



# JASPER COUNTY COUNCIL **STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION**

Jasper County Clementa C. Pinckney Government Bldg.  
358 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Ridgeland, SC  
29936

**January 27-28, 2025  
MINUTES**

**Officials Present:** Chairman John Kemp, Vice Chairman Joey Rowell, Councilman Chris VanGeison and Councilman Joe Arzillo. **Absent:** Councilman Sauls

**Staff Present:** County Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Clerk to Council Wanda Giles, County Attorney David Tedder, Kimberly Burgess, Lisa Wagner, Danny Lucas, Chief Russell Wells, and Videographer Jonathan Dunham.

### **Call to Order of Day 1 of the Strategic Planning Session by Chairman Kemp:**

Chairman Kemp called the Strategic Planning Session to order at 9AM. The Report of Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act was read for the records as follows: *In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, notification of the meeting and the meeting agenda were posted at least 24 hours prior to the meeting on the County Council Building at a publicly accessible place, on the county website, and a copy of the agenda was provided to the local news media and all person's or organizations requesting notification.*

The Pledge to the Flag was given and the Invocation was given by Councilman Rowell

Chairman and Administrator's Opening Remarks:

Chairman Kemp noted that the first day of this Strategic Planning Session would be focusing on education. He noted that on the second day it would be a review of the annual audit, staff departments and discussion of strategic planning initiatives. Mr. Fulghum reviewed the agenda and who the speakers / presenters on the agenda would be. He noted that there would be some vendors, consultants and speakers with presentations for Council. The session then continued with the items on the agenda.

### **Regional Agencies, County Consultants, and Legal Services:**

- Vice Chairperson Anna Maria "Tab" Tabernik – Beaufort County Council
  - Discussed collaboration with Jasper County Council.
  - Noted that she was the Jasper County liaison from Beaufort County Council and noted the common issues that Beaufort County and Jasper County had.
  - She mentioned Beaufort County's "Chat with Council". She noted that this was publicized on their website, and it was for the public, with no agenda, and just conversations back and forth.
- Heather Rath – Heather Rath Consulting

MINUTES – 01.27.2025-01.28.2025

- Provided information on her Consulting Firm
- Reviewed her presentation, which can be viewed at via video at: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmlogX05cKAsHm\\_ggXCJIA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmlogX05cKAsHm_ggXCJIA)
- Mr. Fulghum noted that Ms. Rath’s contract had ended on 12.31.2024, so staff would like to get her back under contract.
- Claude Hicks and Dex Stewart – Beaufort/Jasper Housing Trust
  - They discussed the history of the Beaufort/Jasper Housing Trust.
  - They discussed the challenge of retaining and having a workforce in these current times.
  - Workforce housing and affordable housing were discussed.
  - They discussed the income-based home repair program and some of its requirements.
- Danny Lucas – LCOG
  - Mr. Lucas noted that he was the Vice Chairman of LCOG.
  - He provided the history of LCOG and discussed information related to what LCOG was about.
- Stephanie Rossi – LCOG
  - She noted that their activities are organized into 5 main program areas:
    - Community and Economic Development
    - Aging and Disability
    - Workforce Development
    - Planning and Transportation
    - Administration and Finance
- John Fleming and Taylor Boykin – SouthernCarolina Alliance
  - Mr. Boykin discussed the fact that SouthernCarolina Alliance is an alliance of 7 counties.
  - Mr. Boykin discussed the mission of SouthernCarolina Alliance.
  - Mr. Fleming discussed the members of the Board:
    - Appointed Members
    - Elected Representatives
    - Partners
    - Executive Committee
  - They discussed information relating to the SouthernCarolina Alliance and how they are funded.
- Alan Linkous and Sam Howell – Howell, Linkous & Nettles
  - They noted that they currently handle the County’s bond matters.
  - They discussed the reasons for having a bond attorney.
  - They discussed the specialty of Municipal Bond Finance areas.
  - They discussed what a bond attorney does.
- Azad Khan – Parker Poe Consulting
  - He noted that they are a boutique consulting practice division of Parker Poe.
  - He noted that they have 4 consultants.
  - He reviewed:
    - Incentive Compliance
    - GASB77 and the ACFR
    - FILOT Modeling, MCIP and Budgeting
    - Fiscal and Economic Impact Modeling
    - Areas of Economic Development and Other Services
- Jennifer Bragg – J. Bragg Consulting, Inc.
  - She discussed information regarding her company.

- She discussed her staff and operations.
- She noted that they were a staff of Senior Experienced Engineers.
- She discussed their services:
  - Transportation Engineering
  - Civil Site Design
  - Hydraulic Engineering / Stormwater Master Plan
  - Project / Program Management
  - Public Outreach / Involvement
  - Permitting
  - Grant Assistance
  - Utility Coordination
- She discussed some of the projects they had worked on with Jasper County:
  - Impact Fees
  - SC 462 at S-19 (Knowles Island Rd)
  - US 17/US 278 at S -29 (Smiths Crossing) Tap Grant Assistance
  - Road Ownership – Pinehaven Lane and Medical Center Drive
  - New River Landing – Determination for Maintenance Agreement
- Ken Holt and Kevin Morris – Holt Consulting Company
  - They noted their work that they provide in the area of Infrastructure
    - Airports
    - Roads
    - Bridges
  - They discussed the breakdown of their capabilities.
    - Aviation
    - Surfaces
  - They discussed their association with Jasper County and the work they have done on the Jasper County Ridgeland Claude Dean Airport
  - They discussed their Career Experience and Surface Experience
  - They noted that they had worked on the Atlanta Hartsville Airport
- Ray Jones and Ryan Ramano – Parker Poe Law Firm
  - They discussed Economic Development.
  - They discussed what they do in the area of Specialty Litigation.
  - They discussed document management.
  - They discussed managing agenda item processing for the County.
- Chris Johnson – Bettis Law Group
  - He discussed Employee Relations.
  - He gave examples of the services they provide for Jasper County:
    - Discrimination
    - Litigation regarding separation of employment
    - Litigation regarding the Firefighter Pay Plan
    - Litigation challenging elimination of positions
    - Counseling of Human Resources in the investigation of harassment allegation
    - Review of pay plans

Day 1 of the Strategic Planning Session adjourned.

# January 28, 2025

**Officials Present:** Chairman John Kemp, Vice Chairman Joey Rowell, and Councilman Chris VanGeison  
**Absent:** Councilman Sauls and Councilman Joe Arzillo.

**Staff Present:** County Administrator Andrew Fulghum, Clerk to Council Wanda Giles, County Attorney David Tedder, Kimberly Burgess, Lisa Wagner, Danny Lucas, Chief Russell Wells, and Videographer Jonathan Dunham.

## Call to Order of Day 2 of the Strategic Planning Session by Chairman Kemp

Chairman Kemp called the Strategic Planning Session to order at 9AM. The Report of Compliance with the Freedom of Information Act was read for the records as follows: *In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, notification of the meeting and the meeting agenda were posted at least 24 hours prior to the meeting on the County Council Building at a publicly accessible place, on the county website, and a copy of the agenda was provided to the local news media and all person's or organizations requesting notification.*

The Pledge to the Flag was given and the Invocation was given by Councilman Rowell

Chairman and Administrator's Opening Remarks:

He welcomed everyone and noted that yesterday was a long day but that there was a lot of good information provided. He then turned this over to Mr. Fulghum. Mr. Fulghum went over the four Directors and noted that he had their job descriptions for Council. He recapped some information for the prior day and provided some follow up information on a few topics. He also reviewed other staff that worked for him, and information that he had passed out to Council.

- Presentation and Discussion - Annual Comprehensive Financial Report FY Ended June 30, 2024, Alan Thompson, CPA, Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co.
  - Mr. Alan Thompson provided and discussed an overview of the audit findings for this year.
  - They passed out a copy of the audit and presentation summary.
  - He reviewed their findings through the audit.
  - He noted when asked for a grade value on the audit, that the first half of the year would probably be a "C" but the last half of the year would probably be a "B".
  - For additional information on this item, please view our video at: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm\\_ggXCJIA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm_ggXCJIA)
- Presentation and Discussion – Capital Improvements and Investment Plan  
Margaret Rush and Chris Hance, M.B. Kahn Construction
  - Chris Hance, Preconstruction Manager was present to make this presentation.
  - He noted they were going to provide an update to the Capital Improvement and Investment Plan for 2025

- He introduced the following members of the team:
  - Craig Floyd, Project Executive
  - Margaret Rush, Business Development (who was not able to make it today)
  - Shane Stevens, Director of Preconstruction
  - And himself, Chris Hance, Preconstruction Manager
- They provided an outline of the project infrastructure improvement needs of Jasper County.
- They discussed the following Completed Projects:
  - Farmer's Produce Market
  - Ridgeland Claude Dean Airport Phase 1
  - 112 Weathersby Property for the temporary location of the Pratt Library
  - Jasper County Courthouse
  - Pratt Memorial Library
  - New Fire Rescue Station # 31 (Coosawhatchie Fire Station)
- They discussed the following Proposed Projects:
  - Detention Center
  - Sheriff's Office
  - Emergency Services
  - Clementa Pinckney Government Building
  - 252 Russel Street
  - Ridgeland Grade School
  - Department of Social Services
  - Office of Board of Elections Supervisor
  - Detention Center Additions and Renovations
  - Airport Terminal
  - JARM
- Presentation and Discussion of Staff Work Plan
  - Kim Burgess, Administrative Services Division Director
    - Ms. Burgess gave a review of the Finance Department
    - Ms. Burgess reviewed the responsibilities associated with the Finance Department and its Operations.
    - She discussed the Audit Procedure and the responsibilities the Finance Department has in that area.
    - Ms. Burgess reviewed the other departments/divisions that she manages.
    - She discussed the financial obligations of her departments/divisions, and the responsibilities associated with such.
    - Ms. Burges discussed the overall different Operations and Processes of the other departments/divisions that she manages.
  - Nicole Holt, Human Resources Director
    - Ms. Holt was present to provide an overview of the HR Department.
    - Ms. Holt discussed some of the areas that the HR Department works with:
      - Employee Benefits
      - Payroll
      - Worker's Compensation
      - Employee Relations
      - Recruiting, Onboarding and Retention

- Employee Verification
  - Federal and State Reporting
  - Labor Relations
- Ms. Holt noted a couple of major accomplishments of the HR Department this year:
  - EEO Policy was finalized this year
  - Rollout of a new Employee Handbook
- Ms. Holt gave an overall staff work plan for her department
- Ms. Holt discussed the County HR Department's management of the over 300 employees and Elected Officials that they work with throughout the year.
- Donald Hipp, Detention Center Director and Consultant Arthur Benjamin
  - They discussed:
    - Tasks of the rebuilding due to fire
    - Approved for the intercom system update
    - Progress of going to Live Scan
    - Policies and Procedures of the Facility
    - Discussed Southern Health Partners
    - Mental Health Coordinator working with them
  - Discussed the major issues of the Detention Center Facility and what it provides and its operations.
- Jim Iwanicki, Engineering Services Division Director
  - He noted that their department has six kinds of functions:
    - Building Maintenance
    - Roads and Bridges
    - Engineering Services Administration
    - Central Garage
    - Solid Waste Recycling
    - Mosquito Control
  - He discussed the current and future projects.
  - He discussed staffing needs.
  - He noted that they have 54 buildings that they take care of with a building maintenance staff of 4.
  - He discussed the overview of operations of his departments / divisions.
- Danny Lucas, Development Services Division Director
  - Mr. Lucas discussed:
    - Overview of the Development Services Division
      - Development Services
        - Involved in all external and internal development matters that happen within the County
      - Work with the Southern Carolina Alliance
      - Development Services Division:
        - Airport
        - Parks and Recreation
        - Sgt. Jasper Park
        - Planning
        - Building

- Current Projects such as:
      - Parks and Recreation Master Plan
      - Renovations of the JRYB Field
      - Pratt Memorial Library; and others
      - Boat Landings
      - BMX Property Acquisition
  - Russell Wells, Emergency Services Division Director
    - Chief Wells discussed:
      - Discussed the prior snowstorm and how the agencies operated together
      - 129 full-time employees through six operational divisions
        - Levy Fire District
        - Cherry Point Fire District
        - Fire Rescue Division
        - Community Risk Reduction Division
        - E911 Telecommunications Division
        - Emergency Services Division
      - Current Projects
        - ARFF Vehicle Training of 32 individuals
        - 3<sup>rd</sup> Party EMS Billing
        - New Fire Engines and Pumpers
        - New Coosawhatchie Fire Station
        - Tillman Fire Station replacement
        - Levy Fire Station improvements
        - Minor 911 Communications Center renovation
        - Code Enforcement
        - BRIC grant for County wide stormwater study
        - Fire Extinguisher Training for internal and external customers
        - Targeted Smoke Alarm installation efforts
        - Emergency Management Projects
      - Operations of the Fire Department locations
        - Coosawhatchie Fire Station and its complications
        - Tillman and what the future looks like
- Discussion of Strategic Planning Initiatives for 2025  
Mr. Fulghum noted he and the Chairman were going to get together to get some priorities together for you and bring those back to you.
- John Kemp, Chairman – Review Summary and Next Steps  
He said this turned out well, and the communication was good. He noted that this allowed the Council to understand the staff better and their needs and the staff understands the Council’s desire for the future. He noted that changing direction, working together through a work in progress will put the County on a better path for the future. He also mentioned having “Town Halls” and getting those started. Councilman Kemp thanked staff and everyone who participated. Mr. Fulghum said that this team was willing to work and build upon solving problems and working together.

For more information on this second day of the Strategic Planning Session, please go to our YouTube Channel for the video go to [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm\\_ggXCJIA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBmloqX05cKAsHm_ggXCJIA)

The motion passed and the meeting adjourned.

**Respectfully submitted:**



Wanda H. Giles  
Clerk to Council



John Kemp  
Chairman