



**MINUTES**  
**OCONEE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**WORKSHOP MEETING**  
**with the Infrastructure Advisory Commission**  
**Tuesday, March 17, 2009, 6:00 PM**  
Council Chambers,  
Oconee County Administrative Offices  
415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

Oconee County Council met on Tuesday, March 17, 2009 at 6:00 PM in Council Chambers, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC with all Council Members [except Mr. Suarez, and Mr. McCall], County Administrator Dale K. Surrett and Elizabeth G. Hulse, Clerk to Council present.

**Press:**

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [[www.oconeese.com/council](http://www.oconeese.com/council)]. In addition it was made available to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Member of the press present: Ray Chandler – Anderson Independent, Peter Kent, WSNW Radio & Carlos Galarza - Daily Journal.

**Call to Order:**

Mr. Dexter called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Workshop Discussion between the County Council and members of the Infrastructure Advisory Commission**

Mr. Dexter recognized Mr. Bob Winchester, Chairman of the Infrastructure Advisory Commission and the Oconee Joint Regional Sewer Authority. Mr. Winchester addressed Council recapping the summary of powers and duties of the commission that includes advising and making recommendations concerning the County's role in building, operation of sewer and water lines in Oconee County and being a liaison between Oconee County and sewer and water entities in Oconee County. Mr. Winchester stated that Infrastructure Advisory Commission is in the process of putting together their goals/objective for the future but needs input from the Council concerning actions for the future. Mr. Winchester calls up Mr. Doug Fuller, chairman of the Capital Project Sales Tax Commission. Mr. Fuller reiterated the need for Council support for future endeavors of the Infrastructure Advisory Commission and also states that they will start to solicit input from the cities and other entities.

Mr. Blanchard stated he has concerns with some of the suggested projects because of ongoing Operations & Maintenance [O&M] costs that might have to be picked up by the county. Mr. Blanchard also suggested that research be done to find out the cost of items that are needed and present the information to the public.

Mr. Fuller stated that the commission had met with Parks, Recreation & Tourism [PRT] and that they had presented plans for several projects. He stated that the major issue is having land for development of any of the projects.

Mr. Blanchard mentioned Horry County and how they used their penny tax for road and bridges. Their program was successful and they are in the middle of their second tax cycle. Mr. Blanchard asked the commission to research promoting the penny tax and at the same time decreasing millage as a way to have the citizens accept a sales tax increase for a seven year period.

Mr. Surrett reminded everyone that South Carolina is under a mileage cap and that if you reduce millage you can't recoup those dollars due to the cap.

Mr. Blanchard asks if the 1 cent can be used to purchase land. Mr. Fuller stated that yes that would be an appropriate use of the funds. Mr. Surrett states that the 1 cent can also be used to replace funds from another source.

Mr. Dexter stated his concerns about the long list of projects developed by the previous commission. He stated he felt this was a major reason it failed. Mr. Fuller agreed and stated that they are looking into creating a 4-5 projects list.

Mr. Thrift asked if the commission had identified how much money they felt the tax could raise over the seven year period. Mr. Fuller stated that they anticipate approximately \$50 million dollars was the estimated amount.

Ms. Sharon Nunnery, Mayor of West Union, asked if any of the projects would put citizens to work? Mr. Blanchard stated that it depends on the type of projects on the referendum. Mr. Blanchard also stated that it is important for the Commission to educate the citizens regarding how the projects will benefit them and the County.

Mr. Alexander stated that the project list must be approved by County Council in sufficient time to have the referendum drafted and put on the November 2010 ballot. He stated that it is important that work begin on public education and project identification as soon as possible. Mr. Fuller stated that it is important that someone be identified with marketing skills to spearhead the education project. Mr. Blanchard stated that there are many citizens that have the background and could possibly volunteer their work towards the project.

Mr. Surrett asked Mr. Winchester to speak about the Infrastructure Commission role in bring private and public entities together. Mr. Winchester stated that this Commission has county, municipality and utility membership and it allows for each to communicate their ongoing projects and fosters cooperation between all entities.

Mr. Winchester closed by thanking the Council and inviting everyone to come to the both the Infrastructure Advisory Commission and Capital Projects Sales Tax Commission meetings.

## **Adjourn:**

Mr. Thrift made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanchard, approved 3 – 0 that the meeting be adjourned at 6:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Stacy Crosby  
Administrative Assistant