



Minutes  
Sumter County Council Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, September 13, 2022 -- Held at 6:00 p.m.  
Sumter County Administration Building  
Third Floor, County Council Chambers  
13 E. Canal Street, Sumter, SC

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**Council Members, Staff, And The Public Will Be Asked To Wear A Facemask At The Meeting. Social Distancing Is Required At All Of County Council's Meetings. Seating Is On A First Come First Serve Basis.**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAHjqzPaonQ9LFS2kO37tA>

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:** James T. McCain, Jr., Chairman; James R. Byrd, Vice Chairman; Artie Baker, Eugene R. Baten, Charles T. Edens, Vivian Fleming McGhaney, and Carlton B. Washington.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**COUNTY STAFF PRESENT:** Gary Mixon, Mary Blanding, Johnathan Bryan, Annie Rivers, Valerie Brunson, Jeff Dewort, Greg Hawkins, Joe Perry, and two Sheriff Deputies.

**MEDIA PRESENT:** The Item Newspaper, Shelbie Goulding.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT:** Approximately six members of the public were present.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Or Vice Chairman Of Sumter County Council

Chairman McCain called County Council's meeting of September 13, 2022, to order.

**INVOCATION:** Council Member, Staff Member, Or Local Citizen

Veteran Rev. Frederick L. Huth, Jr., gave the invocation and gave some background about his time in the Military. He ended his brief history with the statement that he is alive at 97 years of age because God brought him to be able to tell his story. Of the 14 young men in his graduating class only two of the 12 that went into the military came back home alive.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Veteran Frederick L. Huth, Jr., from Council District 4. Rev. Huth informed those present that he is 97 years of age. He thanked God for allowing him to live through World War II. He is from Council District #5. Council thanked Rev. Huth for his service.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Regular Meeting Tuesday, September 13, 2022  
Chairman McCain called for a motion on approving the agenda.

**ACTION:** MOTION was made by Councilman Baten, seconded by Councilman Baker, and unanimously carried by County Council to approve the agenda as presented.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Regular Meeting Tuesday, August 23, 2022  
Chairman McCain stated that he would entertain a motion on the approval of the minutes of August 23, 2022.

**ACTION:** MOTION was made by Vice Chairman Byrd, seconded by Councilman Baker, and unanimously carried by County Council to approve the minutes of August 23, 2022, as presented.

**LAND USE MATTERS AND REZONING REQUESTS:**

Planned Development/Rezoning Requests:

*NOTE RZ = Rezoning Of Property As Applicable In Sumter County Zoning and Development Standards.  
AC = Agricultural Conservation As Applicable In Sumter County Zoning and Development Standards.  
NC = Neighborhood Commercial As Applicable In Sumter County Zoning and Development Standards.  
LI-W = Light Industrial-Warehouse As Applicable in Sumter County Zoning and Development Standards.*

- (1) **OA-22-09 -- County Flood Damage Prevention (County) - First Reading** -- Amend Relevant Portions Of The Sumter County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance To Adopt The Black River Watershed Maps And Flood Insurance Study (FIS) Revisions That Become Effective October 27, 2022; And, To Update The Ordinance To Make Corrections And Clarifications Required For Compliance With The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) And Community Rating System (CRS) Program.

Mr. Jeff Dewort, the Zoning Administrator, presented this proposed ordinance amendment to Council for first reading consideration. Mr. Dewort informed Council that this ordinance will amend relevant portions of the Sumter County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance to adopt the Black River Watershed Maps and Flood Insurance Study (FIS) revisions. The Maps must become effective by October 27, 2022. Also, he informed Council that there will be other updates which include corrections and clarifications required for compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and Community Rating System.

This is a separate ordinance from the County's Planning and Zoning Ordinance. This ordinance purpose is to regulate development and disturbance in specific areas, special flood hazard areas, also known as floodplains, that are shown on maps provided by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). The County participates in the NFIP Program; it is a two-fold program where residences have the ability to have federally backed flood insurance, in turn the County adopts a local ordinance that regulates the development in the floodplain areas. The ordinance must meet FEMA's minimum standards; however, Sumter County's proposed ordinance exceeds FEMA's minimum standards to participate in the Community Rating System Program which residents with Flood Insurance access to purchase insurance premiums at a better rate.

Mr. Dewort also provided new maps for Council and the public review of the Black River Watershed Maps. He also stated that the Planning Commission reviewed the maps and recommended approval of the ordinance. In addition, the S. C. Flood Mitigation Office also reviewed the proposed maps as presented at this meeting. The Planning staff recommended approval of this ordinance as presented so that the County can remain a member of the NFIP program.

Councilman Edens stated that he, Vice Chairman Byrd, and the Administrator attended a meeting last week which was sponsored concerning the concerns of the new maps. He asked the County administrator to elaborate on the meeting.

Mr. Mixon stated that the meeting was coordinated by Speaker of the House of Representative, the Honorable Murrell Smith's Office and coordinated by Department Of Natural Resources (DNR). It was noted by Mr. Mixon that there are still a lot of questions particularly from those folk that live in the Lakewood Subdivision Community. It was the intent of Speaker Smith that the folk that have been impacted by the changes in the flood maps could meet face to face with DNR who is responsible for the flood information.

As far as the maps presented by Mr. Dewort, Mr. Mixon said that the County must move forward with the maps because the maps have tremendous impact not only on the Lakewood Subdivision, but the entire Black Water Shed Areas. Those at the meeting understand the importance of going forward with the existing maps including, Mr. Louis Tisdale, per Mr. Mixon, who was also present at the meeting with DNR and Council's previous meeting where the maps were discussed, challenged DNR, County Council, and Speaker Smith, to discuss the process on how the maps are developed with local people who know the community better and before the maps being set-in-stone.

Mr. Mixon also stated that Mr. Tisdale indicated that the maps are better than they were before; however, to get it better, local engineers and other professionals, as well as the community, need to be involved with the process early on during the process. Additionally, Mr. Mixon said that Mr. Tisdale asked if the state, local, and national government come up with a funding source to provide an on the ground surveying for the next time the maps must be updated. DNR was challenged to provide a cost estimate of what it would take to fund the re-delineation of the Lakewood Area based on the fact that it has been identified as an area with numerous errors.

Once the information is received from DNR, this matter will be brought back to Council along with the State to see if there is a desire to fund another level of study on that particular area. However, the information that is forthcoming is not in conjunction with action on the ordinance that is before County Council for first reading.

Lastly, Mr. Mixon stated that he would hope that Council will consider granting first reading to this ordinance and review the information from DNR when it is received by the County.

**ACTION:** MOTION was made by Councilman Baker, seconded by Councilman Edens, and unanimously carried by County Council to grant first reading of this ordinance as presented at this meeting.

#### **OTHER PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

- (1) None

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- (1) Presentation By Annie Rivers, Executive Director, Sumter County Museum And Molly Fortune, The Executive Director of the SC American Revolution Sestercentennial Commission.

Annie Rivers, Executive Director of the Sumter County Museum thanked Council for allowing her, along with Ms. Molly Fortune, to make a presentation to Council concerning the SC250. Then Ms. Rivers introduced Ms. Fortune, who provided Council with the details of SC250 PowerPoint presentation. (See <https://www.southcarolina250.com/>)

Ms. Fortune thanked Council for allowing her to speak and providing a supporting resolution to allow the County to have a SC250 Committee, and then the County would be allowed to submit a grant application for projects that the County would like to provide during the celebration of SC250. (See *resolution below.*)

After all comments, the Chairman called for a motion on the resolution R-22-07, listed below.

**ACTION:** MOTION was made by Councilman Baten, seconded by Councilman Baker, and unanimously carried by County Council to adopt the resolution as presented and directed the Chairman and the Clerk to execute and deliver the resolution on behalf of the County.

- **Council to Take Action On:** **R-22-07** - Resolution Supporting The South Carolina American Revolution Sestercentennial Commission And Recognizing And Establishing The Sumter County 250 Community Committee.

*WHEREAS South Carolina created the South Carolina American Revolution Sestercentennial Commission (250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commission also known as SC250); and*

*WHEREAS the mission of the SC250 Commission is to celebrate and promote South Carolina's role in the American Revolution by educating, engaging, and inspiring South Carolinians and visitors; and*

*WHEREAS the SC250 Commission is seeking partnerships with counties and municipalities to further its mission; and*

*WHEREAS this partnership will be formed by creating a local committee called the Sumter County 250 Committee; and*

*WHEREAS the Sumter County 250 Committee will focus on important events, people, and places during the Revolutionary Era within Sumter County to promote, observe and celebrate Sumter County's role in the American Revolution by educating, engaging, and inspiring South Carolinians and visitors; and*

*WHEREAS local projects (i.e., creating visitable historical sites to attract tourists, supporting celebrations, restoring local historical markers, rebuilding local historical infrastructure, etc.) will enhance historical tourism opportunities.*

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that Sumter County Council hereby recognizes the Sumter County 250 Committee as its official committee and will partner with the South Carolina American Revolution Sestercentennial Commission (SC250); and will support initiatives of the SC250 Commission; and will support the Sumter County 250 Committee in its local efforts to educate, engage, and inspire South Carolinians and our visitors, thereby enhancing historical tourism opportunities in Sumter County.

- (2) It May Be Necessary To Hold An Executive Session To Discuss An Employment Matter, An Economic Development Matter, A Legal Briefing, Or Other Matters Pertaining To An Executive Session, And Take Appropriate Actions Thereafter If Required.

No executive session was held.

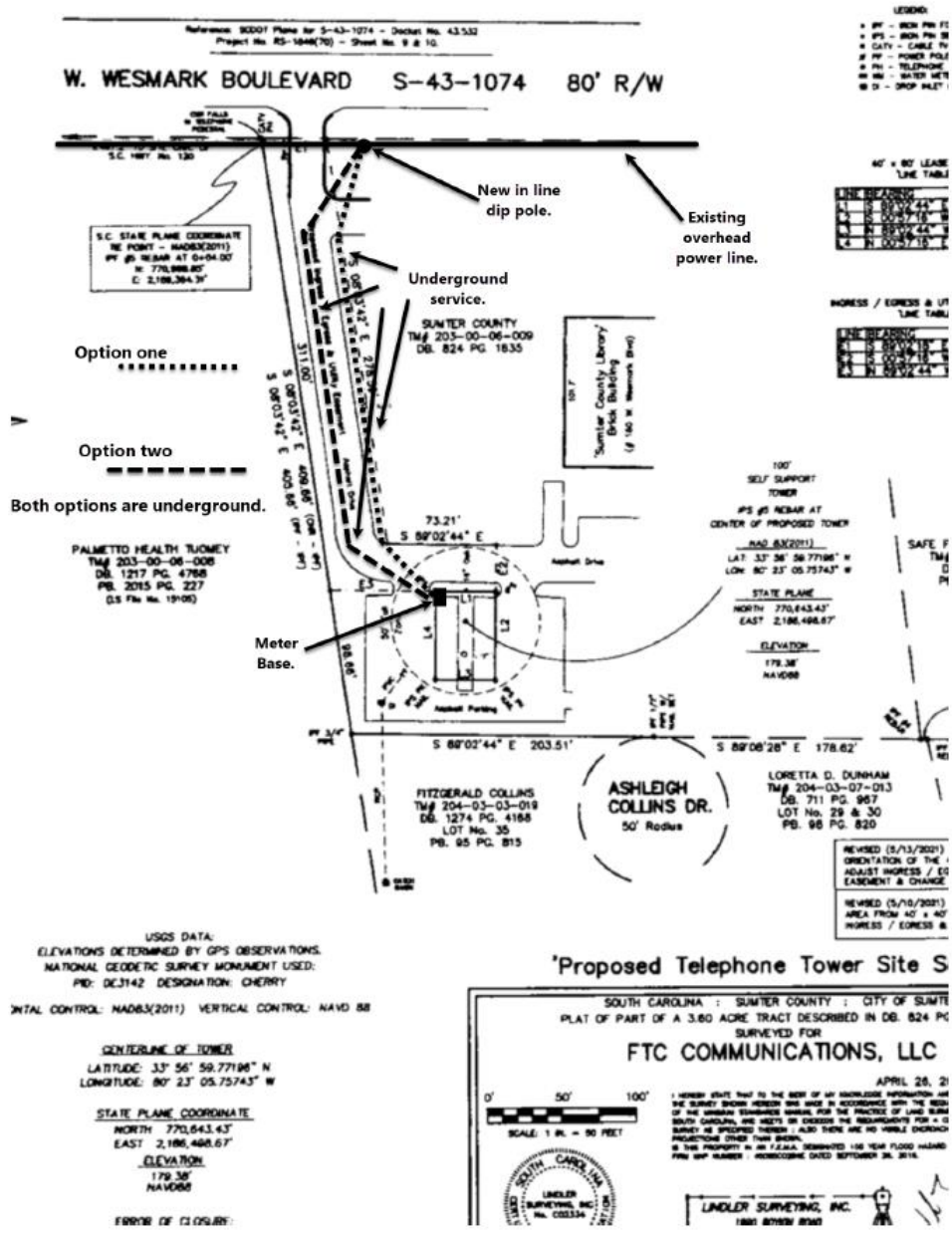
**OLD BUSINESS:**

- (1) Ordinance 22-977 - Third Reading -- An Ordinance To Approve A Utility Easement Over Property Located On West Wesmark Boulevard.

Johnathan Bryan presented this ordinance for third reading consideration. He stated that there are two proposed routes for the utility easement with each proposal starting with a pole on West Wesmark Boulevard. One proposal would have been a trench on the right side of the driveway; the other proposal is a boring, the "dash-line" on the map, which leaves the pole and bored to the driveway, then under the driveway back to the Cell Tower and that is the route that will be used for this easement. This will be a ten-foot-wide easement so that the power company can provide electricity to the cell towers.

Chairman McCain asked if there were any questions; there were no questions from Council. He then called for a motion on this ordinance as presented.

**ACTION:** MOTION was made by Councilman Edens, seconded by Councilman Baker, and unanimously carried by Council to approve this ordinance as presented at third reading.



**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- (1) **Public Safety Committee Meeting To Be Held On Tuesday, September 13, 2022, at 5:15 p.m. In The County Administration Conference Room, 13 E. Canal Street, Sumter, SC. (Washington, Baten, and Byrd)**

Councilman Carlton B. Washington, Chairman of the Public Safety Committee, reported on the following matters that were discussed in the Committee meeting.

**Report From EMS Director:** The Committee received a presentation from the EMS Director. Mr. Hingst reported that because Council approved for the EMS Department to enter into a contract with an outside Emergency Medical Services Agency to provide additional help in answering emergency calls, Sumter County has been receiving better services throughout the Community. Also, it was reported that the morale of the EMS Department's staff is up due to the changes that were made. (See full report below.)

***Staffing:** We wanted to share that since April 1, 2022, after implementing the supplemental help of Guardian Ambulance Service to provide two Ambulances a day we have been able to reduce the workload on our EMS personnel by lowering the calls per Ambulance a day, giving them more down time on a 24-hour shift to complete their necessary tasks that come with responding to calls for service.*

*We have been able to reduce our vacancies from a high number of 34 open positions to 10 open full-time positions currently to date. This has made a huge difference in moral and personnel coming to work in the EMS department when scheduled.*

*With the support of Sumter County Council, we have been able to make the necessary changes to ensure we are able to operate in a safe and timely manner. We have not operated less than 7 Ambulances per day in Sumter County since April 1, 2022, implementation.*

**Open Positions:** *Currently to date the 10 open positions are at the Paramedic level. This is a problem across the country with Paramedic positions being unfilled due to a shortage of certified Paramedics remaining in EMS and practicing on the Ambulance as a provider. Many have taken opportunity to bridge to nursing programs, find other work due to the strenuous schedule and demand of the EMS systems, and some are working in hospitals as Paramedics to backfill for the shortage of nurses.*

*Our current plan is to possibly combat this with operating more than 1 Quick Response Vehicle (QRV) with a Paramedic on these to be available to respond to calls where it is necessary to have a Paramedic. Currently we require a Paramedic on about 49% of the calls we respond to in Sumter County. This number does fluctuate monthly, however, this is the overall average for the year.*

**Education interests:** *On a positive note, we have witnessed an increased desire from current staff to move to the level of Paramedic so they can fill these open vacancies, provide the higher level of care needed in critical moments, and bring the EMS department back to a strong level as far as Paramedics on each ambulance. Currently in two separate Paramedic classes going on at Pee Dee Regional EMS in Florence SC, we have 11 Paramedic students attending these classes who work for Sumter County. Three of these will finish Paramedic School in November of this year, and eight of these students will finish in October 2023. We had eight current employees this year that showed interest and willingness*

*to attend the 22-23 Paramedic training course. This has been unheard of for us in Sumter County. We have not had this level of interest since I have been employed with EMS since 2002.*

**Closing:** *I felt it was necessary, along with the County Administrator for me to come back to County Council and update you on your investment in the EMS department over the last several years and mainly in the last two years to try to get and retain staffing. There are many great things happening with Sumter County EMS and we are getting back into the community to do outreach and prevention activities. We have many employees that are actively recruiting other EMS providers to come work in Sumter County, many are doing their part to make Sumter County EMS shine in the public eye and promote our department. We appreciate the steps that County Council and Administration have taken in the last several years, the investments you all have made, and your continued support of our EMS system!*

**Highway 76/378 Safety Issues:** Ms. Gwen Padmore and Dr. Brenda Williams were present at this meeting on behalf of the request concerning the Public Safety issues on Highway 76/378 and the possibility of the County providing funds to help with putting a store on the side of Pike Road where there are homes and apartment complexes. This will help deter children and adults from crossing Highway 76/378. Committee Chairman Washington indicated that there are several recommendations that have come before the Public Safety Committee and Council will review all recommendations to try to help the community. Ms. Padmore requested a donation from the County, \$15,000, to help fund a store for this community. It was noted by Committee Chairman Washington that the County Administrator will talk with the City of Sumter about what can be done, if anything, concerning assisting with the proposed project and other safety matters in this area.

Sumter SDA Church  
103 North Pike West  
Sumter, SC 29153  
803-775-4455



TO: SUMTER COUNTY COUNCIL

**Community Health & Variety Store**  
1 Bordeaux Avenue  
Sumter, SC 29153

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RE: Store –Hwy 76/376, North Pike West, Sumter SC 29153

Dear County Council:

The Community Health & Variety Store is pleased to present this proposal for your review. We look forward to providing a convenience store on the North Pike West side of Hwy 378. This will help resolve untamed concerns of future deaths/injuries, add goods and services to a devoid community, and potential impact roughly around a thousand (1,000) people.

**The Need:**

Numerous adults and children have attempted to walk/ride bicycles across Hwy 76/378 going to and from the store. According to WLTX TV News 10, of lately one person was killed in 2017, three persons in 2020 and Za'Hiar Hammet killed on his bike in February 2022. Numerous children including Michael McGill (November 2010), have been killed before 2017 trying to obtain food from the stores across the busy highway (Photos attached).

The Sumter "Community Health & Variety Store" sits in a community which is devoid of the goods and services which are privy to and easily accessible to the vast majority of citizens. This area has two apartment complexes with a total of 96 units and around 125 houses for an estimate of over 800 people located in an area which in actuality is a "Food Desert" in the City of Sumter and Sumter County, South Carolina. The residents in this community have no convenience store, are of low to moderate-income and are at high risk of loss of life and limb while attempting to walk or ride bicycles across Hwy 76/378.

**How We Can Help:**

The "Sumter SDA Center" sits in this community and holds a crucial place in the empowerment of the community. We started selling Health food used clothing and household goods in February 17, 2019 to provide affordable and convenient goods to the community. Although we are small, we adjusted to the challenges of the Covid 19 pandemic and managed to keep our doors open to serve the community.

(2) Report From Council Members On Other Meetings, Trainings, And/Or Conferences.

Councilman Washington stated that he raised some issues about meeting with the new Superintendent of Sumter School District. He further stated that he and Councilman Baten meet with the new Superintendent and Dr. William Wright provided information concerning his plans for the rural schools. One of the areas that was discussed was Rafting Creek Elementary School, security cameras, heating, humidifiers, outdoor basketball areas, updated playground equipment, field trip transportation funding, and a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and math). Also, it was asked that there be a partnership with local businesses to introduce career fields and help provide a more rigorous and skilled based curriculum highlighted and employability skills such as teamwork, communication, and presentation skills, as well as an agricultural program. Councilman Washington stated that Dr. Wright received all the information very positively and agreeing to secure these things for the Rafting Creek and Rembert Community as he thinks that these things are important as well. Dr. Wright is from a rural school district community too.

Councilman Baten stated that he found the meeting to be very informative. He also said that one of the shocking things that he found out was that the Superintendent said he has employees that are working that are only making \$12,000 a year. Also, it was stated that 16 of the schools are Title 1 Schools. It was also noted by Councilman Baten that when Council is considering the budget for the School District that Council members will remember that some of the School District employees are only making \$12,000 per year.

Councilman McGhaney stated that many of the roads in District 5 are very bad and have not gotten better since the 1,000-year flood. She stated that it is her hope that Council will consider some means of helping the citizens on the private roads that cannot afford to upgrade the roads even with crusher run. She mentioned two of the roads: one road off Queen Chapel Road and Skylark Lane.

Councilman Washington also stated that there are many roads in his area with the same problem and asked if the County Administrator and the County Attorney can discuss this matter and bring it back to the Public Works Committee in the near future.

## **MONTHLY REPORTS**

- 1) Airport Commission June and July Monthly Meeting Minutes
- 2) Sheriff's Office July Monthly Report
- 3) Festival On The Avenue
- 4) Premier Showing Of "Waiting For Superman"
- 5) Return To Bollywood - Red Carpet Affair - YWCA
- 6) Building Report And Planning Commission Information
- 7) Ribbon Cutting Ceremony - Lincoln Center

## **COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

The County Administrator presented several copies of a brochure listing all of the projects that are listed in the Capital Projects Sales Tax Commission Referendum. This brochure will be distributed to other areas as an educational component for the community.

Mr. Mixon stated that at the August 23, 2022, meeting of Council, Councilman Washington brought up the fact that Council should be sharing the information about the Capital Projects Sales Tax Commission Referendum at Council's meetings. The information will be shared by the four categories of the projects (public safety, public buildings, quality of life, and infrastructure). Then Mr. Mixon provided a PowerPoint



Presentation on all of the Public Safety Projects which included City and County fire trucks, emergency radios, renovations of the Stadium Road fire station, Sheriff's Office Forensic Center.

Councilman Washington stated that these projects are "Basic Service Projects." He also said that he is glad that the administrator has provided information on these projects especially for the upgrades in the rural areas of Sumter County.

Mr. Mixon also mentioned that the Chamber of Commerce will soon start its marking campaign in promoting the upcoming Referendum for the Capital Projects Sales Tax.

Councilman Baten stated that \$117,000,000 should be listed within the brochure. It was noted by Mr. Mixon that the funds are listed within the brochure; however, because of the number of projects, the print is smaller but all the funds and information that will be on the referendum is also included in the brochure.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Citizens Desiring To Speak Are Limited To No More Than Three (3) Minutes; Comments Are To Be Made Through The Chairman Of Sumter County Council.

- Mr. George Bates stated that he has been coming to Council meetings for many years asking for help in staffing and improvements for the law enforcement officers. He stated that there are a number of unfunded deputies for Sumter County. He stated that the community is looking a little depressed. Therefore, the Codes Enforcement Officers should have additional help to write tickets to those that are not taking care of their property and making the community look bad. Mr. Bates also thanked Council for bringing up the issue about helping to alleviate some of the problem roads in Sumter County. It was also asked by Mr. Bates to make sure that there is better maintenance for the roads that are already approved as a county road.
- Dr. Brenda Williams talked to Council about the Family Unit, Inc. helping to improve the lives of the people that are disadvantaged, low-income, and deprived. She stated that she has been working with Mr. Doc Dunlap and the Sumter SDA Church, as well as Santee Wateree Regional Transportation Authority (SWRTA) so that those that live on North Pike Road can have free fair on the SWRTA buses to get from one side of Pike to the other side of Pike Road. As of this meeting, SWRTA has not answered her about creating this new route. Dr. Williams has also contacted Family Dollar, Dollar General, and several other businesses to consider having a store on the North side of Pike Road.
- Jackie Hughes talked to Council about the flood in October 2015. She stated that she lives by the trussells where the trains go by on Highway 15. Ms. Hughes also stated that the flooding that occurred caused all the flood around Second Mill, Swan Lake, and the contributories that are in that area. All that water has to go under that trussell. The flooding occurred because the water could not get under the trussell. She asked Council if the Greenswap area can be cleaned out to help alleviate any future problems with potential flooding.
- Tashsa Gardner asked if the City and County Council could come together and form one Codes Enforcement Office. She also explained the needs for more codes officers and the problems that are existing with the lack of sufficient codes officers. Ms. Gardner also mentioned the difference in the City codes and the County codes which causes problems for the citizens.

Chairman McCain stated that he has been working to try to get the State to give the Counties the same type of statutory rights as Cities. As of today, Speaker of the House Smith and South Carolina Association of

Counties legal staff members are working to see what can be done to change the statute to provide the Counties with the same statutory rights as the cities. As this matter is being review, the Chairman will keep Council informed.

Councilman Washington also clarified the type of roads that are in Sumter County (blue signs, Private Roads; green signs, City of Sumter Roads; Green signs with a black number on the top of the sign, State Roads).

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business for Sumter County Council, and no additional comments from the public, the meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m. after a motion by Councilman Baker, seconded by Vice Chairman Byrd, and unanimously carried by Council.

Respectfully submitted,

James T. McCain, Jr.  
Chairman or Vice Chairman  
Sumter County Council

Mary W. Blanding  
Clerk to County Council  
Sumter County Council

**Approved: September 27, 2022**

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I certify that public and media notification of the above-mentioned meeting was given prior thereto as follows required by Freedom of Information:

- Public Notified: Yes
- Manner Notified: Agendas posted on Television on first floor of the Administration Building.
- Date Posted: September 9, 2022
- Media Notified: Yes
- Manner Notified: Agenda Information is listed on Sumter County's Home Page, and E-mailed to The Item, The Chamber, WIS-TV, WBTW, and Spectrum Cable.
- Date Notified: September 9, 2022

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary W. Blanding  
Clerk to County Council