoman Clark closed the floor to the public.

**ADJOURN – Vice Chairman Sauls moved and Councilman Etheridge seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.**

The meeting ended at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Approved by:

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Judith M. Frank, ccc  
Clerk to Council

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Barbara B. Clark  
Chairwoman