



JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL
358 THIRD AVE., RIDGELAND SC. 29936

BLUE HERON NATURE CENTER

FEB. 4 -5, 2013

9:30 A.M.

RETREAT MINUTES

MONDAY, FEB. 4, 2013

Officials Present: Chairman Henry Etheridge, Vice Chairwoman Barbara Clark, Councilman Theodus Drayton, Councilman Johnson, Councilman L. Martin Sauls, IV

Staff Present: Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Atty. Marvin Jones, and Clerk to Council Judith Frank, Director of Administrative Services Ronnie Malphrus, Director of Engineering Services Dale Terry, and Director of Emergency Services Wilbur Daley.

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 Etheridge called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

MORNING DISCUSSION -ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, SALARY AND BENEFITS OF COUNCIL - PERSONNEL AND PROCUREMENT POLICY AND PROCUREMENT POLICY - Mr. Fulghum explained that Mr. Jones wrote the ordinance 08-17 which specifies the duties of the Council members, the Administrator, the Attorney and the Clerk to Council. Mr. Fulghum said that Council also passed an ordinance amending 08-17 to include the office of the ROD to be under the direct authority of the County Council, however, the Director of Administrative Services would oversee the day to day operations of the ROD office. Mr. Fulghum said the ordinance outlined and established the duties and responsibilities of the Council, the Council Chairman, Vice Chairman, and the function of the standing committees. Mr. Fulghum said the ordinance also formalized the process for preparing the agenda and meeting packets for the Council. Mr. Fulghum told the Council that no votes can be assigned or can the Council vote by proxy. Mr. Fulghum said that perhaps instead of standing committees that all issues be presented to the entire Council. Mr. Fulghum requested that the Council consider doing away with standing committees as they have not been as effective as they should be. Councilman Drayton with only two members on the committees there is not a quorum and they would not have to have

a formal meeting. Attorney Jones said the Council has to deal with the staff through the administrator and this is a way to get around it as a staff member is assigned to the standing committees. Chairman Etheridge said the Council would discuss standing committees at a later date and time. Chairman Etheridge explained the type of government the County operates under and Home Rule established the guidelines. Councilman Etheridge said in the 1970's, when Home Rule was established, the delegation had considerably more power over the Counties. Chairman Etheridge said that the Council Members are the policy makers and no Council Member can make a decision by himself, the issues have to be voted on by the entire Council. Chairman Etheridge asked about the benefits for Council. Mr. Malphrus said the Council receives the same benefits as the other employees including annual leave, sick leave, insurance, retirement, and works compensation just like all the other employees with the exception of health insurance. If the council member declines health insurance the amount of money the County would have to pay for that insurance can be placed in a retirement fund for the Council member. Chairman Etheridge asked about salary for Council and Mr. Malphrus responded that Council is paid \$16,300 each; however, the Chairman is paid \$17,300. Vice Chairwoman Clark said she cannot understand why the Council would get vacation and sick pay or why the insurance money would be transferred to a retirement fund if they did not take the insurance. Vice Chairwoman Clark said the other County employees who do not take insurance do not get this benefit and it is money that the County can save. Mr. Malphrus said the reason for the vacation and sick leave was that it counts towards retirement. Vice Chairwoman Clark said they should get the days, not the money. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked how much the previous Council members were paid and Mr. Malphrus said \$2,822 for up to 360 hours of annual leave when they leave office. Vice Chairwoman Clark said when she left Council before she did not receive that money. Councilman Johnson asked how many days per year and Mr. Malphrus said 10 days sick leave and 12 days' vacation and the vacation days increases based on the number of years served. Chairman Etheridge said he did not agree with providing the unused insurance funds for retirement since none of the other employees are offered that benefit. Councilman Etheridge said that a workshop is needed to review the salaries and benefits of County Council. Councilman Drayton asked why the County should have to pay for insurance if it is not needed and he felt those dollars should go somewhere else. Chairman Etheridge explained that the rest of the employees are not offered that option, only the Council. Councilman Drayton said he felt it was a privilege he deserved. Vice Chairwoman Clark said being on Council is a service to the people, not a job. Vice Chairwoman Clark said the Council cannot put themselves above the employees. Vice Chairwoman Clark said if there a plans for cuts, then the Council should be cut the same as the employees. Councilman Drayton agreed it was not a job, and he reminded the Council that when he took office he said he would do it for free, but he was told to take the money and the salary does not cover what he spends for travel. Councilman Drayton said some past Council Members said they needed the money

and they did not want to take a cut. Chairman Etheridge said the Council was also getting a \$75 phone stipend which was cut to \$35 and that the Council can have a workshop to decide how to do it effectively. Councilman Drayton said there are many ways to save money, but the Council will not entertain them. Chairman Etheridge said this is a new Council and that they need to be given a chance. Councilman Drayton said that is a good point. Councilman Johnson suggested that Councilman Drayton make a list and bring it to Council.

Personnel Policy and Procurement Policy – The council discussed the alcohol and drug testing portion of the personnel policy and explained the ordinance that amended this section. Councilman Drayton asked if all county vehicles are signed out and Mr. Malphrus said only the ones he has. Councilman Sauls asked who was authorized to drive county vehicles on the weekend and Mr. Malphrus said the sheriff's employees, the mechanic, the maintenance man and ems employees. Mr. Fulghum said he would provide the Council with a list of employees authorized to take their vehicles home. Chairman Etheridge asked the attorney to define nepotism. Mr. Jones said staff members who are supervised by family members. Mr. Jones said that there are numerous employees that are related, but they are not supervised by a relative. Chairman Etheridge said he has been hearing this for five years and he is sure everyone has someone working for the County. Councilman Johnson asked about a list and Mr. Jones said that it is explained and listed. Mr. Jones said they can make a change, but it is not about who works for the County but who you supervise or are supervised by. The Council discussed County owned vehicles and that the Sheriff has his own policy, but the County owns the vehicles, pays the employees, but the Council cannot make the Sheriff adhere to the County policies. Mr. Malphrus said that the Council and the Administrator has no control over any elected official, their policies or procedures. Mr. Jones said they are not governed by County policy and they can adopt their own policy. Councilman Johnson said that would be a job for the Intergovernmental Committee to handle. Chairman Etheridge said he is concerned that the County is responsible, but has no authority over it. Mr. Jones said the law goes back about 150 years and all County Councils are frustrated with it. Councilman Drayton said there was an incident and no one had the authority to investigate it. Councilman Drayton said he agreed. Councilman Johnson said it was not just the vehicles, but the County is liable for whatever the elected officials and their employees do and the County is responsible, but has no control. Councilman Drayton said he knows what nepotism is, but when they have cousins and friends and they apply the rules for everyone but their relatives and friends and there is favoritism or racism and if it exists it needs to be called out. Councilman Drayton said it exists on Council and in this County and some people get benefits that other people do not get. Councilman Drayton said they need to cut out cousins and relatives in County positions. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked how many votes does it take to cut a salary and she said it takes three votes. Councilman Drayton said the County could save money by cutting those positions. Chairman Etheridge asked about personal use of the internet. Chairman Etheridge said he had

a copy of a personal email sent to an employee by another employee. Chairman Etheridge said he would give Mr. Fulghum a copy of the email. Councilman Drayton said they cannot do that or use county cell phones for personal use. Councilman Drayton said that can be audited by the administrator. Councilman Drayton said he felt that was abused in every department and memos needed to be sent out to the employees. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked how many employees had County cell phones. Mr. Malphrus went through the list and said they have cut it down and some employees get an allowance. Chairman Etheridge asked how much is paid for an employee to have a cell phone and Mr. Malphrus said about \$35 a month and about 30 people have cell phones. Mr. Fulghum said some employees are paid a \$35 allowance for use of their own cell phone. The Council discussed recruitment. Mr. Malphrus explained the difference between Internal and External recruitment. Mr. Fulghum said the type of position also determines how they recruit to fill it. Mr. Malphrus said a committee of 2-3 people review the applications and determine a list of individuals they will interview. Mr. Malphrus said the committee determines the best applicant and they send the recommendation to Human Resources. Mr. Malphrus said the department head has the final say; however, Human Resources will step in if the person is not qualified. Chairman Etheridge asked if a trainee can be hired at a lesser salary. Mr. Malphrus said that can happen in certain situations and they work towards certification. Mr. Malphrus said that only permanent employees are eligible for internally offered positions. Chairman Etheridge asked how annual leave can be taken away for an employee who is terminated. Mr. Fulghum said he would take that up with the employment attorney. Vice Chairwoman Clark said a person who is reprimanded has to sign off, but they can sign and say they do not agree but have to sign because it is the County policy. Mr. Malphrus said he thought that was correct, but he would have to check on it. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked if an employee asked for a second appeal, should the same grievance committee members hear the appeal. Mr. Malphrus said there is only one grievance committee. Vice Chairwoman Clark said that was not fair and they should not be the same. Attorney Jones said the County has a 5 member grievance committee and two alternates, but he sees no problem in appointing another committee and this could be one of the changes to the personnel policy. Vice Chairwoman Clark said she did not think this was fair to the employees. Attorney Jones said he felt they had a good committee and personalities do not enter into their decisions. Mr. Fulghum said he brings a recommended list of employees to serve on the committee and the Council approves it. Chairman Etheridge said they receive \$60 for meals when traveling. Chairman Etheridge said any meals that are provided the stipend for that meal should be deducted from the \$60 stipend. Chairman Etheridge said he felt the Council needed to revisit this in the budget. Councilman Drayton commented that not everyone is a millionaire and they were dealing with trivial things and needed to get with the issues. Councilman Johnson said they were all adults and answerable to the citizens. Councilman Johnson asked about the policy of people taking Council to dinner. Vice Chairman

Clark responded that if the dinner was more than \$25 you have to report it. Councilman Johnson asked if there were any personnel policies for particular departments. Mr. Fulghum said there were different operating procedures and Councilman Johnson said he would like a copy of them. Vice Chairman Clark said the Council will ask for a lot of things, but they like to have the information to make sure everyone is operating on the same page. **Procurement Policy** – Mr. Fulghum said that Mr. Malphrus is the procurement officer and that the policy does need some changes. Mr. Fulghum said that CBDG need a statement added to the policy regarding small businesses. The Council discussed professional service contracts and they all have to be approved by Council. Mr. Fulghum explained that the administrator can approve up to \$5,000 unless it is a budgeted item without Council's approval. Mr. Fulghum explained the indefinite delivery contracts and current way they are handled. Mr. Fulghum said every so often he puts together a team to solicit proposals and they evaluate the proposals and they do try to spread the work around. Mr. Fulghum said the staff compiles a list of companies for County Council's approval, but they always have the right to solicit other proposals. Mr. Malphrus said every day procurement process does not require anything under \$1,500 to be bid out or advertise, but they will do price comparisons; \$1,500-\$5,000 they get 2 quotes at a minimum either verbal or written and \$5,000-\$10,000 they get 3 written quotes. Mr. Malphrus told the Council that anything over \$10,000 is advertised for bid, but there are some exceptions. Mr. Malphrus said they advertise in the Jasper County Sun, SCBO and on the County website. Chairman Etheridge asked about a vendor list. Mr. Malphrus said the County did not have one, but they needed to add that minority companies are encouraged to apply. Councilman Drayton asked if minorities were included. Mr. Malphrus said that it is not done locally, but it could be done. Councilman Drayton said he thinks it should be included for all local funds, not just federal fund. Mr. Malphrus said RFP are also done for certain projects. Mr. Malphrus discussed the various requirements for the different type of projects over \$50,000. Councilman Drayton asked about the employees of company bidding. Mr. Malphrus said they did not do that and Councilman Drayton asked why it was not done. Mr. Fulghum said the consultant knows the requirements and they team up with other firms to go out after those funds. Mr. Malphrus said certified information is required and they need to certify their employees are legal residents, but that is handled by the engineers. Councilman Johnson said that contractors use subcontractors that also have employees. Mr. Malphrus said anything on the state or national contract list does not have to go out to bid and the County can purchase under those contracts. Mr. Malphrus reviewed the most recent local preference policy. Chairman Etheridge asked how often the County puts the auditor contract out to bid. Mr. Malphrus said every three years. Chairman Etheridge said the state recommends changing auditors. Mr. Fulghum commented that when things go out for bid, price is not always the only factor when making a decision. Chairman Etheridge said he felt a workshop was needed to thoroughly review the procurement policy and see what changes were needed. Councilman

Johnson asked if there were any problems. Mr. Malphrus said that there were some language changes that needed to be made. Councilman Drayton said that he did not think it was right to purchase thing out of the County if they can be purchased in the County for the same price. Councilman Drayton said the policy is for guidance, but the people need to use common sense. Councilman Johnson asked if all purchases go through Mr. Malphrus. Mr. Malphrus said that purchase orders are done for anything over \$250 and either he or Ms. Smith has to approve them. Chairman Etheridge asked who had County credit cards and Mr. Malphrus said that Mr. Fulghum, Mr. Daley, Mr. Terry and himself. Mr. Malphrus said there is a card that the employees have to sign out if they need it. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked if training had to be approved. Mr. Malphrus said the department head schedules necessary training and Mr. Fulghum approves any out of state training. Chairman Etheridge said the election commission pays for all the training and they use the credit card. Mr. Malphrus said they only use it to hold the rooms. Vice Chairwoman Clark said she did not think any County office should be closed during operating hours. Vice Chairwoman Clark said people needed to be crossed because the employees are here to serve the people. Councilman Sauls said they can only make that recommendation to the elected officials. Councilman Johnson asked if the clerical employees in the magistrate's office fall under the County or the Magistrate. Mr. Malphrus said they fall under the magistrate. Councilman Drayton asked if temporary employees should go to training. Ronnie Malphrus said he was not aware of a temporary employee going to training. Councilman Drayton said they should not go and Vice Chairman Clark said if County employee had them stay in their room that was already paid was okay, but the County should not pay a per diem or for any classes for a temporary employee. Councilman Sauls asked why this was being discussed. Councilman Drayton said because they should not take a temporary employee to a conference and an elected official took a temporary employee. Mr. Fulghum said that the County paid for an intern to attend something. The Council broke for lunch.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES - Administrative Service- Mr. Malphrus, Director of Administrative Services, discussed the departments in his division, the number of employees in each department and the total salaries for the employees in each department. Mr. Malphrus explained the duties and responsibilities of each department. The Assessor, Finance, Human Resources and the day to day operations of the Register of Deeds office are under Administrative Services. **ROD** - Mr. Malphrus said the ROD office records about 6,000 documents per year and he listed the types of documents that are recorded. Mr. Malphrus said that currently all documents from 1990 to present have been verified and the goal was to have all documents back to 1912 verified and they will make sure everything is filed properly. Mr. Malphrus discussed a company that wants to purchase the data and Attorney Jones is working on a contract. Councilman Johnson asked if it would be restricted so that anyone else can get it. Mr. Malphrus said it would not. Councilman Johnson asked if that department was

cash positive and Mr. Malphrus said that it was. Chairman Etheridge said that when he visited the Senator in Columbia, the Senator wants to make the ROD an elected official and there are no qualifications to run for that position. Chairman Etheridge said he did not think the County needed anymore elected officials. Mr. Fulghum said that the Council hires this position. Councilman Johnson said to give it back to the clerk of court. Councilman Drayton said the County does not need any more elected officials and that there were already too many that do what they want. Chairman Etheridge said the Council needed to contact the Senator and let him know that the Council does not support this. Councilman Drayton asked if the Senator knew the problems the County has with the elected officials. Chairman Etheridge said that he did. Chairman Etheridge said that he was concerned that the position will not require any qualifications and he felt every elected office should require some qualifications. Councilman Sauls said he felt the same way and they should just let it be the way it is now. Councilman Johnson said that some Council voted to take it from the Clerk of Court because they perceived some problem. Mr. Malphrus said the change was made in 2005 or 2006. **Assessor** - Mr. Malphrus told the Council that there were 8 positions in the Assessor's office and one position was vacant. Chairman Etheridge asked if the vacant position has been advertised and Mr. Fulghum responded that he was not sure. Councilman Sauls said if it has been vacant for 6 months it may not be needed. Mr. Malphrus said it is for an assessor and next year the office starts the reassessment process. Mr. Malphrus said in 2012 there were 602 appeals and in 2013 there have been 5; Mr. Malphrus said they handle the appeals in house and if the citizen is not satisfied they go to the assessment appeals board. Vice Chairwoman Clark said the property values went down and the taxes went up. Mr. Malphrus said the taxes are determined by the millage rate even when the values go up. Mr. Malphrus said each piece of property is looked at individually. Mr. Malphrus said he will find out how much the 602 appeals cost the county in taxes. Mr. Malphrus said they are currently looking at upgrading and automating the GIS system and they are contacting companies and getting more detailed information. Mr. Malphrus said it would cost approximately \$7,500 and it would give everyone access to the all the information. Mr. Fulghum said that when people can look things up for themselves it reduces the workload and could cut out the cost of one position. Mr. Malphrus said they were also looking to upgrade so that the information would go directly into the system from the field and not have to be entered again when they come back to the office. Mr. Malphrus said the laptops currently being used are 5 years old. Mr. Malphrus said the requirements for an appraiser are changing and they need to fill the position prior to January, 2014 because at that time the applicant will need a bachelor's degree to qualify for the position. Chairman Etheridge asked if the salary was the problem and Mr. Malphrus said it was part of the problem and the have to be sent for training. Mr. Malphrus said the current staff would be grandfathered in. **Tax Collector** – Mr. Malphrus explained that there are two people in this department and they are responsible for collecting the delinquent taxes, and having the

delinquent tax sale. Mr. Malphrus said this department just completed the process for taking credit card payments. Mr. Malphrus said in January, 455 properties and 929 mobile homes were turned over from the treasurer to the delinquent tax office for collection. Mr. Malphrus said the taxes owed were \$862,628,49. Councilman Drayton asked how much did Mr. Malphrus think would be collected. Mr. Malphrus said about 99%. Mr. Malphrus discussed the Forfeit Land Commission (FLC). Mr. Malphrus said in 2011, 260 properties were turned over to the FLC and in 2012, 257 properties were turn over to the FLC. Mr. Malphrus said the people have one year to redeem their property before the FLC can sell it. Chairman Etheridge asked if the FLC was having meetings and were they selling the properties. Mr. Malphrus said he did not know and Attorney Jones said he told them they needed to advertise the meetings, but they do not contact him. Councilman Johnson said does the County check to see if there is any benefit for the County to retain ownership of some of the property that they could use. Attorney Jones said a lot are less than desirable. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked about the mobile homes and if they are worth taking over. Mr. Malphrus said none have been moved at this time. Vice Chairman Clark said a lot of the mobile homes are no good. Chairman Etheridge said if people are living in it, then the people need to pay taxes on it. Mr. Jones said the FLC owns it, not the County and the FLC is established by state law. Chairman Etheridge said he heard the three members cannot get along. Barbara Bartoldus was asked to discuss her experience with FLC in order to purchase one of the mobile homes. Ms. Bartoldus said the two elected officials would not deal with the ROD and she had to go to each member separately for signatures. Ms. Bartoldus said there is a big problem with the mobile homes and the elected officials will not and do not want to deal with the ROD. Mr. Jones said the chairman of the FLC is the Auditor. Mr. Malphrus said they are selling some of the properties. Chairman Etheridge said that some of the funds collected by the FLC go to the state. Mr. Jones said the FLC answers to the Legislature. Councilman Johnson asked if there was any mechanism to collect the taxes prior to a mobile home being repossessed and is there anything in place so that they cannot be moved. Mr. Jones said the mobile homes are usually gone before the County knows. Chairman Etheridge said he would like to see the Council have some authority over the FLC and they may need to talk with the Legislature. **Finance** – Mr. Malphrus said the finance department has two employees and they are responsible for all the finances except for what the treasurer handles. Mr. Malphrus said they handle the PO's and AP's for the entire County. Chairman Etheridge asked how they deal with the Treasurer's office and Mr. Malphrus listed the various accounts handled by the Treasurer and he told the Council that the Treasurer does monthly reports for the auditor. Chairman Etheridge asked about collection and deposit reports and Mr. Malphrus said she has been told, however he has no control over her. Mr. Malphrus said the auditors reconcile her accounts monthly, but she has not provided the reports as she was asked to do. Councilman Sauls asked who does the grant writing. Mr. Malphrus said the various departments will apply for grants and LCOG writes the grants for the

County like the CBDG grants and LCOG gets a percentage of the grant for managing it. Mr. Fulghum said a memo can be sent to the treasurer regarding the reports. Councilman Johnson said the Council can file a FOIA and then she would have to provide the reports. Mr. Jones said he would do whatever the Council asks him to do. **Human Resources** – Mr. Malphrus said the Human Resource department has 3 employees and he listed their responsibilities. Mr. Malphrus said they are working on the imputed income so that it can be handled throughout the year rather than once a year. Mr. Malphrus said they also occasionally offer a seminar and they hold a health fair. Councilman Johnson asked if County Council could conduct the exit interviews and Mr. Fulghum suggested that HR do a summation report and give it to the Council. Vice Chairwoman Clark said any personal information would have to be removed. Vice Chairwoman Clark and Councilman Johnson said they were both very unhappy about the high volume of worker compensation and that it needs to be discussed. Vice Chairwoman Clark said the employees need to feel like they are wanted and they will be dedicated to the County. Vice Chairman Clark said all the employees needed to be treated the same and that dedicated employees will come to work if they feel valued. Councilman Johnson asked what needed to be done to cut down on injuries. Mr. Malphrus said his 1st nightmare is mobile homes and his 2nd nightmare is workers compensation. Chairman Etheridge said the County's NPO rating is very high and needed to be worked on. Mr. Fulghum said that word will get out that it is being looked at and that is very helpful. Mr. Malphrus said that once a claim is filed, you don't have a lot to say as to what goes on. Chairman Etheridge asked why mills are used instead of dollars and Mr. Fulghum said the mills are required by state law. **Engineering Services** Dale Terry, Director of Engineering Services, discussed the departments in his division, the number of employees in each department and the total salaries for the employees in each department. Mr. Terry said that a challenging part of the job is keeping up with DHEC regulations. Councilman Johnson said he felt more hours were needed at the recycling centers and Mr. Terry said being closed on Wednesday allows them to catch up on the hauling of the trash. Mr. Terry discussed the money raised by recycling and that he has the recycling items hauled to where he gets the best price. Mr. Terry said the maintenance of all the County buildings are handled by 4 employees and 1 supervisor. Mr. Terry said that maintenance also handles the heating and air, the old Clemson Building, the old grade school, the health department and the back of the library. Mr. Terry said that people are requesting things from the old Grays School when it is torn down. It was the consensus of the Council that people could be give 2 bricks from the old Grays School if requested. Chairman Etheridge said to stack the remaining bricks by the Grays Fire Dept. Mr. Terry said they should start work on the floor at the library soon and he was waiting until it got cold before going under the building. Councilman Johnson asked about the old senior center in Hardeeville. Mr. Malphrus said the auditor and Clerk of Court were going to start going back there once a week. Mr. Terry said the 3 custodians were split with one going to the Government Building and Court House and the other two cover all

the other buildings. Mr. Terry said there are two employees at the Central Garage. Councilman Johnson asked if they change out motors and Mr. Terry said they do not have the equipment to do that. Councilman Sauls asked if they did maintenance and keep records and Mr. Terry said that they did. Councilman Johnson asked about public services workers and Mr. Terry said that he does use them when they show up. The Council discussed that employees using County cars and they should make sure they are cleaned out and filled with gas when they turn the keys back in. Mr. Terry discussed the road, bridges and ditches that are maintained by his department. Mr. Terry also discussed the new fishing pier on Knowles Island. Mr. Terry told the Council that Stiney Road needed to be resurfaced and the Dawson Landing Parking lot was also in bad shape. Chairman Etheridge discussed the drainage ditches that need taken care of and Mr. Terry said the track hoe cannot take care of all of them and a piece of equipment would need to be rented for about \$8,000 per month to handle it. Mr. Fulghum said that Mr. Terry is also working on a map of all the county maintained ditches. Chairman Etheridge said that if the State is not maintaining their ditches it causes problems for the County. Mr. Terry said he has spoken with Malzone Russell and he is always ready to help. Mr. Terry invited the Council to the new fishing pier at Knowles Island. Mr. Fulghum said he was going to have video done on this project to promote it. Councilman Sauls told Mr. Terry to contact the Chamber about a ribbon cutting. Chairman Etheridge said even the people from Knowles Island have commented that it is really nice. Councilman Johnson asked about liter barrels and a port-a-john and Mr. Terry said a liter barrel is there and he will discuss getting a port-a-john. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked about Turnbridge Landing and Mr. Terry said not much can be done there due to the property not being owned by the County. Mr. Fulghum said one of the goals is to visit all the landings. Councilman Johnson asked if anything was on the horizon regarding paved roads in sub-divisions since the County is not in the paving business. Mr. Terry said a lot of people complain and he does his best to keep the roads up, and he will do a road that is in bad shape so the emergency vehicles can pass through. Councilman Johnson asked about ones that were required and turned over to the County. Mr. Fulghum said the County will not take over any paved roads. Mr. Terry said that his administrative office takes care of all the insurance claims and handles all the records, titles, maintenance requests and accident reports. Mr. Terry said he had two employees previously, but now he only has one. Mr. Terry said his department works 4 days, 10 hours per day and there is a split crew on Monday and Friday. Mr. Terry said this has worked well and has saved a lot of fuel. Vice Chairwoman Clark said you are hired to run a department and make it better and that is what Mr. Terry is doing. Mr. Terry said he tries to save money on whatever he can and if he can do something for the employees that doesn't cost more, he tries to do it and keep his people happy. Mr. Terry said he has 32 people working in his department. **Emergency Services** – Wilbur Daley, Director of Emergency Services, discussed the departments in his division, the number of employees in each department and the total salaries for the employees

in each department. Mr. Daley told the Council he has 57 employees and they include fire fighters, dispatch, administration and medics. Mr. Daley said his fire fighters are all certified and they are also certified medics that are trained from basic to paramedics. Mr. Daley said 7 stations are operated and some of the employees have been hired and trained by the County. Mr. Daley said each level of training is paid differently. Mr. Daley said all fire fighters are required to be a basic EMT. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked about the Captains. Mr. Daley said they manage the shifts and are responsible for what goes on during their shift. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked if the Captain can replace someone on a shift and Mr. Daley said no, they use a part-time person to cover that position, but the Captains do run calls in the district. Councilman Drayton asked about the people who are on call and Mr. Daley said they only get retirement and no other benefits, but they have all the training and some are called in every day to save overtime. Chairman Etheridge said that some work 24 hours in one place and then come to work here and he asked whose workers compensation they fall under. Chairman Etheridge said don't let them work 24 hours and then come here. Mr. Malphrus said that was the only way to cut down on the overtime. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked what it would cost to have all the stations covered since you need to have 4 people at the scene. Councilman Sauls said the County does not have the personnel that is needed. Chairman Etheridge said they need to figure out how much they are paying for fire and how much they are paying for ambulance service. Chairman Etheridge said if here is an ambulance call, they are not around to go to a fire call. Councilman Drayton asked about volunteers and paying their insurance. Mr. Daley said that he has been getting volunteers and as soon as they get new ones the others quit. Mr. Daley said each volunteer has about \$3,000 worth of equipment and you cannot count on them. Mr. Daley said that Jasper County Fire and Rescue has 1% money that comes back to the fire people and has to be utilized to purchase things that help them. Mr. Daley said they started a 1% retirement fund for paid and volunteer firemen and they need to be with the County for 5 years for them to be vested to be part of the retirement account. Mr. Daley said it is a good incentive. Vice Chairwoman Clark said that Levy has dedicated volunteers and the people from Grays Falls where they bought a piece of equipment visited the Levy Fire Station and were very impressed. Councilman Drayton asked what were the plans for covering the Sand Hill and Stokes Bluff areas. Mr. Daley said that the Tillman Station covers that area. Councilman Drayton asked if there were any plans for that area and Mr. Daley said he did not know. Councilman Sauls said the number of homes in that area are very few and Mr. Daley said it was one of the areas marked for review. Councilman Drayton asked Mr. Daley as Fire Chief what are your plans. Mr. Daley said they are doing the best that they can. Councilman Drayton asked Mr. Daley if he has any minorities in his division. Mr. Daley said he had one in dispatch. Councilman Drayton asked Mr. Daley what he does to recruit minorities. Mr. Daley said that they advertise. Councilman Drayton told Mr. Daley he needed to do a better job recruiting minorities and he needed to go out and be aggressive and as a leader he needed to

do more and Councilman Drayton said he didn't think Mr. Daley response was a good response. Chairman Etheridge said the EMS and the Detention Center both have hiring problems. Councilman Drayton said he spoke about Stokes Bluff last year and nothing has been done and he is not satisfied. Chairman Etheridge said there is a staffing problem. Councilman Drayton said Stokes Bluff is the worst and Mr. Daley needed to do something. Vice Chairwoman Clark said that when she served on Council before there was a problem of hiring firefighters and EMT and hiring blacks. Vice Chairwoman Clark said they don't go out and get training or go to places where training is offered. Mr. Daley said he cannot hire the blacks if they do not apply. Councilman Drayton told Mr. Daley he needed to go to the blacks to get them. Vice Chairwoman Clark said in the 8 years since she had previously been on Council the only change was that someone donated money and property to build a station on Firetower Road and Doug Graham built a station in Bellinger Hill. Vice Chairwoman Clark said the problem is not that they don't want to hire minorities, the minorities don't apply, but that you need to check who has applied and who is qualified. Councilman Johnson asked if they had a training or rookie program. Mr. Daley said that they bring in volunteers with no training and send them to classes and they also hold classes here. Mr. Daley said volunteers can come with no certifications. Councilman Johnson asked if they have an outreach program with the schools and Mr. Daley said they have held career fairs. Vice Chairwoman Clark suggested that they have Chief Doug Graham come and work with them and kick some ideas around to improve the fire departments. Councilman Drayton said the County needs a more aggressive chief instead of one that just sits there. Councilman Drayton said you say the chief is doing a good job and he just sits there. Chairman Etheridge said he knows where Emergency Services is and where it needs to go. Councilman Drayton said the Chief needs to do something. Chairman Etheridge said the Council needs to know how much EMS is costing and how much fire is costing. Councilman Sauls said the Council needs to know the bottom line and they just don't have the money to build a station for 10-12 houses in Stokes Bluff. Councilman Sauls said there are other areas where can be spent and get more positive results. Councilman Sauls said if \$16,000,000 wasn't spent by past councils on this building it could have been spent on other things. Councilman Sauls said he did not care who was chief or what race he is, if he doesn't have the money he can only do the best that he can with what he has. Councilman Sauls said he was willing to look at other options and do an inventory for each station and analyze and see what is needed. Councilman Etheridge said very little of the \$5,000,000 is dedicated to fire. Councilman Drayton said as long as the Council sits back and say the chief is doing a good job he won't do anything and the Council needs to make him do something. Chairman Etheridge said that the Council needs to work on this with the administrator. Mr. Fulghum said they need a plan and then they can start to chip away at it. Vice Chairwoman Clark discussed outsourcing and Councilman Sauls agreed that it was an option. Councilman Drayton said something needs to be done, not just sitting back. Mr. Daley said there are 6 ambulances and 4 are manned full

time and 2 are spares. Mr. Daley said they are working on upgrading the water supply with 5-7 water tanks and ponds in certain areas. Mr. Daley said the water tanks can be purchased for about \$500 each. Mr. Fulghum asked for permission to move forward with the water tanks and establishing water points throughout the County. Councilman Sauls said a lot of insurance companies do not recognize dry hydrants at a pond and Councilman Sauls asked the staff to check to see if the tanks would work. Councilman Drayton asked where the tanks would be placed and Mr. Daley said at all the stations that don't have them. Mr. Fulghum said they needed an inventory list and a plan to improve the service for the future. It was the consensus of the Council to purchase the water tanks, but to make sure they were in good shape. Chairman Etheridge said they needed to find funds in their budget to pay for them. Councilman Johnson said there were railroad tankers for sale and he would send the information to Mr. Daley. Mr. Daley discussed the responsibilities of the management team and that they all serve in 3 different capacities. Mr. Daley said they report to the state and meet the state regulations. Mr. Daley said the Emergency Operations Plan is updated every 5 years. Mr. Daley discussed the old Jaycee field and that he would like to install lights and fence for staging incidents and that the vehicles could be in that area instead of parking along Hwy. 278. Chairman Etheridge asked the staff to work on a grant to get this done. Mr. Fulghum said Emergency Management was broken out because of other functions that it handles. Mr. Daley discussed telecommunications and that it operates dispatch for 7 agencies throughout the County. Mr. Daley said in 2012 they handled 50,952 calls. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked about the radios and Mr. Daley said the tech came and repaired the glitch. Mr. Daley said that Ridgeland and Hardeeville pay \$55,000 each for dispatch. Mr. Fulghum said he felt this needed to be renegotiated. Mr. Daley said that everything has been up and running for 9 years out of the armory and there is a 911 surcharge on every phone bill and some of that money comes back to the County, but it can only be used on 911 equipment. Mr. Daley said that the system has not been upgraded since 2003. Dr. Hood discussed fire service when he was chairman of the Council. Dr. Hood said a plan was needed to address the problems and they needed to come up with creative ideas. Dr. Hood said there were two minority employees at EMS, but both left of their own accord. Dr. Hood there have been some great black applicants apply and they needed to be cautious not to say that blacks don't apply. Dr. Hood said that the detention center does not have whites applying and they have tried to recruit whites to work there. Dr. Hood said they needed to stop communicating with everyone and form and committee to work on this and they needed to work together as one County. Dr. Hood said he was glad for the time he served, but he did see things that he did not like. Chairman Etheridge said he felt all the Council members were willing to work with everyone. Chairman Etheridge said that the 2 departments need to be shown who is applying and the department heads do not always have the final say. Chairman Etheridge said he worked with many people of all races and he has no

problem with that. Chairman Etheridge said they needed to work on getting people of all races to apply for those two departments.

Vice Chairwoman Clark motioned and Councilman Drayton seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion carried with all members present voting in favor.

The retreat adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

FEB. 5, 2013 - MORNING DISCUSSION -ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Officials Present: Chairman Henry Etheridge, Vice Chairwoman Barbara Clark, Councilman Theodus Drayton, Councilman Johnson,

Officials absent: Councilman L. Martin Sauls, IV

Staff Present: Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Atty. Marvin Jones, Clerk to Council Judith Frank, Director of Administrative Services Ronnie Malphrus, Director of Engineering Services Dale Terry, Director of Emergency Services Wilbur Daley, Director of Planning and Building LeNolon Edge, I-T Director Earl Bostick, Jr., Director of Parks and Recreation Johnny Davis, Detention Center Director Arthur Benjamin, Business Licensed Coordinator Renty Kitty,

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 Etheridge called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

LeNolon Edge explained to the Council that he was the director over the planning and building departments. Mr. Edge provided a hand-out of the activities and explained that the building department was merged with the planning department and he had 3 employees. Mr. Edge said his department works with the Planning Commission and they also do inspections for the Town of Ridgeland. Mr. Edge said they edit the zoning ordinance, as needed and they also do plan review. Mr. Edge discussed some of the upcoming revisions to the zoning ordinance. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked about the gas station on Hwy. 17 near SCAD. Mr. Edge said that a lot of people apply and once they get their entitlement they do no move forward as quickly. Councilman Drayton asked where the Chevy dealership was going and Mr. Edge responded on the same side of the road as the Ford Dealership. Councilman Drayton asked where Lisa worked and Mr. Edge said that Lisa is cross-trained and she works in both planning and zoning and the building department and she makes sure there are no gaps. Councilman Johnson it is important for the employees to be crossed trained and he said that he has received a lot of

feedback on the department and the people told him what a great job Lisa did and the contractors have had good things to say about Doug too. Mr. Edge said the contractors call ahead for inspections and they can schedule things better. Mr. Edge said they take applications and try to solve things the best way possible. Councilman Johnson said the department will not record a plat that does not meet the zoning. Mr. Edge said that property cannot be cut in to more than 3 pieces. Mr. Edge explained that they host an pre-application conference meeting and explain the process, they review the project with the engineers and the fire marshal and everyone involved voice their concerns and these concerns are passed on to the applicant. Mr. Edge said his department also does code enforcement, and issues stop orders on buildings without permits. Mr. Edge compared the number of applications in planning and zoning in 2011 and 2012 and he also discussed the 2 new commercial property in Jasper County. Mr. Edge told the Council that the Honda dealership is expanding and 2 new dealerships will be locating in Jasper County and a new Church is being built. Mr. Edge said they were reorganizing their filing system and increasing the storage. Mr. Edge said the Comprehensive Plan needed reviewed every 5 years and updated every 10 years. Vice Chairwoman Clark said she was excited and glad to see him because she was told there were no blacks in management. Chairman Etheridge asked Mr. Edge if he had good help and Mr. Edge said he did and a lot was going on in his department. Mr. Edge said any input from the Council and the public will help move the department forward. Mr. Fulghum recommended that the Council review the Comprehensive Plan as it is very important. Mr. Fulghum said that Mr. Edge worked for Hardeeville and he is very aware of the joint planning process. Chairman Etheridge asked when the new Comprehensive Plan would be complete and Mr. Edge said it will be completed this year. Vice Chairwoman Clark told them to make sure the Council has enough time to review it. Councilman Johnson asked Mr. Edge to provide Council with a copy of the draft. Councilman Drayton asked about the property off of Hwy. 17 near the interstate. Mr. Edge said the property is in Hardeeville and a rest area and truck stop are planned. **Johnny Davis**, director of Parks and Recreation, discussed the departments in his division, the number of employees in each department and the total salaries for the employees in each department. Mr. Davis explained that he had a staff of 5 people and they cover all of Jasper County. Mr. Davis said they take care of 4 parks, 10 landings, 5 community centers and they man the 321 acre Sgt. Jasper Park. Mr. Davis said they offer recreation programs and special events for both the youth and adults. Mr. Davis said they partnership with youth baseball and youth football, hold disk golf tournaments, offer canoeing and kayaking. Mr. Davis said his department has a positive economic impact on the County. Mr. Davis said he would like to establish a junior golf league and he advertises all his programs locally. Vice Chairwoman Clark said that Mr. Davis is doing a good job. Mr. Davis said he would like to have a sign that lists all the activities that are going on. Chairman Etheridge asked how Beaufort County gets the word out and Mr. Davis said they have large banners that go across the road near the government building. Councilman

Drayton suggested flyers and a sign at the community centers. Mr. Davis said that he tries to get things out through the schools, but the schools have so many things to hand out, they may not go out. Chairman Etheridge commented that Mr. Davis works just about every Saturday. Councilman Drayton asked about a team that plays at Wagon Branch Loop and Mr. Davis said that was a Hispanic League team and the County does not run it. Chairman Etheridge asked about the old Jaycee field and Mr. Davis said it needed lights for practice. Mr. Fulghum said they were trying to get a grant for lights. Mr. Davis said they are about finished with Phase One of the connector trail and that a ribbon cutting will be scheduled for March 1, 2013 at 10:30 a.m. Mr. Davis said the parks are open 7 days a week, but they are closed Thanksgiving and Christmas and they are open from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. which creates some staffing issues. Mr. Davis listed the increased activity at the Sgt. Jasper Park and the improvements that have been made. Mr. Davis said he could really use a part-time person for the weekends and Chairman Etheridge suggested volunteers. Mr. Davis discussed the repairs and upgrades needed at the community centers and at the landings. Vice Chairwoman Clark said she was very excited with what he was doing and that it was important to get the word out. The Council and Mr. Davis discussed Facebook, the website, email and phone blasts to reach the public. Chairman Etheridge said the Council will help spread the word. Chairman Etheridge discussed the new RV Park locating near the park. The Council discussed Corner Lake landing and primitive camping. Mr. Davis said the soccer teams followed the Olympics this year and a soccer complex is really needed. Chairman Etheridge said they really needed to start hunting grants. Mr. Fulghum told the Council that Mr. Davis was working on a CBDG grant. Mr. Davis said they need a gymnasium and he does work with the schools, but the schools programs take priority. Chairman Etheridge asked about the gym at the old high school and Mr. Davis said it had floor problems. Mr. Davis said they have also partnered with the USCB cross country team and he has a data base of everyone who participates in his programs. Councilman Johnson asked Mr. Davis to see what could be done at the Screven's Ferry Landing. Councilman Johnson said the Sandshark programs may be able to capitalize on that and it has a major potential that has gone unrecognized. Mr. Davis said an economic input study should be done. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked how much revenue is generated from the rentals. Mr. Davis said there has not been an increase in fees since 2005 and the park is booked a year in advance and they only charge \$50 for 4 hours at the community centers and \$100 for 4 hours at the park. Mr. Davis said the same type of building like at the park cost \$400 in Estill. Vice Chairwoman Clark said that Mr. Davis needed to make a recommendation to the administrator regarding the fees and he can bring it to Council for approval. Vice Chairwoman Clark said she would like to see quarterly reports and Mr. Davis responded that he provides monthly reports to the administrator. Councilman Johnson said he would like to know the break even amount for the rentals to make sure the costs are covered. Chairman Etheridge asked the administrator to provide the reports and figures. Mr. Davis said the County owns three sets of fields behind the

school and then he was told the school owns the fields. Mr. Davis said he has never seen the deed or contract for the fields. Mr. Malphrus said the Old Kleckley Field is owned by the school district and he is not sure about the 2 small fields. Chairman Etheridge said he has never known the schools to use those fields. Vice Chairwoman Clark said the school district has a phobia about land and she does not understand it. Mr. Fulghum said he would research it.

Renty Kitty – Mr. Kitty reported that the business licenses run from June to July and from June until December 509 business licenses were issued in the amount of \$215,624.33 and there is about \$40,000 in revenue from signs. Mr. Kitty said that there are 43 new businesses and 7 businesses were discontinued. Mr. Kitty said that there were 423 in county renewals and 109 out of county renewals. Mr. Kitty said that when the companies do not respond that is when he knows they are no longer there. Mr. Kitty said the municipalities collect business license fees for the companies located their area. Chairman Etheridge asked how many companies did not renew and Mr. Kitty said only 7 and Mr. Kitty said that renewal notices go out in May. Chairman Etheridge said the renewals are past due now. Mr. Kitty said if they do not renew or respond to the late notices he sends it is because they are small businesses that did not make it and they don't renew. Chairman Etheridge asked if past due notices were sent out and Mr. Kitty said that they were sent if they don't renew within 40 days. Mr. Fulghum asked how you know if they are still operating and Mr. Kitty said he does a field review. Mr. Kitty said the car lots, Publix and Wal-Mart are the biggest businesses. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked how they are charged and Mr. Kitty explained how the fees are calculated. Mr. Kitty also explained how out of county contractors are charged. Councilman Drayton asked how the fees compare to Beaufort County. Mr. Kitty said the County fees are very close to the fees in the surrounding areas. Chairman Etheridge asked about issuing business licenses when the fire inspections and zoning are not completed. Mr. Kitty said a new review process has been established and all the issues are brought to the table. Councilman Johnson asked who was fire marshal for the County and Mr. Daley said the County has two certified fire marshals. Councilman Johnson asked if a person has a problem with the fire marshal what and where can they go and Mr. Daley said the Chief can deal with the people, but they have to meet the requirements. Vice Chairwoman Clark said that they must be sure before issuing the business license. Councilman Drayton said that a citizen called him and Mr. Daley came with the inspector and simple communication resolved the issue on the spot. Mr. Fulghum said a new ordinance may need to be developed and they can adopt the model used by most counties. **Earl Bostick, Jr.** explained that he had 2 people in his department and they service the entire county includes 36 servers of which 10 can never go down. Mr. Bostick said that several of the servers are aging and he was in the process of downsizing servers. Mr. Bostick said they also take care of all software issues and the phone system. Mr. Bostick told the Council they do the repairs and replacements and they are completing upgrading the services for EMS and the Detention Center. Mr. Bostick said they work with the employees and do training in certain departments.

Mr. Bostick said the management server is in place and they manage all requests so at the end of the project all actual time and cost for the County is calculated. Mr. Bostick added that they deal with the vendors, contractors, and price shop the County's needs. Mr. Bostick said they are working on a new website and a Facebook page. Mr. Bostick discussed the new website costs and that the department head would have to provide the information and each department would have to manage their own web page. Mr. Bostick discussed the various software and links for the website. Mr. Fulghum said they need a way to keep up with questions and responses. Mr. Davis said images and information also needs to be included. Mr. Fulghum said there are a lot of questions because people do not know where to go. Mr. Bostick said financial support is needed to get this done. Chairman Etheridge asked about the maintenance contracts and Mr. Bostick responded that he has gotten them down to 1 entity and they have 1 more year and then they can renegotiate. The software contracts are needed, and the cost can be cut based on the PC count and a license is needed for each PC. Mr. Bostick said maintenance and support solves issues and they have to relicense if you change machines. Mr. Bostick said it is better to own the service contract. Mr. Bostick said he is always working and searching for ways to save money. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked about joining other entities for discounts and Mr. Bostick responded that it depends on who is in charge and if they want to cooperate. Mr. Fulghum said we needed to get our house in order and settled and then we can reach out with the municipalities and county and agencies to share the costs. **Arthur Benjamin** informed the Council that he had 35 employees and he currently had 6 vacancies that included and administrative assistant and 5 detention officers. Mr. Benjamin told the Council that he was responsible for the care, custody and control of the inmates Mr. Benjamin said he cannot house juveniles in the 108 bed facility, but the cost of housing them comes from his budget. Mr. Benjamin said it cost \$50 per day per juvenile and there was no youth facility in this area so they are housed in Columbia. Mr. Benjamin credited the career criminal team with keeping the inmate count down. Mr. Benjamin said that by working with other facilities he has been able to keep the costs down and he does not have to send so many inmates to Just Care. Mr. Benjamin said his department has worked on getting grants for vehicles. Mr. Benjamin informed the Council that currently 20 people accused of murder are housed in one wing at the detention center. Councilman Johnson said they cannot be sent to the penitentiary until they are convicted. Vice Chairwoman Clark said the public defender said he needed more money. Chairman Etheridge asked the average length of stay at the detention center. Mr. Benjamin responded that it is not as bad as it used to be and he has taken it up with the solicitor. Councilman Johnson asked if the state has the same procedure to do the same thing no matter what the inmate is charged with and Mr. Benjamin said they are all the same and depending on the date of the hearing and the results. Mr. Benjamin said the number of inmates is up and the number of staff members is down. Chairman Etheridge said the cost of housing an inmate trickles down into other departments. Mr. Fulghum told the Council he

had a video on the career criminal program if they would like to review it. Councilman Drayton said the low count for inmates was 45 after the career criminal program and he asked what the high count was and Mr. Benjamin said over 200. Mr. Benjamin invited the Council to tour the detention center. **Attorney Marvin Jones** explained that he and a para-legal work in his department. Mr. Jones provided a list of activities and duties of his department. Mr. Jones discussed litigations and proposals that he was working on. Mr. Jones said they also handle the FOIA requests and with title issues. Mr. Jones said there were 62 FOIA requests last year and this year there are already 5 requests. Mr. Jones said he also writes the responses for the grievance committee and handles the deeds for the tax sale. Mr. Jones said there were 72 deeds last year and 57 this year. Mr. Jones listed a variety of activities that take up his time and that he works with staff support and he also works with the Planning Commission. Councilman Johnson asked if attending the meeting was a waste of his time and Mr. Jones said that he felt it was important to attend the meetings, but he only attended the planning commission meeting if they requested that he be there. Chairman Etheridge asked about Mr. Jones involvement with the mobile home titles from the tax sale and the mortgage holders not being notified. Mr. Jones said some of the cases are real estate and they had a brand new delinquent tax collector and the 1st year was a hard transition and it should not be a problem in the future. Vice Chairwoman Clark said people were complaining about dilapidated mobile homes and houses on the same road that they have request to have the road paved. Vice Chairwoman Clark said she was going to meet with the people. Chairman Etheridge said they need to find out who owns the mobile home and if nothing is done they need to do something. Chairman Etheridge said there is an ordinance that addresses this and Mr. Edge is in charge of code enforcement. Mr. Fulghum said there were a lot of different ways to handle this. Mr. Fulghum said if there is a code issue to bring it to him and Mr. Edge. Vice Chairwoman Clark said Mr. Terry was on top of it and the road was cleaned. Councilman Johnson said he was concerned about the Forfeit Land Commission (FLC) and they need to abide by the County rules and the FLC needs to be dealt with will all deliberate speed. Councilman Johnson said they may need to meet with the assessor, the delinquent tax collector and coordinate so that the County does not end up with something they don't want. Mr. Jones said there are entities that will take the mobile homes, but the County will end up with little to nothing, but they are not the kind the County would want. Mr. Fulghum said the information was provided to the FLC and there are plans, but the FLC has to take care of it. Mr. Jones said he would look at it again. Mr. Fulghum suggested giving them a proposal and see how they handle it. Mr. Malphrus said he has the names of a some people who will move the mobile homes if the County gave the mobile homes to them for free. Mr. Fulghum said the FLC is aware of this. Mr. Malphrus said the FLC has done something, but has not provided the County with a report.

The Council broke for lunch and upon the opening of the afternoon session the following individuals joined the retreat: Auditor Hazel Holmes, Clerk of Court Margaret Bostick, Sheriff Jenkins, Voters Registration Director Jeanine Bostick and Probate Judge Albert Kleckley.

Councilman Drayton left the meeting after the lunch break.

AFTERNOON DISCUSSION - AUDIT REPORT ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Mr. Widden, the outside auditor, reviewed the audit and explained how it was done. Mr. Widden said the audit provided recommendations with internal control and compliance and there was a problem with separate duties, but due to the management oversight of Lisa Wechsler and Mr. Mellen this is monitored. Chairman Etheridge asked about the Clerk of Counts office and Mr. Widden said that the reports were filed, but not in a timely manner. Mr. Widden said the County was awarded the GFOA award and that his opinion was the audit was good as you can get. **Sheriff Jenkins** told the Council that he had 41 employees and their goal was to provide the best law enforcement they can. Chairman Etheridge asked for a copy of the Sheriff's policy and procedure manual and Sheriff Jenkins said he will provide the Council with a copy. Sheriff Jenkins asked who was the liaison from the Council to the sheriff's department. Chairman Etheridge said that he and Councilman Johnson were the Liaisons to the sheriff's department. Chairman Etheridge said they would like to compare his policies and procedures with the County's. Sheriff Jenkins said the attorney looked at his and it will not line up with the County's. Chairman Etheridge said the Council would like to know what is in it for reference reasons. Sheriff Jenkins said he would provide them with a copy when he met with his liaison members. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked how many deputies work at night and Sheriff Jenkins responded he tries to have 4 deputies on duty at night and they must patrol the County twice a shift, and they do their best, but sometimes they are interrupted by calls. Councilman Johnson asked what the Sheriff's most pressing need was. Sheriff Jenkins responded finances and more people and more finances for overtime. Councilman Johnson asked where does the overtime come from and Sheriff Jenkins said during general session and emergencies. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked for a breakdown of his employees and Sheriff Jenkins said he has 5 people in administration and the rest are officers. Sheriff Jenkins said he looked forward to meeting with liaison committee. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked why he was so far behind with the vehicles and Sheriff Jenkins said they had not received any new cars since 2008 and they just got 8 new cars that are on the road. **Margaret Bostick**, clerk of court, said she is down from 9 employees to 6 employees and she voluntarily decreased them to help with the budget. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked how they could get the people out of the jail faster. Ms. Bostick said she felt the career criminal program was a waste of money and the Judges have control of the docket. Mr. Bostick said the solicitors get them to postpone the trails. Ms. Bostick said the Judges are calling the docket and they will not be picking and choosing. Ms. Bostick said she does

everything she can to get the prisoners out of the County jail. Councilman Johnson asked if the Judges were here more often would that speed things along. Ms. Bostick said she has made that request, but the solicitor said no and she was told they do not have the manpower. Ms. Bostick said the Judges coming more often would help, but they won't do it. Ms. Bostick said her wish list would include getting audio visual for the jury box so they can review the documents and it was not included in the renovation. Ms. Bostick said it was on the list of things needed, but it was not done and there is no money in Court Administration to pay for it. Ms. Bostick said a security scanner was also needed. Councilman Johnson asked if there was a ruling regarding security and Ms. Bostick said it has been mandated for about 5 years. Councilman Johnson asked Ms. Bostick to get a price for the scanner. **Jeanine Bostick** – Ms. Bostick told the Council that her department has two employees. Ms. Bostick said there are 14,701 registered voters in Jasper County and the Registration Board has 5 members. Ms. Bostick said there will be a special election for a school board member. Ms. Bostick said the citizens can register online and she discussed the removal of the signature line on absentee envelopes and they were looking at passing early voting. Ms. Bostick said the candidates can file with the Election Office instead of with the party. Ms. Bostick said there are two mandated seminars about voters ID. Ms. Bostick said she goes to the schools and churches to show people how to operate the voting machines and the machines are all cleared prior to an election. Chairman Etheridge asked how many members short was the election commission. Ms. Bostick said they have 5 members currently, but they can have up to 9 members. Ms. Bostick said they have had 5 members since 2011 and she did not know why others were not appointed. Vice Chairwoman Clark told Ms. Bostick that she told the administrator to have someone cross trained so that when she and her board have to attend meetings that cross trained individual can operate her office because it never should be closed, not even for lunch. Vice Chairwoman Clark said Mr. Fulghum will be in touch with her. Vice Chairwoman Clark said she was concerned about the two mandated classes and how will the elderly know and Ms. Bostick said she advertised the meetings. Councilman Johnson asked about the notary on absentee ballots and Ms. Bostick said she is not making it mandatory. **Albert Kleckley**, the Probate Judge said that there are two people in his office and QS1 was used in his office for many years and they needed to switch over to IKON and it is working very well. Judge Kleckley said he needed a scanner to get information scanned and he could also use a part-time on-call person because there are time when he and his assistant both need to be away from the office and they need to keep the doors open at all times. Councilman Johnson said that perhaps they could use a person from another department that is cross trained. **Hazel Holmes** told the Council she was open for questions. Councilman Johnson asked for a list of the properties and mobile homes held by the FLC. Ms. Holmes said the FLC has a procedure where there is a sale and the delinquent tax collector must certify the property being turned over to the FLC. Ms. Holmes said she just received 8-9 mobile homes and the real estate is sitting with the attorney

and she is waiting on the deeds. Ms. Holmes said she did not have the current list, but she did have some properties from last year. Ms. Holmes said there were two other FLC commissioners and they can provide the same information as she can. Councilman Johnson asked how the Council would go about acquiring it. Ms. Holmes said the County wanted the property disposed of quickly so that it gets back on the tax rolls. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked Ms. Holmes to give Mr. Fulghum the list. Ms. Holmes said the properties are sold on a first come basis and if someone wants something she has the secretary do up a bill and they give it to an outside attorney for a quick turnaround. Ms. Holmes said that currently she has a piece of property at the Settings valued at \$11,000 and someone wanted to purchase it for \$2,000. Chairman Etheridge asked how often the FLC meets and Ms. Holmes said 1 or 2 times a month. Chairman Etheridge asked if anything goes out for bids and Ms. Holmes said it is 1st come 1st served. Councilman Johnson asked about derelict mobile homes and Ms. Holmes said she gave amnesty to the people who paid 3 years' worth of back taxes and then they are back on the tax rolls. Ms. Holmes said she did not take title to the derelict mobile homes and if they were not livable she erred them off the tax books. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked about the purchase of land and Ms. Holmes said they come to the office, look at the list and make a decision. Vice Chairwoman Clark told Ms. Holmes to give Mr. Fulghum a copy of the list. Ms. Holmes said the derelict mobile homes were never titled to the FLC and she refused ownership of anything that was not sellable and the County is not responsible for those properties. Mr. Fulghum said the statute gives the authority to Ms. Holmes and she went out and checked each piece of property and mobile home. Mr. Malphrus asked how many were in the name of the FLC and Ms. Holmes said 12 and she sold 4. She said she had 6 from the prior year and 8 this year. Chairman Etheridge asked if the meeting were advertised and Ms. Holmes said they do not have to advertise because they are a commission and the Chairman and Vice Chairwoman are welcome to attend. Mr. Fulghum asked that he be notified of the meetings. Mr. Malphrus asked how many were erred off and Ms. Holmes said she had that number in her office. Ms. Holmes said the Council now has more solid numbers to work with. Ms. Holmes said she erred off over 100 and she has pictures of them. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked that this information be provided to the administrator for the Council to review. Chairman Etheridge said to provide information regarding the ones sold and the ones taken off the tax rolls. Ms. Holmes said a lot of the County is going into debt and she is trying to get the mobile homes situation under control. Councilman Johnson said you go and look and they are not there. Ms. Holmes said that was correct and you cannot find them. Ms. Holmes said she was not asking for anything extra in her budget, but asked the Council to consider the scanning equipment she requested last year. She said the equipment would benefit her office, the treasurer, the assessor and the delinquent tax collector. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked her to check and see if the program was upgraded since last year. Ms. Holmes said it was tied into QS/1 and it was updated. **Phil Richardson** provided an update of economic development activity since the County joined the

Alliance. Mr. Richardson said a study of I-95 and the land near-by was done and they have a list of all the properties and the environmental information. Mr. Richardson discussed Riverport, the Hardeeville Commerce Park and the Nimmer Tract. Mr. Richardson said that the Ridgeland Commercial Park and the Hardeeville Commercial Park are moving to round two. Mr. Richardson discussed the new companies locating in Jasper County and the new RV Park at Exit 8 in Hardeeville. Mr. Richardson discussed work at Exit 5 and that the economy is picking up. Mr. Richardson discussed the businesses that will be hiring soon and that he met with the Commerce Department to see how they can help. Mr. Richardson said he has met with some businesses that are looking for new locations that will be suitable for them. Mr. Richardson discussed CAMI and that they are doing international work and he described the equipment they were building. Mr. Richardson said the FEMA should have some of this equipment. Mr. Richardson discussed prospects he is working with and he was helping to develop sites so they are ready for spec buildings. Chairman Etheridge said he would like an update on Be Green and Mr. Richardson said he hoped to meet with them next week. Mr. Richardson provided an update on Daniel Defense. Mr. Richardson said they are working on a getting a proper entrance site and a grant for the infrastructure for the Hardeeville Tract at Exit 5; Mr. Richardson discussed the Sherwood Tract and that BJWSA was applying for a grant for water and sewer. Chairman Etheridge asked about Gateway Crossings and Mr. Richardson said the primary focus is not residential and they were formulating something with commercial development. Mr. Richardson said they were working with the COG and comparing Jasper County to other areas to see what needs to be adjusted and they are comparing other successful areas to see what needs to be done. Councilman Johnson asked what other obstacles they were encountering beside the schools. Mr. Richardson the schools are a problem and the workforce. Mr. Richardson said he has been providing a larger area to draw the workforce. Councilman Johnson asked if they have coordinated with the tech school. Mr. Richardson said the tech schools will become involved as needed. Councilman Johnson asked about what was being done to get the Port built. Mr. Richardson said that was a big political question and he is monitoring it. Mr. Richardson said the Alliance is behind it and they realize what is lacking is that the whole state will be impacted. Vice Chairwoman Clark asked about the Sunday sale of alcohol being placed on the ballot. Mr. Fulghum said he will get the information on it. Mr. Fulghum said it is already being done in Hardeeville. Mr. Richardson said they are putting together a good action plan and want to be more proactive and visit companies. Councilman Johnson told Mr. Richardson that if he needed anything to let Council know. Mr. Richardson said that landing good companies with bring down taxes. Chairman Etheridge commented that he was proud to be part of the Alliance and felt the Alliance will move the County forward. Mr. Richardson said that Jasper County is a good location with I-95 and the railroad. Mr. Richardson said he knows the areas that the County wants to develop and they know what they need to do and they needed money to get the infrastructure in place

and he planned to get out and visit companies. **Andrew Fulghum** said he felt the retreat was much more productive and that workshops will be held to decide what to do. Mr. Fulghum said the County has completed plans for another spec building and it is proposed to go across the street from Brown Campbell. Mr. Fulghum said the Hardeeville Commerce Park is a priority and they requested RDA funds for it, but the RDA funds went to Bluffton this year. Mr. Fulghum said they have evaluated the office space and work still needed to be done. Mr. Fulghum told the Council that all the County buildings are ADA compliant. Mr. Fulghum told the Council he has worked with the Forfeit Land Commission. Mr. Fulghum discussed the project for drainage at the Hardeeville Industrial Park. Mr. Fulghum said funds were received in the 1960's and the County is obligated for the drainage and pumping the water was done, but the pumps were stolen. Mr. Fulghum said that the drainage is now a problem. Mr. Fulghum discussed the possibilities for correcting the problem. Mr. Fulghum said he met twice with Hardeeville and a new engineering firm. Mr. Fulghum said they were making some headway and a draft agreement was being done to resolve the County of all responsibilities. Mr. Fulghum told the Council he would send them a summary of last year's retreat list and the action that has been taken. Mr. Fulghum discussed economic development and identifying key properties. Mr. Fulghum said he is met with the YMCA regarding a recreation facility at the old high school. Mr. Fulghum said he was working on getting a grant for infrastructure for the Hardeeville Commerce Park and Mr. Richardson is working with prospects for that park. Mr. Fulghum discussed bringing natural gas through Turkey Hill Plantation to the CRBIP. Mr. Fulghum said he has also applied for funding for the Ridgeland Industrial Park. Mr. Fulghum said that they have a prospect for the Ridgeland Industrial Park, but infrastructure was needed. Mr. Fulghum said the County has a purchase option for the Park. Mr. Fulghum said that he was also working on expanding the airport and he provided notes from 2001 regarding the 5,000 foot runway. Mr. Fulghum said they have received \$950,000 of entitlement money from the FAA for safety improvements. Mr. Fulghum said he was attending a conference and he was going to request additional \$43,000. Mr. Fulghum said they have also received a grant from the state in the amount of \$102,000. Mr. Fulghum said that the FAA would pay 90% if it goes through. Mr. Fulghum told the Council that Be Green pays no operating taxes, but it does pay school taxes and they will go into an educational fund for green education at the public schools. Mr. Fulghum said that an account needed to be set up. The Council asked Mr. Fulghum to revisit the hospital property and to see what is planned. Mr. Fulghum discussed an impact group that wanted to apply for a CBDG grant to do something in Levy. Mr. Fulghum said that with CBDG they needed to have a plan in place and ready to go. Mr. Fulghum said he was going to have a video done on the trestle which is now complete. Mr. Fulghum said he would like the Council to be involved and it is a good way to get the word out to the public. Mr. Fulghum informed the Council that there were several leases getting ready to expire and they needed to be revisited. Mr. Fulghum said Exit 8 was being looked at for retail

development and they may need to hire someone to market it. Mr. Fulghum said there is a lot of potential at Exit 8. Mr. Fulghum added that he was working with Mr. Nanni on the Hardeeville Library and with the Town of Ridgeland on Turpin Park. Mr. Fulghum explained that the Jasper Ocean Terminal Joint Project Office was discussed and Mr. Fulghum commented that it is a political football with the County stuck in the middle. Mr. Fulghum said the Port Project is endorsed by Governor Haley and the project is close to being able to pull a permit on it, but they can't do it just yet. Mr. Fulghum added that the dredging is up in the air and he thought it was rescinded. Mr. Fulghum told the Council that the County storage facility was started at the Old Clemson Building and the County needed to move forward digitizing documents as a solution is needed for record storage. Mr. Fulghum discussed the IPOD at Point South and that Meely is doing a study and will be presenting a report. Mr. Fulghum told the Council that the attorney will be providing a report on the Settings and that they were trying to get the cash from the bonding company to complete the project to the lots that were sold. Mr. Fulghum updated the Council on the drainage assessment appraisal, a proposed wetland mitigation map, the widening of Hwy. 17 at the southern end of the County, and that the Back River Bridge is going to be replaced. Mr. Fulghum explained that the widening was being paid 90% by Georgia and 10% by South Carolina. Mr. Fulghum said it will not be four lanes; it will be 2 lanes with 10 ft. shoulders. Mr. Fulghum said that Hardeeville's annex projects, the New River Area and the Nichol Plate Agreement needed to be reviewed.

Chairman Etheridge said he thought the Council need to tour the County lines and the areas of development.

The Retreat ended at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Judith M. Frank, ccc
Clerk to Council

Approved by:

Henry Etheridge
Chairman