

Council Members

District 1: Terry Graham
District 2: Charlene McGriff
District 3: Billy Mosteller, Secretary
District 4: Jose Luis
District 5: Steve Harper, Chair
District 6: Allen Blackmon
District 7: Brian Carnes, Vice-Chair

**County Administrator**

Dennis E. Marstall

County Attorney

Ginny L. Merck-Dupont

Clerk to Council

Sherrie Simpson

June 5, 2024

2:00 PM

**101 North Main Street
Lancaster, SC 29720**

**LANCASTER COUNTY COUNCIL
County Council Chambers, County Administration
Building, 101 North Main Street, Lancaster, SC 29720**

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Council Members Present: Allen Blackmon, Brian Carnes, Steve Harper, Billy Mosteller, Charlene McGriff, Terry Graham (entered at approximately 2:11 p.m., after the vote to go into Executive Session), and Jose Luis.

Staff Members/Others present: Dennis Marstall, County Administrator; Ginny Merck-Dupont, County Attorney; Sherrie Simpson, Clerk to Council; Stephany Snowden, Deputy County Administrator; Jamie Privuznak, Budget Director; Monique Beasley, Accounting Supervisor; Darren Player, Fire Service Director; Suzette Murphey, Auditor; Chief Greg Nicholson; Jeff Catoe, Public Services Director; Leah Clevenger, Information Technology Project Manager; Brenda Thompson, Communications and Marketing Director; Karla Deese, Coroner; Chris Clouden, Parks and Recreation Director; the press; various elected officials; various Department Heads; various employees; and citizens.

A quorum of Lancaster County Council was present for the meeting. The following press were notified of the meeting by e-mail in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act: *The Lancaster News*, *Kershaw News Era*, *The Rock Hill Herald*, Cable News 2, Channel 9 and the local government channel. The agenda was posted in the lobby of the County Administration Building and also on the County website within the required length of time. The power point presentation utilized during the meeting is attached to the written minutes in the Clerk to Council's office.

Call to Order - Chairman Steve Harper

Chairman Steve Harper called the special meeting of County Council to order at approximately 2:00 p.m.

Welcome and Recognition - Chairman Steve Harper

Chairman Steve Harper welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation - Council Member Allen Blackmon

Allen Blackmon led the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and delivered the Invocation.

Approval of the Agenda

Brian Carnes moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Charlene McGriff. The motion Passed by a vote of 6-0; Absent: Graham.

Citizens Comments

The following citizens signed up for and spoke during Citizen Comments:

1. Revery Johnson, Indian Land, SC spoke regarding fire department funding.
2. Bruce Cohen, Indian Land, SC spoke regarding fire department funding and merit pay for County employees.

The following citizens submitted electronic, written comments for Citizen Comments: None.

Executive Session

One Item:

1. **Discussion and review of security issues and devices relative to County Administration Building sensitive equipment room.**

Steve Harper stated that he needed a motion to go into Executive Session for discussion and review of security issues and devices relative to the County Administration Building sensitive equipment room and to invite Information Technology staff and the Deputy County Administrator into Executive Session. Allen Blackmon stated that he so moved. Seconded by Billy Mosteller. The motion to go into Executive Session Passed by a vote of 6-0; Absent: Graham. At approximately 2:10 p.m., Council went into Executive Session.

Terry Graham arrived at approximately 2:11 p.m. and went directly into Executive Session

Council came out of Executive Session and Steve Harper called the meeting back to order at approximately 2:41 p.m. Charlene McGriff moved to come out of Executive Session. Seconded by Brian Carnes. The motion to come out of Executive Session Passed by a vote of 7-0.

Upon returning to open session, Ginny Merck-Dupont noted that during Executive Session, Council discussed and reviewed security issues and devices relative to the County Administration Building sensitive equipment room. She stated that during Executive session, no motions were made, and no votes were taken.

Non-Consent Agenda

1st Reading of Ordinance 2024-1910 regarding Approval of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget

Ordinance Title: An Ordinance To Appropriate Funds And Approve A Detailed Budget For Lancaster County For The Fiscal Year Beginning July 1, 2024 And Ending June 30, 2025 (FY 2024-25); To Set Millage Rates For The Levy Of Ad Valorem Taxes; To Approve A Schedule Of Taxes, Fees And Charges For FY 2024-25; And To Provide For Matters Related Thereto.

Brian Carnes moved to approve the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2024-1910. Seconded by Charlene McGriff.

Ginny Merck-Dupont stated, for the record, that the motion referenced was to review the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2024-1910 as it stood, as amended, at the previous Reading with the amendments made at the Council meeting that was held on May 28, 2024. Dennis Marstall expressed the urgency of the upcoming deadline for the

Public Hearing notice for the 3rd Reading of Ordinance 2024-1910 being Thursday, June 6, 2024, in order to be published in the Saturday, June 8, 2024, newspaper. The Public Hearing notice would advertise what the potential millage impact would be for FY25.

Jamie Privuznak noted that each Council member was given a notebook with budget information. A copy of the notebook is attached as Schedule A to the written minutes in the Clerk to Council's office. Ms. Privuznak reviewed the updated Fund Balance Appropriations, position adjustments, and new position line items via the County's PowerPoint presentation. The presentation reflected the amendments that Council made at the May 28, 2024, Council meeting. Council and Staff discussed the contracted services for a Grant Writer line item of \$98,000. Council was not in favor of budgeting an amount that significant, and Charlene McGriff requested to see that amount cut in half. Council and Staff discussed the Parks and Recreation ballfield lights line item of \$50,000. Chris Clouden stated that the funds would be used to upgrade to an automating lights software at Buford and Springdale ballfields.

Charlene McGriff made a motion to amend the Parks and Recreation ballfield light upgrade line item to reflect the updated amount of \$50,000. Seconded by Billy Mosteller. There was no discussion from Council. The amendment Passed by a vote of 6-1; Ayes: Blackmon, Carnes, Harper, Mosteller, McGriff, Graham; Nays: Luis.

Jose Luis made a motion to reduce the Information Technology data room upgrade line item from \$250,000 to \$65,000. Seconded by Allen Blackmon. The amendment Failed by a vote of 3-4; Ayes: Blackmon, Graham, Luis; Nays: Carnes, Harper, Mosteller, McGriff.

Brian Carnes made a motion to accept the Emergency Medical Services line item in the amount of \$23,311 for a position upgrade from Equipment Manager to Deputy Director. Seconded by Allen Blackmon. The amendment Passed by a vote of 7-0.

Charlene McGriff made a motion to reduce the contractual services for a Grant Writer line item to \$49,000. Seconded by Allen Blackmon. Terry Graham made a motion to amend Ms. McGriff's amendment to reduce the contractual services for a Grant Writer line item to \$0. Seconded by Jose Luis. The amended amendment Passed by a vote of 5-2; Ayes: Blackmon, Carnes, Mosteller, Graham, Luis; Nays: Harper, McGriff.

Jamie Privuznak reviewed the External Budget requests via the County's PowerPoint presentation. Kylie Craig, the Executive Director for the Lancaster County Council on Aging, explained why the organization needed additional funding. Ms. Craig highlighted that County Council had supplied the Council on Aging with \$40,000 each fiscal year since 2009, with no increase. Ms. Craig explained that the money historically provided was no longer covering the needs of the organization when the rising cost of inflation was factored in. Ms. Craig went on to explain that the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) required local match dollars for their assistance of the Lancaster Area Ride Service (LARS) program, which the \$40,000 was allocated towards. Ms. Craig explained that the organization was maxed out on the services they were able to provide due to the exponential growth that the County had experienced, and the lack of an increased amount of funding. Council and Ms. Craig discussed the cost per trip with the LARS program and the outcomes that Council could expect to see with increased funding. Ms. Craig provided Council with an update on the Council on Aging's "Meals on Wheels" program. Ms. Craig announced that there had not been a waitlist for the program since November of 2023, and the organization delivered 300-310 meals to Lancaster County residents on a daily basis.

Allen Blackmon made a motion to adjust the Lancaster County Council on Aging budget line item to \$100,000. Seconded by Brian Carnes. There was no discussion from Council. The amendment Passed by a vote of 7-0.

Jamie Privuznak reviewed the Replacement Fund Highlights - Capital Improvement Fund via the County's PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Privuznak proposed that the vehicle replacement fund be increased by 2 mils, from 5.3 to 7.3 mils. Council and Staff discussed the Parks and Recreation gym wall padding and flooring line item of \$250,000. Chris Clouden stated that the gym wall padding would be installed at all four recreation centers and the flooring upgrades would most likely be for the Springdale Recreation Center's gym. Council and Staff also discussed the cost of brush trucks for the Fire Service, and Darren Player explained the brush truck program.

Dennis Marstall stated that Ordinance 2024-1910 had the millage increase for the County Operating Budget as 3.5 mils, but it would be increased to 4.2 mils when the salary adjustments that Council had previously discussed were included. Council and Staff discussed the \$3.3 million new revenue projection for FY25, and how that number was calculated.

Allen Blackmon made a motion to increase the revenue projection amount to \$36,037,698.33. Seconded by Jose Luis. The amendment Failed by a vote of 2-5; Ayes: Blackmon, Luis; Nays: Carnes, Harper, Mosteller, McGriff, Graham.

Council requested information on building permit and Certificate of Occupancy (CO) data, and the revenue brought in by them. Council and Staff discussed revenue for Fee in Lieu of Tax (FILOT) agreements, and Allen Blackmon requested justification on how the numbers were calculated. Council and Staff also reviewed trust fund overages and information that was missing in the year-to-date budget items listed in Council's budget notebooks.

Council and Staff discussed the expenses in the Operating Budget. Jose Luis questioned the vacancies in the Building Department and Planning Department, and why the departments requested funds for the hiring of additional staff when the departments had routinely functioned without additional staff in the past, and the number of building permits issued had decreased over the last year. Charlene McGriff believed that the current department staff would be overworked if the new positions were not created and budgeted for. Dennis Marstall noted that if the funds for the salaries were not utilized, they would be returned to the Fund Balance. Allen Blackmon reviewed the Airport funding and questioned how much the County was planning to have to makeup in shortfall for the Airport.

Charlene McGriff made a motion to cap the County Operating millage at 93.00, the County Debt millage at 6.00, and the County Capital Improvement millage at 7.30. Seconded by Brian Carnes. Billy Mosteller voiced concerns with the proposed millage increase and stated that the County needed to find more revenue that could be utilized in place of a millage increase.

Terry Graham made a motion to amend Charlene McGriff's motion to cap the County Operating millage at 91.80. There was no second. The motion died on the floor due to the lack of a second.

Since the amendment to the original motion died, Allen Blackmon made a motion to amend Charlene McGriff's motion to cap the County Operating millage at 88.80, the County Debt millage at 6.00, and the County Capital Improvement millage at 7.30. Seconded by Jose Luis. Charlene McGriff explained that if there was no millage increase, Council would either need to cut more out of the proposed budget or find more revenue. The amendment Failed by a vote of 2-5; Ayes: Blackmon, Luis; Nays: Carnes, Harper, Mosteller, McGriff, Graham.

Since the amendment to the original motion failed, Terry Graham made a motion to amend Charlene McGriff's motion to cap the County Operating millage at 91.80, the County Debt millage at 6.00, and the County Capital Improvement millage at 7.30. Seconded by Charlene McGriff. There was no discussion from Council. The amendment Passed by a vote of 5-2; Ayes: Carnes, Harper, Mosteller, McGriff, Graham; Nays: Blackmon, Luis.

Dennis Marstall and Council discussed Council's opinion on a potential General Obligation bond package for different capital items such as new fire apparatus, convenience site improvements, upfits for County buildings, etc. Mr. Marstall stated that if Council was interested, the conversation could be revisited in July or August of 2024.

Stephany Snowden reviewed the Indian Land Fire Funding Plan via the County's PowerPoint presentation. Council and Staff reviewed the Indian Land rooftop fees and ERU rates. Several Council members questioned if there was any interest in a two-stage hiring process where the County would hire half of the requested fire personnel one year, and the remaining in the next year.

Brian Carnes made a motion to change the fee schedule to reflect 750 square foot ERU and a \$240 roof top fee. Seconded by Jose Luis. There was no discussion from Council. The amendment Passed by a vote of 7-0.

Terry Graham made a motion to approve the 1st Reading of Ordinance 2024-1910 as amended with the amendments made on May 28, 2024, and June 5, 2024. Seconded by Charlene McGriff. The 1st Reading of Ordinance 2024-1910 Passed by a vote of 5-2; Ayes: Carnes, Harper, Mosteller, McGriff, Graham; Nays: Blackmon, Luis.

Adjournment

Charlene McGriff moved to adjourn the special Council meeting. Seconded by Allen Blackmon. The motion to adjourn Passed by a vote of 7-0.

There being no further business to discuss, the special meeting of Council adjourned at approximately 4:55 p.m.

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