

Council Roundtable Discussion July 9, 2018

Ms. Dickerson stated she organized this meeting with staff and asked them to help us to look at where we are, and where we need to go. In her opinion, we are faced with a lot of issues we need to address. She does not know if we can address those issues at a Council meeting. She does not so much want to talk about how we got here, but where we are and where we need to go. And, how we address some of those issues. She felt like we needed someone to help us to guide through this process, as we deal with our Administrator and all of the things that are brought to her attention on a daily basis. How we are operating illegally, and all that kind of stuff. She wanted to take the time to thank you for coming. She introduced Mr. Charles Weathers from the Weathers Group. She invited Mr. Weathers to come. She expressed to him some of the issues Council was facing, and asked him to help guide us through this.

The Council Members introduced themselves.

Ms. Dickerson stated when the thought came into her head about how she could bring all of us together. It was for us to have a conversation between the Council members, but every time we have a meeting it has to be published. Ms. Ellis called her before the agenda was even published and asked her about the meeting. She was also informed that some of the staff members needed to be in attendance.

Mr. C. Jackson stated he just got a text from Ms. Myers and she is on her way.

Ms. Dickerson stated Mr. Malinowski is coming in from North Carolina and will be joining us later.

Mr. Weathers thanked Council for allowing him to help facilitate the conversation. He stated his role is to simply guide the conversation. It is not his meeting, it is Council's meeting. It is not his topics, not my talking points, they are all Council's. He is simply here to guide the conversation and make sure we have a meaningful, deliberative dialogue and guide Council in the proper direction. That being the case, he is a neutral party. He is not here working on behalf of any one Council member. He is here on behalf of the body as a whole. He has no decision making authority, and he hopes he is acceptable to everyone in the room. He thinks understanding should be the focus of the day. Not agreement. Oftentimes when we sit in a room and have conversations like this, the first goal is I'm going to get someone to agree with me before I leave here today. You and I both know there may be some things we never agree on, and that's ok. But, we can seek understanding. Understanding can be the doorway to agreement, or at least a doorway to some form of compromise. Thank you, Chairwoman Dickerson for bringing us together to have a healthy dialogue and conversation. Just to get some understanding, clarity, and help us to move forward with the proper roles, responsibilities and expectations to serve the citizens of Richland County. Chairwoman Dickerson already talked about the purpose, and the order of the day. We will follow the agenda as closely as possible. He stated what he wanted to do is talk about where we are as a Council. He opened up with that question. He wanted to get Council's paradigm, their perspective. If someone were to ask you right now, where is Richland County Council at today? How would you describe it? How would you frame it?

Mr. Pearce stated he would use the word transition. He stated we are going to make a major transition in the Fall with 3 new people coming in.

Ms. Dickerson stated she sees us as fragmented right now. Because we are fragmented, for the last few months we have been going through a very trying time. In her opinion, we have been dealing with a lot of great challenges. These challenges are within our body. It is like getting us to work together on certain issues...most of the time it is 5-6 all the time. She sees that as fragmented. She stated not that we have to agree on everything, all the time. She would not expect us to always be in agreement, but she does expect us to have respect for each other. To her that is important. She does not care who serves as Chair. The fact of the matter, whoever is in that position, that person should be respected. The other thing she sees is that we do not have any leadership. Today was a prime example, we are without leadership. If she needed something today, she would not know exactly who to go to because she only has one employee in this room. If she needed something, where and to whom would she go to for help and assistance to get what she needs?

Ms. McBride stated from her perspective she would use the word struggle. It appears that she is struggling, and some of her colleagues are struggling with where we are going. How do we get there? In terms of how do we get the actions we need to take? Given all that, there is a struggle with the purpose...can we fulfill the purpose with all of the issues that are compounded right now?

Mr. N. Jackson stated he would use the term disarray.

Mr. C. Jackson stated he would use the word that we are microcosms of the greater society, and greater government we are living in, in the United States. He does not necessarily think it is for him as much of a shock as some people are because when he watches the nightly news, and then comes to a Council meeting, there are a lot of similarities that he sees. He thinks it is reflective of all the words that his colleagues have already used. The tension, the stress, the fragmentation, the struggle he sees, whether it be in US Congress, or even in the State House.

Mr. Weathers stated this is kind of evidence of the culture we are in right now.

Mr. C. Jackson stated that is his view.

Mr. Weathers stated some of the key words were transitioning, fragmented, a trying time with no leadership, not sure where to go if I need something, we are struggling, where do we want to go, how are we going to get there, disarray, microcosm of the greater society at large.

Mr. Livingston stated we are at a point where we are lacking communication.

Ms. Dickerson stated one of the things she put down on her list was trust. Being able to trust one another. If she has a conversation with you, it be intelligent, and be able to trust one another.

Mr. Weathers posed the question, "If we are going to work together to best serve the citizens of Richland County, we as a body must....?"

Mr. Livingston stated we have to do a better job of, at least, respecting the decisions of each other. And, not immediately attributing motives to one's decision, rather than try to understand it.

Mr. Weathers stated respecting, and appreciating our decisions. Not assigning motive to the decision.

Mr. Pearce stated we must have a common goal. He thinks we do. He thinks everyone has a perception of a greater Richland County, that is very similar, but sometimes he is not sure.

Mr. Weathers inquired if the common goal captured in the vision and mission of the County anywhere. We can all look at that say, if nothing else we know we want to do that together.

Mr. Pearce stated the Renaissance Program, conceptually, was a great idea. He thinks we all had a piece of it that we thought was a great idea. Somehow, the whole thing fell apart. There was a common goal out there, but what happened to that. What happened to that is a lot of the things we just talked about...trust, etc.

Mr. N. Jackson stated understanding. We have 11 different districts. There are different cultures, habits, desires, and wants or needs. And, each Council member that works in that district, even though you are a Richland County Council member, they represent a specific district, with specific demands, needs and wants. Council members have to understand each other and what they are fighting for. Someone may not understand and may not think it is of value to them, but it is of value to someone else.

Mr. C. Jackson stated when he walked in he wrote down, everyone and everything matters, and everyone and everything has value, whether he agrees with it or not. When you are expressing a desire and interest regarding "Pinewood Lake". When you have a passion for that, and that is very important to you. It matters. It has value, and whether he agrees with that or not, he has to be able to recognize that issue/project in your district matters and has value, not to just you, but the people you represent. So, when he goes about making decisions on that, he needs to remember that. Not that it drives his decision, but he needs to have that in the forefront of his mind. And, not blowing it off and saying we have this other issue, so we are not going to deal with this issue. Then, wanting the same folks to come back and rally around him when he has an issue on Clemson Road.

Ms. Kennedy stated we have to get in our minds that we represent individual areas, but we are ultimately responsible for Richland County, as a whole. We need to concern ourselves with what effects all of Richland County, not just our districts. You have to open to think about all of that when making your decisions. You are to represent all of Richland County, specifically one district. She stated we have long neglected certain areas of Richland County because we were concerned about other districts. We have to be concerned about all of Richland County, and its residents. A lot of citizens do not feel that way. We need to worry about the progression of Richland County, as a whole.

Mr. Livingston stated we need to respect and appreciate the decision of the body. If it is 5-6 vote, or a 7-2 vote, or whatever. Respect that. You do not have to agree with it, but respect it. To figure out a way to make it work, not at all costs. For example, he did not support the Renaissance Plan, but once there was a majority vote he was willing to do what he had to do to make it work. He was totally against Pinewood Lake. He voted against. He said he did not think that is how we should spend Hospitality Tax dollars, but once Council decided, his goal was to figure out a way to make it work. Once the body makes a decision, lets figure out a way to make it work. If it is not possible, that's a different story, he is going highlight the negatives, but he's going to try to make it work.

Mr. Pearce stated that is what gets us into trouble. We pass something, then how do we make it work is going to difficult.

Mr. Livingston stated the reason it is difficult is when you raise a legitimate concern, then the ulterior motive is you are raising a concern because you are against it. That is not the reason he is raising a concern. He is raising the concern because he thinks it is a legitimate concern, and we should consider it, but that is not how it is perceived.

Mr. Pearce stated he thinks people get so engrained in their perception of the way it ought to be, that when someone else is offering an alternative, there is no consideration of that alternative. When nobody budes, then people start changing their minds and everything starts falling apart.

Mr. N. Jackson stated when something passes with a 6-5, then we try to make it work. People come up with ideas to shift it or change it, that is where the problem comes in. Let's move forward. Still find out the kinks, but trying to find out the kinks is like trying to change the direction. There is where sometimes things fall apart. We mentioned the Renaissance Plan. He stated it was a good plan. He supported it, but he wanted more details of how we move forward. The plan is not dead. We decided to sit it aside, and go back and regroup.

Mr. Weathers stated it sounds like the decision is made, but then we do not work it out because of some of these other factors we are talking about today.

Ms. Dickerson stated there are countywide projects, but that project may happen to land in one of our districts. She thinks that sometimes we take that as a personal project. She noticed we have had several projects fallen apart because they were listed in a certain district, and they fell apart because they were "not in my district" or it is "in my district and this is the way we want it to work." They seemed to fall apart because we could not get consensus, in order to make it work.

Ms. McBride stated we have to understand what a consensus is. Oftentimes we cannot take our egos and our personal desires away from it. Therefore, the consensus cannot move forward.

Mr. Weathers stated let's say it is a 6-5 vote, and he's one of the 5. For those that have done this successfully, how are you one of the 5, but still able to engage in an effort to make it work though you voted against it.

Ms. Kennedy stated, at that point, you need to concentrate on what the project is, and how it is going to serve the citizenry of Richland County. You lost the vote. You have got to move on and live with it. The focus is not on you. The focus is on the citizens of Richland County.

Mr. Livingston stated, if he is one of the 5, he thinks it is his responsibility to explain to the others his rationale for not supporting it. In doing so, hopefully, they would be objective about listening to my rationale, whether they agree with it or not. Any time is one that side, he will support the decision and do whatever he can to make it better.

Mr. N. Jackson stated that is the only rule we have. The majority rules. In order to not have stress, you have to be focused and move forward. The best thing is to jump on board. When you constantly still fight something that is already approved, then that is where the stress comes in.

Mr. Manning stated he does not know that we do a good job of keeping the motion statement or the vision statement in front of us and look at decisions we are making and how they connect to the vision statement.

Mr. Weathers restated the questions for Ms. Myers when she arrived.

Ms. Myers stated her experience is that when there is a 6-5 vote often what has happened is the people in the 5 are going to upend the vote they do not agree with. It has not been that we just agree to move forward. She finds that frustrating. She agrees that if you are in the minority you cannot impress upon people why you disagree with them, and maybe prevail upon them to make

distinctions. You just have to go with it because that is the way this works. That is the point of everyone voting so we get a majority consensus of Council. She would love that to be guiding principle, but she has not seen that. For example, the Renaissance Plan was controversial when we voted on it. It was a difficult vote. The six of us that voted on it were for it, and were very in support of it. We have seen systematically it being picked apart by those who did not support it. She thinks that is 180 degrees away from anything that builds you to a point where you are moving together because it builds resentment. You think when you are in the 6, you expect her to support you, but when she is in the majority you do not support her. She stated she has lost some that she thought were very important, but we have to move from that point. If we are serving as a body, we must focus, set tangible goals, work to transform all of the County, and, thereby equitably use taxpayer funds. We do not tax just one part of the County. We tax all of the County. All of that taxpayer money should be used to benefit all of the County. We have to begin to be more collaborative.

Mr. Pearce stated people agree on the goal. They do not necessarily agree on how to get there. For example, in an attempt to work with the Renaissance, it is perceived as picking it apart, but it could be the person are trying to make a constructive effort to improve upon something. He thinks sometimes when you are trying to suggest something it might be constructive way of trying to make the thing better, but it gets misperceived along the way.

Ms. Myers stated, when you are so passionate about something, it is quite possible that you can only see it one way. There are multiple ways to analyze a problem. Everybody looking at the same picture could see something different, and everybody be right. She is not suggesting that is always the case. But, she feels like the 2 most controversial decisions we have taken in the last 4 months, that is not the case.

Mr. Pearce stated his biggest concern about the Renaissance, all along, was the money. He did not believe in the money, but we were at a point there where we were getting ready to issue a contract we would have figured out about the money. The contract would have given us hard numbers. He was disappointed. He is sorry we did not get to do that because it would have dealt with a major issue of his. Somewhere along the line it fell apart before the contract, which was only a contract to do design and get some numbers. He thinks that is a perfect example. He had a problem with it, but as we were moving forward, he saw that as an opportunity how to get around the problem.

Mr. Livingston stated he would take issue with anyone that would suggest that after the 6-5 vote his vote was to derail it or do things that were not in the best interest of the County. His position was made extremely clear, even at the time we voted on it. He made a substitute motion to try to get folks to understand his point. After it passed, he attended every meeting, made every effort to express his opinion about it, and support it. He does not remember a time when he made a decision that was totally against it. His plan was never to derail it, but to make it better and stress his concerns. The issue with the 6-5 votes is not what happens after the vote, but what happens before the vote. When he first came on Council and in recent years are the only times he has seen 6-5 votes. All of the other times, we did not have those. The difference is when all Council members get the same information from staff, at the same time. Issues are discussed thoroughly until everybody understands what it needs to be. Councilmembers choose to do their homework. You do not have to worry about 6-5 votes so much. We need to worry about what we do first before we get to 6-5 vote.

Mr. Weathers stated there are some process issues there.

Ms. McBride stated one of the weak areas is getting adequate information to make really good, sound decisions. She does not have enough time for her to process and evaluate them. She is having

to do a lot of research for herself, rather than having someone give us some background information. As a new person, and a person who has worked with a number of staff, she is used to having information in hand, and processing that information. She finds that quick decisions are being required, without adequate information.

Ms. Kennedy stated having been around for a while. We have had this problem in the past. Certain Council members get information. Other Council members do not get that information, and that is a problem. The information needs to be dispersed to everybody. When you sit and listen, at a Council meeting, and you hear information you knew nothing about. And, you turn to the Council member sitting next to you and they knew nothing about it. Then that is a problem. All information should be given out. That became a problem when she was on Council previously, and we had to make some staff changes.

Mr. Weathers inquired if there was an official process or policy that dictates the official flow of information to Council.

Ms. Kennedy stated there is, but it has never been enforced.

Ms. Dickerson stated that comes back to what she said about leadership and staff. When we got fragmentation between staff. We got staff members that are not communication information between them. There seems to be the lack of leadership there, and especially now since we really do not have any leadership. Staff needs to learn how to work together. Do not think that if one person on staff is doing something, that it is totally against your job description. We need to figure out how we bring that together. She thinks a lot of that is predicated on how staff communicates with Council members. She finds that certain Council members will have stuff, like Ms. Kennedy said, from certain staff members that the rest of Council does not know anything about. For example, Beverly is not her employee. Whoever the Administrator is, that is her employee. Although Beverly works for all of us, she is not someone that Council can discipline if she does not do what she asks. Who is responsible for getting us our information? She has experienced it a lot since she has been here.

Mr. N. Jackson stated the one thing he has learned, and he lives by it. The elected, and appointed, are temporary. The staff is there for the long road. We make policies. We make ordinances. It is for staff to implement. If they take it personally, for whatever reason, then we have a problem with Council members and staff. We cannot discipline staff. We have to talk to the Administrator. If the problem exists, and the Administrator does not discipline or deal with staff then it is hard to address because we have to address it through the Administrator. It got so bad one time, he mentioned Pinewood Lake Park, and a staff member went out in the community and told people Councilman N. Jackson made a bad decision. He had to talk with Administrator to request his staff member not to do that. Council makes a decision, and live by it. If there is a Councilperson telling a staff member to do something wrong, report it.

Mr. Weathers inquired as to how many employees Council has.

Ms. Dickerson stated 3...the Clerk, the Administrator and the Attorney.

Ms. Kennedy stated, at one time, we had several other employees and the whole setup was different. It has changed quite a bit.

Mr. Livingston stated, for him, the last year or 2 has not been a problem of getting information. He has gotten a whole lot of information. As a fact, he has gotten too much information. The problem

for him is how that information is communicated. What he means by that is, a lot of times he will get something and it is embedded in a 100-page report. He may or may not miss it, then he will bring up something and someone will say that was in the report. Well, he did not get time to read that 100-page report that weekend. Also, it is communicated in small groups of Council members where full Council does not get an opportunity to vet it because you are meeting 2 or 3 at a time. For him, the problem has been more about how the information is communicated.

Ms. McBride stated she believes we do have 4 employees because the Asst. Clerk is supervised by the Clerk, but that person is a staff person of the Council.

Ms. Dickerson stated the way the office is set up is to have a Clerk, a Deputy Clerk and a recording clerk. Michelle is basically, the court reporter. All of the things the Clerk is responsible for those 2 employees do, but she is not exactly sure how that flows.

Ms. McBride stated, under supervision, but still working for the Council.

Mr. N. Jackson stated the Clerk's Office is sort of special because we will be taking motions, asking questions, so we talk to everyone in that office. Ultimately, the Clerk is responsible for their staff. If we want something done, we talk to the Clerk. If she isn't there, we talk to the Deputy Clerk. The office is slightly different. Even with the Planning Department, there may be a zoning issue in your area. You have to talk to the Planning Director. You cannot go and talk to the Administrator. There are sometimes you will interact with staff on certain things. The problem, as Mr. Livingston mentioned earlier, is there is some much information, and things "hidden" in it. When he asked a question, a staff member told him, "If he had read the document, you would know what happened." He feels like you get all of these documents intentionally on Friday evening. If you do not read the entire document, you missed it. Something important should be highlighted, but it is not.

Ms. Kennedy stated some of us get it on Friday afternoon. Some of us have gotten it before Friday afternoon, and that is a point she wants to bring out.

Ms. Myers stated there is an assumption that people have access to stuff that others don't. She knows there was for some time a running joke, that she found very insulting, that because she would talk to the Administrator that somehow we were dating. She thought that was beyond demeaning. She did not find it funny. She did not find it professional. She thinks where we go sometimes with stuff is, we do not deal with the meat of what is going on. We are sitting here. We got all these big hairy issues. Ms. Kennedy hit exactly on a big problem. If it gets delivered Friday, it gets delivered Friday. Her rule of thumb has been, if it got dropped on Friday, that's her homework. Everyone knows Ms. Kennedy does not download it, so it has to be delivered to her. If it is delivered to her Monday, and everybody else got it via email Friday, that is problematic. To the extent, if she thinks that Ms. McBride has access to early information, she would just ask her. Rather than feeling like somehow Ms. McBride has one upped her, she would just ask her. She does not think that we do enough of that. Last meeting, there was a whole brouhaha about the Recreation Commission, and the MOU. The reason she said it was delivered, she had never seen it, but she asked Tara. She asked the Director, "Did you give this back?" Then people said, "How did you get it?" She did not get it. She got it when everyone else got it. If Ms. McBride calls the Clerk of Court, and asks a question, she has every right to ask that question. As the new person, she thought that was the way we were supposed to do it. We would have to call and find out. She did not know historically there was someone who provided the information to us. She would love to have that because she has found herself on fact finding missions, a lot of times, when she does not understand things. She would like for us to move beyond this level of suspicion. She is also concerned with the level of confidence we

project with each other, and that we place within the staff. She stated it would be hard for her to work in an office if she felt like the people she was working to support do not believe in her competence. She does think sometimes there is a basic question of competence. It may be that sometimes people have demonstrated it, but we have to find a way to fix it and move forward in the best interest of the County.

Ms. Kennedy stated she gets her information delivered to her every Friday afternoon. She thanked staff for their efforts to get the information to her.

Mr. N. Jackson stated sometimes it does become a chess game. It's like I don't want that person to know. It happens. We cannot ignore it or act like it does not happen.

Mr. Weathers inquired as to what priorities or issues we need to discuss. Renaissance is one. We need to have a brutal, honest conversation, and flesh out what we observed, learned, and where we go from here.

Mr. N. Jackson and Ms. Dickerson stated the Administrator, which needs to be above the Renaissance.

Ms. Myers stated relationships with staff.

Ms. Kennedy stated the relationship among Council members.

Ms. McBride stated establishing priorities for the County.

Mr. Weathers inquired what the County's priorities are for the next year. Could you answer that question?

Ms. McBride stated she couldn't answer that question.

Ms. Dickerson stated her #1 priority is the Administrator, and how we go about searching for that Administrator. As Mr. Pearce alluded to earlier, we will have 3 new Council members coming on in January. An Administrator, for the most part, is anywhere from 6 months to year to get all of that accomplished. We are July now, and next month we are out. We have even decided on a group to do the search. That means that is a priority. We have been given 4 firms to select from. The Renaissance is on hold. It is not a dead deal, but it is going to take a lot of work. Based, on what we had before, and all of the facts and figures we were given before, it will probably not amount to a hill of beans right now because it is all exposed. She was told that when you are looking for properties, every time someone knows it is Richland County purchasing property, the prices go up. A lot of time people say we are doing things in secret. She does not know whether it is secret, but it is a way of doing business. Once we discuss things in our Executive Session, before we get out of Executive Session, Sarah Ellis knows. That to her is a problem. We talk about how we prioritize this thing. There is no way we can work on them, and before we try to figure out what we are going to do, and Sarah Ellis is printing them in The State Newspaper. Somebody had to talk to her to let her know what happened because it is almost verbatim sometimes when we read the newspaper the next day. So, finding an Administrator and figuring out a way how we establish some of this leadership, and this relationship with staff is a problem to her.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we have to blame ourselves also because we procrastinate or delay. It does not take but one vote, one day to say let's move forward. We take 4 months to say we are going to

choose a company, and we still haven't chosen a company yet. The citizens look at us like what is the problem. Also, you keep certain things quiet because the price will go up. At the end of the day, we get an appraised value, and we are not going to pay more than 10% above the appraised value. People saying everybody found out we wanted to purchase this building, the price is going to go up. We are not going to pay more than the appraised value, so it should not be a problem. A lot of times, we have to look at ourselves to see why we are not moving forward.

Ms. McBride stated we, as individuals, have priorities, so that is not an issue.

Mr. Manning stated he would like to address how we deal with transparency, and accountability, particularly how that relates to our work in Executive Session. He stated he has been concerned about this for some time because there is archived, when we come out of Executive Session after one meeting, where he let the constituents in District 8 know that there were 2 separate times, about 2 separate things that we were talking about in Executive Session, where he asked the County Attorney if what we were talking about qualified for Executive Session. And the answer on both of those occasions was no. If we are in Executive Session and we are talking about things that do not qualify for Executive Session, then he does not know that for the public to be aware, and Sarah Ellis or anybody else, he does not see where that's...we need to address what we are doing about transparency and accountability when we go into Executive Session.

Mr. Weathers stated he wanted to have a conversation about the Administrator. The conversation centers around this: What got us where we are? What lessons have we learned? Where do we go from here? What are our next steps? He stated Chairwoman Dickerson previously mentioned finding search firms.

Mr. Manning stated Steven Covey talked about begin with the end in mind. He believes we need to figure out what is going to be the evaluation tool and process. When we determine that, then we can go back to a position description, and then we can have a position description for whatever firm we get to work with the people. Then we could interview around the position description. We could hire around the position description, and that position description would guide us into the evaluation process.

Mr. Weathers stated he heard, evaluation tool process. Then a position description that comes with that. Then hire a firm that uses that, that then loops back to the evaluation.

Mr. N. Jackson stated he thinks it is a simple process. You have to do your research. Do a background check and make sure who you are hiring. Get a firm, the criteria you want, research and advertise for 30 or 60 days. Get a name, then look at the criteria, and make a decision. He thinks that sometime we put some much into thinking about the process, and we waste valuable time. We have been talking about the firm for the past 4 months. It takes 10 minutes to say here are the firms, documentation from staff, make a decision and move forward.

Ms. Dickerson piggybacked on what Mr. Manning said. The job description is key to going forward. That seems to be one of the determining in how we move forward.

Mr. Weathers inquired if creating the job description something you are confident Council can do or do you need the firm to help you create that.

Ms. Dickerson stated she sees that as one of the problem. How do we go about creating a job description, salaries, etc. All of that has be in when we are putting out a Request for Qualifications.

Ms. Kennedy stated she has been through 5 Administrators. They spent a bunch of time looking for these Administrators, and the next 2 or 3 years we were ready to get rid of that particular Administrator. She thinks we need to set the qualifications down this time, do adequate research, and take our time to look at what we put down as rules and qualifications. And, make sure they meet those qualifications that we put down. Every 3 – 5 years we are coming up with another Administrator. She stated we did not do our due diligence when we hired those people.

Mr. Weathers stated we did some research in the past, and still people were gone within 2 years. What did we miss? What questions are we not asking? What are we not exploring? What are the things we need to uncover that we haven't in the past?

Ms. Kennedy stated we need to make sure, ahead of time, the qualifications we want. Whether we want someone who is local, or whether we want someone from another area. Have all of that settled in our minds before we start searching for people. And, then we get there and 2 or 3 Council members say, "Well I don't want that person because they are around here and they know this person, and they are friends with that person." We need everything established ahead of time, and out in the open before we do it. Citizens do not really know what we do, and how we get Administrators. They are asking questions about when we are getting an Administrator. Why we don't have one, and what is taking so long in getting the Administrator. She suggested having a public orientation regarding this, as well as the roads. The Administrator we find should be able to keep everybody in the loop.

Mr. N. Jackson stated most of the Administrators we had were qualified. The criteria and job description is there. We know what we are looking for. We know what they are supposed to be doing. The problem is that relationships develop. He had an Administrator in the past to tell him he had 6 votes, so whatever you want I can delay. What the Administrator does not realize is the day he makes one of those 6 upset, and flip, he or she is gone. That is the reason we had such a turnover. Councilmembers, by nature, gravitate and the 6 votes control is there with a specific Administrator, and we have problems. Even if it is for the betterment of the County, and we want to do good for the citizens we represent. It is hard to find an Administrator who is going to say "no".

Mr. Livingston stated he is more concerned about how we move forward. He stated we were given 3 firms on the State contract that we could look at move forward. If any of those firms can help us quickly do an evaluation tool or position description, and handle a selection process, we need to go on ahead and have that discussion with them and just do it.

Mr. Pearce stated we continue to ignore evaluations. A position description is not a big deal to him. We know what the person does. They manage the budget, etc. When you hire the Administrator, if you do not have your evaluative process in hand, you are going to be sitting right here. We have to address the evaluative process. He thought we were heading the right direction. Mr. C. Jackson had recommended a method they used at School District II. He has been sitting over here, saying what happened to that. It just kind of disappeared.

Ms. Myers inquired if Mr. C. Jackson put forward a substitute motion to go forward with your recommendation to evaluate, as opposed to voting to fire. And 6 people voted to fire him.

Mr. Manning stated we were out at the Decker Center, because the renovations had not gotten completed on time, and we had an elaborate discussion on that. And, he made the motion, well if we do not have a position description, and we do not know what we are doing, the Administrator does not know his job, and we do not know what his job is, we should meet tomorrow. That day is when

the procrastination started. Mr. Malinowski, as the Vice Chair, had some responsibility, and leadership before the August break, to find out who these folks were, how they worked. We went months, and months. At one point, in a Council meeting, the Chairwoman was asking, "Well where is it?" Is getting that accomplished in HR, or over in Procurement. We did not have the answer, as to where it was. He stated it was not like it just came up the same night.

Mr. C. Jackson stated Mr. Manning is correct. We were at Decker, and we talked about. He and Mr. Malinowski interviewed the prospective company that was going to do this and brought back a recommendation. What happened was we got into a huge debate about why hire an outside firm when we could do it ourselves. We had the tools from before, so the vote was not to pursue the firm that we identified. It lay dormant, and then it came back up again when we got into the new year, and we started hearing rumblings about more problems with the Administrator. He made a motion then to revisit that particular firm we had identified. Mr. N. Jackson seconded it, and it passed unanimously. At the next Council meeting, was when we decided to end the Administrator's contract before we had a chance to implement the evaluation. He is not arguing about whether we are right or wrong. Doing an evaluation, having one on file, and using that as a tool for determining whether or not the Administrator is doing an effective job is the best way we can do this.

Ms. McBride stated we do not have enough processes in place, not only in relation to the Administrator, but with other staff. In addition, with the way business is done. A lot of it is being placed back on us, as Councilmember, to do some of the process work, which is oftentimes difficult. She stated a lot of things get lost because we did not have the staff in place. Now with the Administrator, at least he had staff in place to do follow-up. We have not had that for Council. As Councilmembers we have been doing everything for ourselves. Just like we are sitting here talking about how we go about hiring an Administrator, and so forth. There is a process, and someone with experience in HR could do a framework that is easy to follow. One of our big issues is we do not have enough processes in place.

Mr. Weathers inquired if the firm hired for the search has the skill or capacity, would that be suitable?

Ms. McBride stated that would help, but we have to get to hiring the firm. You have to lay it out. If not, we waste time talking about "we procrastinated". When you can look at what you are supposed to do for framework, upfront.

Mr. Weathers inquired as to who has the authority to start this process to make this happen.

Ms. Kennedy stated the 11 Councilmembers.

Ms. McBride stated we can say, "Okay, we are going to do this." With all of the other responsibilities, the Chairwoman is going to end up trying to do this with everything else. What she is saying is, there is a process in place when you leave. You have a staff person write down the process.

Mr. N. Jackson stated if we decided not to go with the firm. We have all of the information. Just do it like we did before. He is not sure if it is HR or Legal, but the Chair and Vice Chair were supposed to talk to whoever and move forward. That did not happen. We have to hold staff accountable also. We have a Council meeting. We have a vote. We decide to deal with it a certain way. The next step is whoever is supposed to follow through with their job. If falls back on Council, and we look bad. Like we are not doing what we are supposed to do. Whenever we have a vote 6-5 or whatever, staff needs to follow through. Who holds staff accountable, the Administrator. The Chair accepts

responsibility, and asks questions, but we have to depend on staff to come back to us. If we give them a deadline, we can hold them accountable. The fact is we have 2 meetings per month, the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. We wait so long to get information. The Chair and Vice Chair are there to get information, and disseminate it to us. It gets lost in the directive and who needs to do what.

Mr. Weathers stated he his hearing accountability.

Mr. Manning stated he is being redundant, but he thinks with the end in mind, we figure out what the evaluation process is going to take. Then we back that up to the position description. Then we back that up to the recruitment, related to the position description with everybody knowing where we are going to end up with the evaluation. Not we get them in, and then we get with the firm and get it all set up. We have the opportunity to have that end in mind, here at the beginning to back that all up to be ready for that a year after the Administrator is found. He thinks it would be remiss to not have that in place, and back it all up to where we need to be.

Mr. Weathers inquired if putting all of that in place would require a vote of Council. (i.e. evaluation tool, the description, the recruitment).

Ms. Dickerson stated she would think a process like that would work, but she does not think the Chair or Vice Chair would have that authority without the body giving them that authority. She stated she does not act unless this body gives her the authority. She stated she has worked with 4 Administrators and to this day she has never evaluated any of them. To her, that is a problem.

Mr. Pearce stated they started an evaluation for one of the Administrators, but it was never completed.

Ms. Dickerson stated, here again, it was 5-6. Five completed the evaluation, and 6 did not. We never did give that Administrator that evaluation. She inquired how we can say an Administrator is or is not doing his/her job, and we never put them in a framework to say, "We will hire you this year. In 6 months we are going to do a follow-up, and see how you are progressing. Then give you some direction." We have never put those processes in place. She does not know how the Administrator is doing his staff, but she can tell you what we did with one of our employees. We are the Clerk, the Administrator and the Attorney's employer. Because we are their employer, it is imperative how we treat our employees. Even though we do not always agree with them, we have to respect them. She did a little bit of math on them. Our main executive staff we are paying over \$1 million a year for their services.

Mr. Livingston inquired if we cannot simply set up a meeting with the 3 firms and talk to them about evaluation tools, the position description, the selection process, and select one of them and move on.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we have the documents already. It is up to us to make a decision.

Mr. Livingston stated he may have questions for each of them. He stated just meet with them and simply say this is what we are looking for, and get feedback from them. He wants to hear what they are going to say about how they can help with the evaluation. He also wants to talk to them about the process. If we choose not to go with one of those then we are going to have to go through a Request for Qualifications.

Mr. C. Jackson stated the longer he is on Council, the less he has said what he did at his old job because he knows people do not like to hear that. He stated it is relevant in this case because several members have talked about Administrators that have worked for you. He has had a similar experience in hiring a Superintendent, evaluating all of them, and unfortunately, having to terminate one of them, but using an evaluation tool for the basis for the termination. The vote to end the Administrator's contract was 6-5. It may have been 7-4 because had he had an evaluation done, that would have a determination, on an objective basis, on whether or not to continue that effort. He thinks we simply need to have a meeting, bring 2 or 3 in, like when we selected the auditor from Greenville. Bring them in, sit down, and ask them questions. Before we leave that night, make a selection and determination. Do not waste time making the determination. These are professional people, who are on the State contract, who do this for a living. We may have some differences about ways they are approached, but it sometimes it feels like we are evaluating whether or not they are competent, and capable of doing the job. They would not be on the State contract if they weren't. We need to acknowledge and accept that. These are experts, and of the 3 experts, which one of them we would like to have hire an Administrator. Select that person, and make the process. It does not take forever. We can even set and determine how we want it to happen. Ms. Kennedy made a good point. We hired a Superintendent. We made a big deal about wanting to have somebody from out of State versus local. The one we hired did not work out, at all. We went back to hiring within. He is not arguing that we should hire locally. That is not his point. His point is that sometimes we get hung on certain criteria for what we want, we may miss great candidates in the pool because they do not hit the mark exactly. At the end of the day, you need to make sure you have the right person, with the right fit. The right fit sometimes is beyond an objective. If we do not trust the firm, then we are going to always be subjectively making decisions that are not in the best interest of the County.

Mr. Manning stated some of the lessons learned in the past, in his opinion, is Council should look at a different labor attorney in this process. We also need to give some consideration, because we were in the same bit of a bind 2 years ago when we had a search firm, and were in the process with the search, that we had, at this point, 3 people that we knew were no longer going to be on Council. At this time, we have potentially 4 people that could possibly come on Council. Obviously, if this process is going to go into 2019, none of these potential people, that may join the body, get a vote. We can even decide whether they can say anything or whether they write notes and pass it. He thinks we would remiss if we know that over 25% of this body is going to be new midstream, and we do not let them in on hearing, and seeing, how we got to where they will come in, in January.

Mr. C. Jackson stated there did not seem to be any concern about that when you hired Mr. Seals. We brought on 3 new people, and you did it in less than a month before they came on board. He said later on, he was glad they did it that way. At first, he was upset, but when it turned out the way it did he accepted the decision. He does not think there is ever going to be a perfect time, based upon schedules, where you are going to sacrifice the County from now until next February.

Mr. Manning stated they were not in the middle of the process when the new Councilmembers came on board because a vote was made, in the middle of the process. What he was trying to say is, not that anything stops, but to invite the 4 folks on the ballot in November to be included in the process. They would not be allowed to vote, but to be informed because they will be able to see how Council got to where they are.

Ms. Dickerson stated, unless they are in Executive Session, the meetings are public. If anyone wants to know what is going on, everything is published. She stated she would need to look at if it was legal to include them. When she was elected she did everything she could to learn about it.

Ms. Kennedy inquired how we know who the new people are going to be because we have the November election coming up. The people elected in the primary may not be the people that are going to be on Council in November.

Mr. Manning stated there are 4 names on the ballot for November, which are the individuals that would be invited to participate.

Mr. Weathers restated the previous discussion for the Administrator position, as follows:

- There are 3 or 4 firms that have submitted information to Council
- Ensure all Council members have the information
- Meet with the firms
- Ask clarifying or exploratory questions
- Make a decision; and
- Move forward

Ms. McBride inquired if the evaluation will be a part of the process.

Mr. Weathers responded in the affirmative.

Mr. N. Jackson stated the search and the evaluation process are 2 separate things.

Mr. Weathers stated the search firm would use the evaluation information to conduct the search, but may not be the one creating the evaluation.

Mr. N. Jackson stated most of the evaluation process will be from the labor attorney.

Mr. Manning stated the labor attorney told Council not to put in the contract anything about doing an evaluation. The reason being, Council had never gotten an evaluation, but in the contract it stated Council would do an annual evaluation. The labor attorney stated Council defaulted on the contract in the first year; therefore, Council cannot hold the person responsible for anything because Council breached the contract.

Mr. N. Jackson stated, to him, the search and the creation of an evaluation are 2 separate things.

Mr. Manning stated if we are the first County to begin the process with the evaluation tool and then back it into the hiring process, the County will get wonderful publicity. Council can talk to the firms about how we can get that. They may say, Council needs to independently have an evaluation created, or they may say they can do that work as a part of what they do.

Ms. McBride stated we need a process in place for all of Council's employees.

Mr. N. Jackson stated his thoughts were, before Council recesses for August, we choose a firm to get a process started.

Ms. Dickerson stated, for clarification, the matter of selecting a firm will be on the Council agenda for tomorrow night.

Ms. McBride inquired if we are okay, under the circumstances with which we are working now, as it relates to the Assistant County Administrator or do we need someone for 4 – 6 months, while we are searching for an Administrator.

Mr. N. Jackson stated, at this point, we still need an Interim Administrator to be in compliance with State law. If that means Council members turn in some names, interview those individuals and then vote on those individuals. He stated we have to develop a process to move forward.

Mr. Weathers inquired about what the process is now for securing an Interim Administrator.

The Council members stated there is not a process.

Mr. Smith stated the County is currently not in compliance.

Mr. Pearce stated he made a motion that we advertise within the County to see if anyone was interested.

Ms. Dickerson stated Mr. Pearce sent the motion to her and she did not know exactly how you would go about advertising.

Mr. Pearce inquired if HR posted the position.

Mr. N. Jackson stated there are qualified people in Richland County. He suggested bringing their names forward, have a discussion and move forward.

Ms. McBride stated, for clarification, Council members could submit names with resumes.

Mr. Livingston stated last time Council sent something out through the HR Department. It was a short period of time to respond, and then we interviewed 3 or 4 people. That is how we ended up selecting Mr. Seals as interim.

Ms. Myers stated Council tends to hurry up and do, and then end up on the backside of it having rushed ourselves to do, without a process in place.

Ms. Kennedy stated Councilmembers can submit names, but also advertise at the same time.

Mr. Manning inquired if the position of Interim Administrator had been advertised by HR.

Mr. Hanna stated that it had not been advertised.

Ms. Dickerson stated the question is whether we want to get an Acting Administrator or Interim Administrator while we are working on securing an Administrator.

Mr. Manning stated the Acting Administrator will only have the authority to sign documents until Council has an opportunity to interview for the Interim Administrator position. The Interim Administrator will be there 4 – 6 months while Council is searching for an Administrator.

Ms. McBride inquired as to why Council cannot do an Interim Administrator instead of Acting, then Interim, etc.

Ms. Kennedy stated if we hire an Interim now, we should be looking for an Administrator.

Mr. Manning stated if Council is ready to name an Interim tomorrow night so we are in compliance fine. But, if we are going to advertise and wait until September, then Council needs to name an Acting Administrator.

Mr. Weathers stated, ideally, it would be nice if we had could have an Interim, and be in compliance. If that does not happen, and we have to advertise, then we have to have an Acting. In order to do that do we need to get HR engaged with Council to discuss the process of moving forward.

Ms. McBride stated we need to determine if we are going to move forward with an Acting or Interim.

Mr. Weathers inquired if Council can come with suggested names tomorrow night, to into Executive Session to discuss those individuals for the Acting and/or Interim position.

Mr. Livingston stated he would be willing to discuss the Acting Administrator position, but not Interim.

Ms. Myers inquired about how long we are talking about for Acting.

Mr. Livingston inquired of Mr. Hanna about the length of time for the process to secure an Interim.

Mr. Hanna stated the position could be advertised the next day after Council directs HR to advertise. The County's minimum days for advertising is 5 working days.

Mr. C. Jackson stated Council is capable of coming to the meeting tomorrow and have names presented to have one of those individuals so serve as Acting Administrator. He is more comfortable with Acting than Interim given the finite amount of time. Then give Mr. Hanna the directive to advertise for the minimum amount of days. Council can select an Acting tomorrow night and put them on a 30-day schedule. The goal will be to select an Interim Administrator within those 30 days.

Mr. N. Jackson reminded the Council members that they will be in recess for the month of August.

Mr. Manning stated he was willing to come in in August.

Mr. N. Jackson stated if we advertise for 5 days we can have a Special Called meeting prior to the August recess.

Ms. McBride stated unless there are strong guidelines for how long the Acting Administrator will be in place, she is opposed to bringing in names of a person and making a quick decision.

Mr. C. Jackson stated if you identify an expert professional to serve as Acting, which we have attempted to do on 4 occasions, and were turned down each time, the person would simply be given signatory authority, and not authority to run the County like an Interim would do. The only reason we are doing an Acting is to buy the time to select the Interim. It is not to give the Acting time to acclimate to the job. If Council wants to be in compliance, they need to come up with something immediately. He believes we have professionals within the agency and he would be satisfied with for 30 days.

Ms. Kennedy stated she agrees with Mr. C. Jackson. There are a lot of people capable of doing this for 30 days. Some of the people that were previously approached, Council was talking about a permanent position. If we approached them with the 30-day timeline. She believes there are some that would be willing to work for 30 days.

Mr. Livingston stated he believes if we name an Acting tomorrow, and advertise, we could have an Interim before the August recess.

Ms. Dickerson stated Council does not need to do what they have done in the past and not speak with the individual they are suggesting for the Acting position.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we have a County to run. Having someone with signatory authority is okay, but we do not have the luxury of waiting 45 days with no one leading the County.

Ms. McBride inquired if there will be some type of stipulation that says we only want you for 30 days because 9 times out of 10 that person will end up being Interim. She inquired if that person will be apply to as Interim, or do we tell the person this is just for 30 days, and you are not able to apply as the Interim. What happens is you work with someone for a while and you get used to them, and they slide into the position.

Mr. Weathers stated the concern he hears is the person comes as Acting and becomes Interim by default. We want to make sure there is something in place that states, "You are here for up to 30 days." He assumes the County Attorney and HR personnel will ensure the proper language is in there. He inquired if everyone felt good about the search firm and bringing names to tomorrow night's meeting.

Ms. Kennedy stated it was unfair that the person is named as the Acting Administrator would be ineligible to apply for the Interim Administrator. She stated Council needs to think about who best fits into this position.

Ms. Myers stated she is concerned people who are excessively qualified, and capable of doing it for 45 – 60 days, being barred from being in the "pot" for consideration. She stated, if she is the person applying, and knows she is qualified to do the job, but you say to me, "You can do it for 30 or 45 days." The question becomes, how does it look on the applicant's resume that they went and did this thing for 30 or 45 days, and did an excellent job, but were not considered for the position. She's afraid good people will shy away from it because of the way we are setting it up.

Ms. McBride stated she was thinking the person Council selected was there and they knew when we talked to them about it, it was just Interim, and that is all they were interested in. There have been many contracts she is familiar with they have done that to avoid what happens after they get someone in place. What she is suggesting is not unusual, but she is a team player, so she will go with the consensus of Council. She stated upfront we would say we want someone to come in temporarily to hold this position, but if they take the position temporarily they are not eligible to apply for the regular position.

Mr. C. Jackson stated they do this in the school districts all the time. Usually they use retired superintendents when they are searching for a new superintendent. It does not hurt those individual's resumes because many of those people have already retired.

Mr. Manning stated the Acting is for 30 – 45 days, which has signatory authority, so the County is in compliance. Then there is the Interim. Whoever applies for that, applies for that. If we want to tell this person they cannot apply for anything else, he has no problem with that.

Mr. Weathers stated it is not that the process does not work. We are talking about lessons learned from the past when it did not work, and trying to avoid going there again.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we are trying to accommodate everybody, and we are not taking care of ourselves.

Ms. Dickerson stated where we are now is bringing names. She is going to bring “John” in for 30 – 45 days, and he is going to sign the paperwork, and nothing else. He will have no authority.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we have a need, here is what we want, take it or leave it. It is an Acting until we find an Interim. We cannot find an Interim in 10 days.

Ms. Dickerson stated she wished Mr. N. Jackson would approach her like that and say, “Joyce, we want you to serve as an Acting, while we search for an Interim. You have up to 30 – 45 days to serve in this position, take it or leave it.”

Mr. N. Jackson stated that is not what he was saying. He stated we have a need. Here is what we want done. Whoever wants to apply for it, apply for it.

Mr. Weathers stated he is hearing the driving force behind this is compliance.

Mr. Smith stated Council has said a couple times that whoever, they are considering as Acting, they want to limit what they would be responsible for doing. The statute is specific, in terms of the duties and responsibilities, and whether that person is Interim, Acting, or full-time, State law outlines what their authority is, and that cannot be limited. If we are talking about compliance, the Acting, Interim, the full-time would still have to comply with Sec. 4-9-630, which outlines the duties.

Mr. N. Jackson stated when we decided to talk about Acting, somehow it came up that we needed someone to sign documents.

Ms. McBride stated her major concern was getting somebody to just “sign off”.

Mr. Manning stated we just keep doing what we are doing. Maybe tomorrow night, we will decide to advertise, with a minimum of 5 business days. And, maybe even decide on a day to schedule interviews, so we will have 6 people available. Right now floating in noncompliance does not seem as bad as breaking the State law.

Mr. C. Jackson stated he hopes the Director of HR is clear when he walks out of this room today, that the clock is ticking on advertising for the 5 days.

Mr. Manning stated Council is hopeful that Mr. Hanna will proactively be ready to have something to go out on Wednesday morning.

Mr. N. Jackson inquired, if in the last few months, we requested advertising or just discussed it.

Mr. Manning stated, whether we did or didn't, it has not been advertised.

Ms. Myers inquired what Mr. Smith recommended, in terms of noncompliance, and what the County should be considering.

Mr. Smith stated the Council can do Acting or Interim. That is not is the issue. The issue is the authority that is given to either one, and what he wanted to be sure of is that Council was not of the thought that if they just do an Acting they can limit them to just signing documents.

Ms. Myers stated she was referring to the timing, and just waiting it out.

Mr. Smith stated it is important that the County come into compliance as quickly as possible. The more you are not, that creates some potential problems.

Ms. Myers inquired if it is advisable to go with somebody for 30 – 45, and move forward.

Mr. Smith stated it is important to get someone in, as soon as you can, to maintain the status quo, until you can figure out how you want to move forward.

Ms. Myers stated, for clarification, that protects us from exposure to potential lawsuits about any actions taken during this time, or having to go back and redo.

Mr. C. Jackson stated, stated for clarification, in the interim everything we have signed has created exposure for us.

Mr. Smith stated he is suggesting that could raise a question.

Mr. Weathers stated the discussion for tomorrow night is to find an Actin, if at all possible, for up to 25 days, while we are looking for an Interim.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we are going to advertise for an Interim Administrator for 5 business days. Before the end of the month, we should have interviews and make decisions.

Mr. Manning inquired as to the date for applications to be submitted if Mr. Hanna advertised for the Interim Administrator position on July 11th.

Mr. Hanna stated the deadline for applications would be the close of business July 17th.

Ms. Dickerson stated Council has until July 31st to make the final decision.

Mr. N. Jackson stated if we could interview, and make a decision, on July 24th, so the person would have a week with Council prior to the recess.

Mr. Manning stated the person not may be able to start immediately.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we would have to tell the applicant that we need them immediately.

Mr. Manning stated that should be included in the advertisement that way if someone cannot, or will not, start immediately, they not apply for the position.

Ms. Myers stated we are saying we are going to interview everyone on the 23rd and the person is going to start on the 25th. We are going to tell them in the advertisement they will be required to

start the day we hire you. This is going to make us look crazy. People are going to say, "What in the world are you doing?" That is so unusual, as to almost be absurd. If we are restricting this to internal people that is one thing, but if it is universal people, it is going to make us look like we are absolutely insane.

Mr. N. Jackson stated there are former Administrators that can jump in and do the job.

Mr. Manning stated he is not saying he is agreement with the person starting immediately. The only thing he was saying was that he did not want to be a part of interviewing someone on the 23rd and telling them, "Oh, by the way, we are going to vote on this tomorrow night, and we expect you to start on Wednesday." If we are choosing for them to start on the 25th, he did not want to spring it on them.

Mr. N. Jackson stated he wanted them to be familiar with staff before Council's goes on recess.

Ms. McBride said to strike her comments regarding the applicant not being able to apply for the County Administrator position.

Mr. Manning stated he was willing to come back before the 1st meeting in September, if needed. He considers this urgent, and he is willing to make things work.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we have already established 5 days advertising. We interview them and make a decision.

Mr. Weathers inquired what would happen if we were to hire an Acting up to 60 days, which gets you into September. If you do not get a good Interim in the next 3 weeks, you're still in compliance. Take your recess. Come back in September and take another shot at Interim.

Ms. Dickerson stated this alternative may be the best one, but then you have to look at compensation. At least we will not be so stressed out.

Mr. Weathers stated he was trying to help Council meet the need of being compliant and not making any irrational decisions.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we can make a decision the same day after the interviews are completed. He inquired about how they will look if they cannot make a decision until 60 -90 days later.

Mr. Manning stated, if Council acts tomorrow night, it is Mr. Hanna's directive to put out the advertisement. July 17th is the due date. If at 6:00 PM on that date, we have 12 applications. We know that on the 23rd we are going to interview. He inquired if Council is interviewing all 12 applicants, or is somebody going to narrow them down.

Mr. N. Jackson stated they can narrow it down on the 24th and still interview before the 31st.

Ms. Kennedy stated couldn't we narrow them down to the 5 or 10 most qualified.

Mr. Manning stated it occurred to him between the applications received by the 17th and the interviewing, how is the list going to be narrowed down.

Mr. N. Jackson stated, if they have 5 or less, they will interview on 23rd. If we have more, we will meet on the 24th to decide who to "weed out" and interview before the 31st.

Mr. Weathers stated the HR personnel, and others who have been through the process, have indicated there is a process for narrowing it down. What is the key criteria we are looking for?

Mr. N. Jackson stated in the past a committee met to weed out the applications.

Ms. Kennedy inquired why we could not have HR to send us the top 10 applicants.

Mr. Weathers stated part of the process will be for someone to sit down to explore what the criteria is we are looking for.

Ms. Myers stated Mr. Hanna has a process that works pretty well.

Mr. Hanna stated he was comfortable with assisting Council, if Council gives him direction on what they want.

Mr. Manning stated we are asking someone to screen the applicants, and one of those applicants is going to become their boss for the next 4 – 6 months. He stated that has the potential to be a conflict of interest.

Ms. Dickerson stated what Mr. Manning is saying is, if Mr. Hanna gets in 100 applications, he needs to be far removed from that.

Mr. Livingston stated the problem is, what criteria? He stated it is Council's responsibility to decide what that is. We may need to come up with something, so we can, at least, weed some of them out.

Mr. Manning stated should those requirements be a part of the advertisements.

Ms. McBride stated when we have meetings like, if we have some kind of outline because we are just throwing out different things because there are no guidelines for us to address this particular issue.

Mr. Livingston stated we need to look at some of the Administrator's applications and decide on some things Council wants the person to have that way HR can weed some folks out.

Mr. Smith stated the statute outlines the duties and responsibilities.

Mr. Livingston stated he was referring to the criteria and qualifications for hiring.

Mr. N. Jackson stated one of the criteria should be if the person can start immediately. Another would be the years of experience in local government.

Mr. Weathers stated it seems to him that Council makes the decision tomorrow night, and a lot of the questions get answered.

Mr. C. Jackson suggested Mr. Smith to bring the section of the job description that shows the qualifications for the Administrator. He used the following example: must have a Master's Degree, must have financial experiences, etc.

Mr. Smith stated the qualifications for the position are different from the power and authority the Administrator has, that is statutory. He stated the number of years the applicant has worked in

County/municipal government would be things that may or may not be a part of the current job description. He inquired of Mr. Hanna if there was something within the current job description that outlines what Mr. C. Jackson referred to, which is separate and apart from the statutory duties and responsibilities.

Ms. Dickerson requested Mr. Smith and Mr. Hanna to provide a document that outlines the statutory duties and responsibilities and the qualifications in the current job description.

Mr. Weathers stated the next item for discussion is the Renaissance. Lessons learned; next steps...

Mr. Manning stated there has already been a motion about the 911 Call Center and EOC. There is a motion on the agenda tomorrow night about moving forward with the courthouse. There were a number of things in the budget related to revivification.

Mr. N. Jackson stated the last time Council voted on the Renaissance was to hold it until we get their thoughts together. He is not sure how long the hold is for us to get their thoughts together.

Mr. Manning stated he would like to see an appraisal of 1701 Main Street. He would also like for them to look at bringing a group together similar to the group that resulted in the Transportation Penny. He stated the courthouse was on the table for a long time before anybody started talking about revivifying and Renaissance.

Mr. C. Jackson stated one of his concerns was that a committee be formed to look at the pieces and parts of the Renaissance, objectively and independently, and with them standing on their own merit. Richland County Courthouse is important, but in discussing that the ripple effect of what happens to those displaced by that facility become a part of the discussion. He stated Richland Renaissance was an attempt to address the collective approach to these things, as opposed to this is what we are going to do with the courthouse. He requested that we proceed with caution when we begin to pull out pieces, like the courthouse. He feels very strongly about the hospital need in Southeast Richland.

Mr. N. Jackson stated one of the things he has learned since being on Council is to have a feasibility study done when you are planning on using the taxpayers' money. The feasibility will address what may be displaced, how it will affect other areas, and if it is worth it.

Ms. Dickerson stated the motion Mr. Manning alluded to earlier referenced 3 various things that worked, but they were very specific. The Blue Ribbon addressed a specific issue, flooding. She stated she believes the TPAC Committee had 39 members, and we had a lot of problems with that particular committee because the committee thought they were going to be Council members.

Mr. Pearce stated the Transportation Study group is totally different than the TPAC Committee.

The Transportation Study group helped with the referendum and then went away. The referendum called for the creation of the TPAC.

Ms. Dickerson stated the TPAC Committee was starting to act like Council members. She stated she does not know how the proposed committee will work in regards to the Renaissance.

Mr. Livingston stated his problem with the Renaissance Plan was the "whole" thing. He supported parts of the Plan, but did not support other parts of the Plan. He stated he had no problem with the

mall, but he had serious concerns regarding the cost of renovations. He wanted someone to give him an official estimation of the cost of renovations. He stated he voted against the one in Ms. Dickerson's district because the numbers he had did not work. He stated he is not against any of them, but he needs to be able to verify things and make decisions based on what he thinks is in the best interest of the County. He would treat any project the same way. He is not picking or choosing any projects in the Renaissance.

Mr. C. Jackson stated he thinks the mistake we made is when there is an objective opportunity to vote on an approved organization to do come and do the design, and give us those numbers, we vote it down. He stated we had an opportunity to do what Mr. Livingston described by selecting a firm that would not do more than developing the design, and telling us what it would cost, and the motion failed. Unless we can vote on getting a firm to come in and do what Mr. Livingston suggested, we will never get the hard numbers about what it is going to cost to renovate spaces.

Mr. Livingston stated what he was suggesting would have cost the County about \$7,000 - \$10,000, which was a whole lot less than that firm.

Ms. Dickerson stated she would have a problem with an Administrator bringing her information, that required her to act on, that did not have some credibility.

Mr. Weathers inquired what role the committee can play in getting all of this on track, getting these questions answered, and moving forward.

Ms. Dickerson stated the committee would look at each phase and see what needs to be done to address each phase. The committee may suggest that we have a TPAC, Blue Ribbon, etc. model.

Mr. N. Jackson stated the feasibility study could be used for each project and/or area, so we know whether we should move forward or not. He stated he wanted to build a golf course in Lower Richland, and the study said the people were too poor. In regard to the courthouse, we need to take in consideration where we could move the courthouse, if we can renovate it, and the lawyers that are within walking distance of the existing courthouse. He does not think that was taken into consideration until afterward.

Ms. Dickerson stated the Renaissance was design came up when we did a profile study. Council gave Administration marching orders as to what, and how we wanted to proceed, to address a lot of things in the County. That was put together and brought back to us at our 2017 workshop in Hilton Head on how we address the blight in the whole County, not just downtown. She thinks sometimes we lose a lot. She knows that some of us live in the City, but we forget about the City, County and suburbs. She stated she lives in the suburbs. A lot of times when things are addressed they do not address the suburbs. She feels like the suburbs are continually overlooked, and we cannot allow the outskirts to continue to deteriorate while others are more prosperous. This is the 3rd large countywide project that has failed since she has been on Council. She thanked the staff for all of their hard work on the Renaissance Plan. In her opinion, she thinks it was an insult to the staff when the work they put in to show us how it would work, many Council members did not put input into the project. She also stated that some of the Council members went out in the public and said the plan was not good, while others were saying it was good. Additionally, none of the stakeholders attended the meetings to voice their concerns.

Ms. Myers stated the need to focus on the whole Renaissance is paramount to her. She stated it is a constant battle to have the County use its resources everywhere. We take all of this money from the

taxpayers, and we always agree to all of this stuff that is urban, but anything leaves the urban core it is almost like pulling teeth. It's not just money from the urban core. We, in some cases, have let so many parts of the County, where taxpayers live, go fathom that it is almost an embarrassment to drive through them. The whole point of Renaissance was to take us back to a point where there was some form of return on taxpayer investment. There are parts of this County that get zero, in terms of return on investment. She read in one of the COMET studies about a park and ride in the Southeast part of Richland County that the reason for not having one is because there are marshes, and not many people would ride the bus. There have to be people there because there are at least 2 representatives. The study did not even visit the area to legitimize it. It made that determination based on an aerial map view. Things like that anger people, and we are coming to a point in Richland County where there are people that feel like we are not doing our jobs because their areas are not getting taken care of. They are getting less than fair return for the money they are investing. She urged us to look at Renaissance, not as somebody pet project somewhere because it is their district, but the whole point of Richland Renaissance is encapsulated in the name. Revitalization for the whole County. She stated Mr. Rose dragged her along in the beginning about the courthouse, and she told him she was not interested in having conversations about the courthouse. There are so many other pieces of the County where we have done nothing, that she was willing for us to look at other things before the courthouse. She is completely not willing to go back in and discussing building a new courthouse when there is a trailer park on Percival Road that has literally been there for 25 years, with about 30 trailers. Nobody leaving there. Toilets littering everywhere. There are snake and rat infestations. We cannot look at critical life and health needs. She urged Council to go back to the Renaissance Plan. We did not vote it down. We voted it up. We tabled it. We did not destroy it. She is very opposed to the piece meal.

Mr. N. Jackson stated he has traveled to parts of Lower Richland where it is worse than a 3rd world country. There are places where there is raw sewage. The concentration over the years has been on the City. Most of the Hospitality Tax programs and Transportation Penny Tax projects are in the City. We have to address the areas that have been left out. The Renaissance Plan was supposed to address the neglected areas. When those areas started to cry, it seemed like we were spending too much in those areas, but they are playing catch up.

Mr. Weathers stated what he has heard is when the committee meets there is a list of approximately 10 expectations of Council.

Ms. McBride stated she was excited about the Renaissance because she saw a strategic plan that addressed the entire County. Conceptually it was well done by staff. She stated it was suggested at the meeting in Myrtle Beach that we have an advisory committee, similar to what Mr. Manning described. They could not decide whether to do a big advisory committee with Council members, and other resource persons, or not. We did not go that route, but with a Renaissance Committee of Council. That committee was to look at the entire Renaissance Plan. Now, it seems to her, it is not a strategic plan. It is fragmented. There were 5 components in the plan, and all of the components worked together. She would like to see a large Renaissance Committee with subcommittees working on the different components. She stated people were excited about the Columbia Mall component. She suggested planning it out and not cherry picking, but look at it comprehensively.

Ms. Dickerson stated one of the problems was who would be selected to do the courthouse, etc. She wants to focus on the fact that the Courthouse Ad Hoc Committee was "killed" because the chair of the committee voted to put the courthouse in the Renaissance Plan. She stated NACo got very excited about what the County was doing. When staff sent the plan to NACo, we ended up getting 5 awards because of our vision. Other counties were beginning to look at this plan. We were on the

verge of being profiled by the SCAC. She was so excited to be addressing the issues in Richland County. The blight. The neglected areas. This was giving people in those areas hope and not forgotten.

Mr. Weathers stated Council had not discussed 2 items that were brought up in the morning session. (1) Staff relations with Council; and (2) Transparency and accountability working in Executive Session. Lastly, where do we land with the Renaissance.

Mr. N. Jackson stated his understanding was that we have paused, so we could collect our thoughts and iron out the concerns we had about the plan. We had a vision that a lot of the contracts would be in Richland County. We are trying to spend the money in Richland County.

Mr. Manning stated when the Transportation Study Group began their deliberations it was to discuss the bus situation. The other aspects of the Transportation Penny were rolled into the whole plan. He is very pleased, and would be supportive, of us having something broad like that in regards to the Renaissance Plan.

Ms. Dickerson stated the County has questioned the Parsons Brinkerhoff study every day since. In her opinion, if we cannot depend on those numbers, she is going to have a hard time relying on the numbers for the Renaissance Plan.

Mr. Livingston stated the study was done back in 2010, and the costs were based on the costs at that time. He stated we thought we would get a whole lot of the projects completed by now.

Ms. Myers stated she has been told consistently by the PDT that the inputs Parsons Brinkerhoff used were wrong. She stated she has said if costs of asphalt and concrete have gone up, why not bulk buy and freeze the prices today, so we can hedge against the next 5 years.

Mr. N. Jackson stated, to him, the study was very accurate. At the time the study was recommended, he told Council that all of the documentation they wanted was on his desk at the SCDOT. When they got the contract to do it, they came to the SCDOT.

Mr. Weathers restated that Mr. Manning agreed with Ms. McBride in her approach for the framework of the committee. He inquired if that was a reasonable next step for the Renaissance Plan.

Mr. Manning stated there are many times, archived on video, in Council meetings, where the question is about going into Executive Session. Sometimes the answer has been, "Well there might be a question come up." And his contention has been, "Well why don't we talk about in open session, and if a question comes up, then somebody say stop." But, we still vote to go into Executive Session to talk about stuff because a question may come up. One time, we were actually in Executive Session, and on 2 different occasions, while we were in Executive Session, we were talking about stuff, in his thought, was clearly not Executive Session. In the middle of the meeting, he asked the County Attorney if what we are talking about right now qualify for Executive Session. And on 2 different occasions, he said no. We come out in public, and he made that comment and put it on the record. He thinks we have to do a much better job, if we are going to talk about accountability and transparency, that we are only going into Executive Session, staying in Executive Session, and discussing in Executive Session what legally qualifies for that.

Ms. Myers agrees with Mr. Manning's comments.

Mr. Manning stated he has told his colleagues that if we vote to go into Executive Session and we talk about stuff that does not qualify, then do not be shocked if he goes out and tells the people what the Council talked about when we were in unqualified Executive Session. He stated you cannot use the cover of, "Well we were in there wrongly, so you cannot tell anybody what the Council talked about."

Ms. Dickerson stated, in her opinion, whoever the Chair is, when they set the agenda, and the attorney says these qualify for Executive Session, so they are placed on the agenda during the "Horizon Meeting" to set the agenda. When we come to Council, if the attorney gives me 5 things that qualify for Executive Session under his report, and we go into Executive Session. She stated she is going to have a problem if he takes Council back into Executive Session, and he informs Council 2 of the items do not qualify for Executive Session.

Mr. Smith stated under the law there are certain discussions that qualify for Executive Session. He thinks what has occurred, on some occasions, are when we are discussing those things that qualify someone may make a comment. The comment may not be consistent with the reason we went into Executive Session. He thinks when that occurs, a member of Council has a right to raise a point of order, and say that statement does not qualify for Executive Session. Or, you can go back out into public session, and discuss those comments, and when we get back on track, go back into Executive Session. First of all, Council has to decide whether they want to go into Executive Session. They have the right not to, if you do not want to. Council can waive the right to the confidentiality of the information by not going into Executive Session. He may not recommend that, but Council has a right not to.

Mr. Weathers stated the last item is how to strengthen the relationship between Council and staff, and Council with each other.

Ms. Myers stated she would like to see a more respectful relationship with staff. She stated they are professional. They are smart. Sometimes, especially on the public record, if she were staff she would feel very awkward being screamed out, or called out on live feed. She thinks the time to call staff out is not in that moment because it makes the County look incompetent. Sometimes we make ourselves look worse than we have to. She thinks it is important for things to go well, and smoothly, but she also thinks it is important for people to feel like their work product, and they are valuable. She stated since we, on a live feed, fired the head of the County, she has been excessively uncomfortable. No warning. No evaluation. She stated, if she was a worker for Richland County, she would come in every day worried about being fired. She believes our staff is paralyzed because of it. It is just bad form, and in some ways she feels like she is not personally doing a good enough job of collaborating with fellow Council members, so the Council is not divided. She stated she has not had the heart to do stuff at the County. She is excited about Richland County because she is a geek, a pinhead, and she rather likes all of Council. She thinks they are smart people. She talks to other people about the fact that this is probably the best work she has ever done in her life. It is so impactful for people in their homes. It is such a privilege to do it, and she thinks that we could do it better. She has managed staff her whole life. She has never managed a staff that is afraid, and this is a staff that is afraid.

Ms. Dickerson stated she would have ditto Ms. Myers' words. The day after Mr. Seals was fired, she came down to Administration Building about 8:30 a.m., and it was like somebody had died. She stated doors were closed. People was almost afraid of their shadows. A lot of people were in tears. She stated she does not bother staff. She goes to the Clerks or the Administrator. If she addresses

other staff members, she copies the Administrator on the correspondence. When staff comes to her with complaints, she advises them they need to go through the process.

Mr. Weathers stated this is culture, and it starts with the head. It starts with those in the room, and then whoever the Administrator is going to be. One of the keys to successfully managing a staff this large is having a healthy relationship between the Administrator and Council. Then that bleeds down into everything else. That is why everything you are talking about, the Administrator is going to be key to make all of that happen. Council will govern and the Administrator will manage. The greatest asset/resource Council has is the public's trust. Whatever we do to erode that trust, it we have to do triple to get it back and sustain it. Somethings are not a process or policy issue; it is a person issue.

Ms. Dickerson thanked her colleagues for attending. She thought it necessary to get the body engaged in a conversation.