

Minutes  
Special Meeting  
Sumter County Council  
Tuesday, December 7, 1999 – 9:30 a.m.  
Sumter County Council Chambers  
County Administration Building

**Council Present:** James A. Campbell, Chairman; Louis Fleming, Vice Chairman; Carol Burr, Charles T. Edens, Naomi Sanders, Rudy Singleton, and Frank E. Williams, Jr.

**Staff:** William T. Noonan, Mary W. Lewis, Lorraine Washington Dennis, Joseph McElveen, Carolina Richardson, Jeanette Mixon, Simon Major, and Tommy Mims.

**Media:** The Item and WIBZ Radio.

**Public:** Approximately 12 members of the public were in attendance.

**Call To Order:** The meeting was called to order by Chairman Campbell, and the invocation was given by Vice Chairman Fleming.

**Amendment To Agenda:** MOTION was made by Councilman Burr, seconded by Councilman Williams, and unanimously carried by Council to add the following items to the December 7, 1999, agenda.

- Comments from Attorney Ed Bell
- Comments and Letter from Heyward Bruce Ewart, III, Ph.D.
- Comments from the Public Including Chief Justice Ernest Finney

**Discussions:**

Prior to receiving information from Mr. Blake Taylor, Division Director of Inspections and Operational Reviews for the S. C. Department of Corrections, Council took the following actions on the property located on East Calhoun Street.

**ACTION:** MOTION was made by Councilman Williams, seconded by Vice Chairman Fleming, and unanimously carried by Council to direct the Administrator to engage a certified appraiser to appraise the property located at East Calhoun Street which is proposed as the new site located for the correctional facility.

**Comments From Blake Taylor:** Mr. Taylor addressed Council and acknowledged that Council has shown good faith effort in the past to solve the overcrowding at the Sumter County Correctional Center (installation of prefabrication building, involvement in Regional Jail concept, presentation of a One Cents Local Option Sales Tax Referendum).

He also reminded Council that the S. C. Department of Corrections will provide "Technical Assistance" to the County's staff or Council as it ponders how to review the overcrowding conditions at the County's Correctional facility.

Mr. Taylor reemphasized that the letter sent to Chairman James A. Campbell, dated September 30, 1999, must be answered by December 29, 1999. This letter must provide the Department of Corrections with a report "indicating those measures taken to overcome the deficiencies noted" within the September 30<sup>th</sup> letter. After receiving a response from the County, the S. C. Department of Corrections will determine whether or not it will accept the decisions and directions of the County and will once again notify the appropriate official of the Department's decisions.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:**

**Chief Justice Ernest Finney** spoke to Council about the growing problem that is brewing from the Correctional Center. He stated that he was not speaking as the Chief Justice, nor was he representing any group. Justice Finney stated that he feels that too much politics has gotten mixed in the hopes of correcting the Correctional facility's problem. He stated that Council must look into other means of solving the overcrowding problem other than building. Programs and practices by law enforcement as well as the judicial arena must be a part of solving this problem that is effecting this County.

**Heyward Bruce Ewart, III, Ph.D.** spoke to Council and asked members to consider instituting procedures which would help eliminate the overcrowding conditions immediately. The procedures include psychological and neuro-psychological evaluations and implementation of a program to provide treatment, rather than incarceration for repeated DUI, as well as substance-abuse offenders.

Council asked the Administrator to review these two procedures and their costs if implemented by the County and report back to Council.

**ACTION BY COUNCIL:**

The Chairman indicated that he would entertain a motion to enter executive session to receive a legal briefing concerning the information to be given to Council by Attorney Ed Bell.

ACTION: MOTION was made by Councilman Williams, seconded by Councilwoman Sanders, and unanimously carried by Council to enter executive session to receive a legal briefing concerning information to be presented by Attorney Ed Bell.

At the conclusion of executive session, Council re-entered open session.

**OPEN SESSION:**

**REPORT FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**ACTION:** MOTION was made by Councilman Burr, seconded by Councilman Williams, and unanimously carried by Council to withdraw from the December 7, 1999, agenda of Council comments by Attorney Ed Bell.

**NEXT MEETING:**

Council decided to meet on Thursday, December 9, 1999, from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. to discuss the pending Zoning Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan.

It was also decided that Council would meet on Tuesday, December 14, 1999, at 9:00 a.m. to discuss the letter from Blake Taylor and to decide what actions would be taken to alleviate the County's overcrowding conditions.

Staff was asked to prepare financial information, alternatives for overcrowding, zoning of property, etc. as it relates to the correctional center and have the information available for the meeting on December 14, 1999, at 9:00 a.m.

IV. **Additional Items** - There were no additional items added to the agenda.

V. **Adjournment** - The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary W. Lewis

cc: Mr. William T. Noonan  
Mr. Joseph McElveen  
Mrs. Lorraine Washington Dennis