

EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL

March 13, 2012

6:00 PM

Trenton Town Hall

The Edgefield County Council held a Listening Tour meeting at 6:00 P. M. Tuesday, March 13, 2012, in the Trenton Town Hall, 106 Church Street, Trenton.

Members present

Dean Campbell, Chair

Rodney Ashcraft, Councilman

Willie Bright, Councilman

Others present

Lynn Strom, County Administrator

Jennifer Gilley, Clerk to Council

Michael Medlock, County Attorney

and others as per list attached

Absent

Genia Blackwell, Vice Chair

Norman Dorn, Councilman

Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order and told the citizens in attendance that County and staff were there to listen to any comments and answer any questions that the public may have.

Comments from the public

Mrs. Betty Butler had several questions, some were her own and some on behalf of Joseph Mosley who couldn't be in attendance. She asked what the projected impact was expected from the expansion of Bridgestone to district 4. Chairman Dean Campbell answered by saying that approximately 850 new employees would be hired, some of which may live in Edgefield County. He went on to say that Edgefield County will get 1% of the tax revenue paid to Aiken County. Mrs. Butler asked if there was any information available as to how we prepare the people in Edgefield County for these jobs. Chairman Campbell responded by saying that he would encourage her to contact Piedmont Technical College and Aiken Technical College. Mrs. Butler then asked what could be done to impact the future growth of district 4 by the capital investments of Bridgestone in Aiken County. Chairman Campbell responded by telling Mrs. Butler the industry that we do have is maintaining and some are even looking into expansion. Mrs. Butler continued with her next question about the Bettis Academy Park. She wanted to know why the Edgefield County Bettis Academy Park gets water from the Mt. Cannan pond instead of Edgefield County Water and Sewer Authority. Councilman Bright responded by saying that it is much more economical to get water from the pond rather than the ECWSA when they are using anywhere from 50-60 thousand gallons of water each day for irrigation of the fields. Mrs. Butler asked him if it lowered the water tables. Councilman Bright responded by saying no, there is no effect on the water tables and that Clemson has done a study to prove this fact. He also told her that it benefits the pond because it helps generate oxygen in the pond which helps the fish growth. Mrs. Butler then asked where the proceeds from the concessions and gate fee go. Mrs. Strom told her that the gate fees go to the Edgefield County Recreation Program and that seasonal passes are available to help save a little bit of money on the gate fee. Lynn Strom told Mrs. Butler that the concessions are not run by Edgefield County and we did not receive this money. She did go on to say that this money did help pay for some

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of the referees, the line crew, and the food stock in the concession stand. Mrs. Butler then asked what some of the foreseen benefits of having a Rails to Trails program are. Councilman Ashcraft responded by saying that a Rails to Trails program would provide a better quality of life, it would promote tourism and it would make use of over 43 miles of abandoned railroad. Next she asked what a citizens could do about the noise from others participating in target practice. Chairman Campbell referred her to the County Administrator in regards to nuisance complaints. Mrs. Butler then asked how much consideration was given to applicants that were “home-grown” in Edgefield County for county jobs and if minorities were considered as well. Lynn Strom told her that each department head hires their own employees and when they are given the application it does not show race, age, or other discriminating factors. She said that applicants are hired based on qualifications. Councilman Ashcraft stated that if he ran a business he would want his new hires to know that they were hired due to their qualifications, not because they were black, or female, or anything other than qualified. Louise Kemp Settles spoke next and she just asked that Mrs. Strom check into the abandoned trailer park on Egghouse Road. She wanted to know if there is anything that could be done to make it less of an eyesore. Mrs. Strom said she would look into it and see what, if anything could be done. Mayor Helen Summers was our final speaker and asked if any new industry prospects were looking closely at Edgefield County. Chairman Campbell said that several industries have showed interest lately but nothing was “in the works.” She also stated that she believed the Rails to Trails program would be a wonderful addition to Edgefield County, but she did have some concerns since some of the railroad went directly through neighborhoods. She didn’t want to see this disrupt the Town of Trenton. Chairman Campbell stated that when the planning began, if they had problems such as that one an alternate route would most likely be taken. Chairman Campbell thanked everyone for coming out and participating in the Listening Tour and stated that we had to go to Johnston for our second meeting.

Adjourn

Councilman Bright made the motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilman Ashcraft. The motion carried unanimously 3-0 with Councilwoman Blackwell and Councilman Dorn absent.

Notice of this meeting was provided to Edgefielddaily.com, The Citizen News, and The Edgefield Advertiser.

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ATTEST

Jennifer L. Gilley, Clerk to Council