



MINUTES

County Council Meeting

Special Meeting

Tuesday, September 27, 2022

Spartanburg County Council met on Tuesday, September 27, 2022, at 3:00 p.m. in County Council Chambers of the County Administration Building. The following were in attendance: Honorable Manning Lynch, Chairman; Honorables Monier Abusaft, Jack Mabry, David Britt, Justin McCorkle, Bob Walker, and Jessica Coker, Council Members; along with Cole Alverson, County Administrator; Earl Alexander, Deputy County Administrator; Kevin Stiens, Assistant County Administrator, John Harris, County Attorney; and Ryan Gaylord, Deputy County Attorney. In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, notice of this meeting was provided in advance to the local news media and other interested parties.

Meeting was live streamed via YouTube. Links and instructions for how to access this meeting via computer or mobile device were made available on the County's webpage and provided to the local media.

I.

Chairman Lynch called the meeting to order.

EXECUTIVE SESSION CONFERENCE ROOM TWO

II.

Motion made by Mr. Mabry to enter Executive Session for receipt of legal advice subject to the attorney-client privilege and discussion of matters relating to the proposed location and provision of services encouraging location of a business in the area. Motion seconded by Ms. Coker and carried. No action was taken following Executive Session.

**GENERAL SESSION
COUNTY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
3:30 P.M.**

III.

Cole Alverson, County Administrator, presented information in reference to the Spartanburg County Vision Plan. (Presentation and Vision Plan document included in backup) In December, County Council held an all-day Work Session where Council had some robust discussion about trajectory of the County; opportunities that Council collectively sees to improve; and feedback that Council receives from the community. From that Council debated and collectively identified five Vision Areas that Council wanted to focus on over the coming years. Those areas were (1) Accelerate the improvement of County roads; (2) Make strategic use of land to foster both quality of life and economic growth; (3) Strike optimal balance between attracting corporate presence and supporting the growth and thriving of small businesses; (4) Expand access to housing that is affordable; and (5) Champion a vibrant downtown.

Following Council's Visioning Session, senior leadership met with our facilitator to identify and discuss strategies around each vision area. They identified a measurable goal for each area and identified four to five key strategies for each vision area that they believe will help to advance the vision and positively impact progress towards the goal. Through spring, they developed key budget recommendations to provide resources to execute the strategies; developed operational level deliverables for year one; and begun a variety of work around each vision area, beginning to advance early strategies. From there, a larger internal group met to come up with our year-one work plan and begin execution of some of the items that were discussed with Council and approved during the budget process. Staff has begun work within each of the five vision areas.

Vision Area 1 is Accelerate Improvement of County Roads. This whole area is dedicated to building public trust, demonstrating progress, being strategic in how we deploy resources so that we impact the most people and communicating our plan and progress better with the public. We have 1700+ miles and 150+ bridges. A 2020 Condition Assessment found that our average OCI is 61 and 33% of our roads (568 miles) fall below an OCI of 50. The scope of our network, combined with its condition and growth trajectory requires that we take a more aggressive approach. Our goal around Vision I is to increase our progress on road improvement and assess how those improvements positively impact the public. The strategies around this body of work are to focus on the areas and projects that impact the most people. It is no longer viable to take the worst-first approach. Our second strategy is to increase our communication with the public on our progress. The third area is to heavily rely on data to help us prioritize projects – develop a new methodology on choosing projects. We also need to focus on better coordinating our projects with new development and growth

trends to make sure we are responding to, but more importantly planning for growth. Lastly, we need to identify additional financial resources to support this body of work. Mr. Walker stated that he would encourage Council to try to schedule public hearings where people have the right to appear before Council. Mr. Alverson stated some of those things can be incorporated. Staff can talk with Council Members about that after the fact. The focus for the Work Session was to stay high level and some of those more tactical level things that we think we can do to increase the touch points with the public to get feedback from them on whether or not our plan is in alignment with what they see from their vantage point and to be able to communicate our plan for roads coming up have been nailed down, but they were not included in this presentation. Administration will be happy to share those with Council offline, but also take the feedback about doing some more community level meetings.

Vision Area 2 is Strategic Use of Land to Balance Growth and Quality of Life. This is all about finding a better balance given our rate of growth. Given the County's growth trajectory, it is important to focus on quality of life and preserving the County's natural character. Strategies focus on balancing land use to increase public access by County and others; finding new ways to incorporate natural areas as a part of the development process; and implement a uniform method of ensuring compatibility. The Goal is to improve the ratio of quality-of-life oriented space to newly developed space. Strategies are to seek acquisition opportunities for public benefit; create opportunities to preserve quality space through partnerships; incentivize private development to incorporate enhanced spaces as part of their projects; increase trail mileage; and complete roll-out of the Performance Zoning Ordinance.

Vision Area 3 is to Balance Small and Large Business. This vision area is about finding a new balance in our support of small business versus recruitment of large business. We need them both to support our economy and to provide jobs. Leadership is looking at developing a new focus area for small and minority businesses recognizing that their needs and the toolkit required to support them are fundamentally different than the toolkit we have for large businesses. Council was clear that they did not want to reduce our focus on large business. This year's economic development numbers are evidence that has not changed. If anything, it has accelerated. Instead, Council wants to add a new focus to make sure we are taking care of small and minority businesses while we are still trying to bring the large employers to the County. The Strategies for this vision are aimed at developing core competency, new tactics to improve outcomes, tailored to the needs of small and minority businesses. The Goal is to strengthen small, local businesses and their impact on the County's economy. The strategies for this vision include creating funding framework to support small/minority business development; fostering community expertise in small/minority business support; establishing technical assistance for small/minority businesses; reducing impediments to conduct business with the County; and identifying and connecting with small/minority businesses. About

400 small businesses currently do business with the County of about 5500 in the County with under 25 employees. The County needs to do a better job of identifying and connecting with these businesses.

Vision Area 4 is to Expand Access to Housing that is Affordable. It has long been the County's practice to be in the affordable housing space with our federal programs, but that work is both fiscally limited and limited from a programmatic standpoint. The current housing market has driven up prices, but we need to better understand the extent to which that has negatively impacted affordability for our residents. A lot of this body of work will be about identifying where we are currently, where the gap exists and crafting our strategies based on that information. Federal programs are constrained and tedious to administer. The goal of Vision Area 4 is to increase the availability of housing within residents' affordability range. Strategies include utilizing data to better understand our inventory and needs; reducing blight to improve housing communities and improve opportunities; based on gap analysis, creating new policies to encourage developers to construct housing in areas of need; advocating for public policies that promote housing affordability; and leveraging partnerships to reduce the gap.

Vision Area 5 is to Champion a Vibrant Downtown. The final area is centered around the vibrancy of downtown Spartanburg. The City of Spartanburg is our County seat. We have great partnerships there. A strong body needs a strong heart, and there are many trickle-down benefits. Community perception and trajectory is often focused on the vibrancy of the urban area, the city. Our body of work will largely be in the unincorporated area surrounding the City, but not exclusively. Our goal is to increase employment and residency in downtown. The strategies are to use economic development tools to attract business and residents to downtown; improve the aesthetics of the gateways leading to downtown; strategically divest in County-owned properties downtown to compel positive change; and to coordinate design and site selection of Joint Government Center. Mr. Walker stated that he knows we are promoting Spartanburg, but he is looking at Campobello, Landrum, Inman, Lyman, and all these cities. A lot of people from Spartanburg go to Landrum for the restaurants. He hopes we do not get ourselves set just with downtown Spartanburg, because we have other cities that also need this. Mr. Alverson stated they have debated this internally. The way he has been thinking about it is that he thinks this is where our body of work starts, but it is very conceivable that we look at any of these downtowns as potential little hubs. They have their own personality, intrigue, and attractants. When we figure out what the toolkit looks like and the strategies, they could be moved out to those cities to help support them too.

Takeaways were presented. Much of the body of work has been started since the vision was identified. Partnership has been and will continue to be critical. Alignment of efforts is key. Administration commits to updating Council regularly on our progress. We need to give ourselves flexibility to adjust strategies as we

deploy. Council also has American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and a tremendous opportunity to make advancements early. The formalized Vision Plan document was given to Council. Mr. Alverson and the County Council Members thanked Staff for putting this document together.

Motion made by Ms. Coker to adopt the Spartanburg County Vision Plan. Motion seconded by Mr. Mabry and carried.

IV.

Cole Alverson, County Administrator, presented information in reference to a project rating methodology for **American Rescue Plan submittals**. A Draft Rating Methodology for America Rescue Plan Proposals was provided to Council. The County has received about \$62.1 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. To date, County Council has only formally allocated \$4.5 million for Rural Broadband, which leaves about \$57.6 million for Council to allocate. To date, we have received about \$186 million worth of funding requests through various channels. Staff thought it may be beneficial to send the projects through a rating methodology using a set of criteria and stack them up against themselves to help give Council some context to discuss them. It is envisioned that Council will have a Work Session scheduled to sit down and go through the projects. The draft rating form contains a variety of criteria by which each funding proposal would be evaluated. Each criteria includes a point scale and weight that will help to translate criteria into a project score. The project score will then be utilized to develop a preliminary rating list. No action taken.

V.

Motion made by Mr. Britt to render third reading to an Ordinance authorizing the Second Amendment of a Fee in Lieu of Tax Agreement by and between Spartanburg County, South Carolina and **AFL Telecommunications LLC, dated December 1, 2008**, to amend the definition of "Land" under the Fee in Lieu of Tax Agreement. Motion seconded by Mr. Mabry and carried.

VI.

Motion made by Mr. Britt to render third reading an Ordinance authorizing the Amendment of a Fee in Lieu of Tax Agreement by and between Spartanburg County, South Carolina and **AFL Telecommunications LLC, dated November 20, 2017**, to amend Exhibit A of the Agreement to include additional real property. Motion seconded by Mr. Mabry and carried.

VII.

Motion made by Mr. Britt to render third reading an Ordinance authorizing the Amendment of a Fee in Lieu of Tax Agreement by and between Spartanburg County, South Carolina and **AFL Telecommunications LLC, dated October 15, 2018**, to amend Exhibit A of the Agreement to include additional real property. Motion seconded by Mr. Mabry and carried.

VIII.

Motion made by Mr. Britt to render third reading an Ordinance authorizing the Amendment of a Fee in Lieu of Tax Agreement by and between Spartanburg County, South Carolina and **AFL Telecommunications LLC, dated August 16, 2021**, to amend Exhibit A of the Agreement to include additional real property. Motion seconded by Mr. Mabry and carried.

IX.

Motion made by Mr. Britt to amend the proposed Ordinance amending the **Spartanburg County Performance Zoning Ordinance (PZO)**, Ordinance No. O-19-29, so as to add a definition of flagpole to Article 7, Chapter 2; to revise Section 7.7.20 to clarify the maximum size flag that can be flown based on the height of the flagpole; to add Section 8.3.08 to allow flags which are displayed on existing flagpoles as of today, September 27, 2022, to remain so long as the design, symbol or decorative feature does not change, and if those items are changed the flagpole must comply with the height limitations in Section 7.7.20. Motion seconded by Mr. Abusoft. Motion to amend Ordinance carried. Motion made by Mr. Britt to render third reading to the Ordinance as amended. Motion seconded by Mr. Mabry and carried.

X.

Motion made by Mr. McCorkle to render third reading an Uncodified Ordinance to grant a Utility Easement to Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC to provide electrical service for lighting and other improvements at the property commonly identified as **Old Canaan Park**. Motion seconded by Mr. Britt and carried.

XI.

Meeting adjourned.

Spartanburg County Council

By:


A. Manning Lynch, Chairman

Attest:


Deborah C. Ziegler
Clerk to Council