

Oconee County Council Retreat

February 5, 2016

Oconee County Council Chambers

415 S. Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

Background

Since 2011, the Oconee County Council and Administrative Staff have annually held a planning retreat to review past operations and discuss short and long term priorities. This session serves an important role in starting the annual budget allocation process for the county as well as setting direction for the administrator and staff.

The 2016 retreat was held on Friday, February 5th. In attendance were the five council members along with the county administrator, members of the county staff, interested citizens and members of the local media.

Workshop Format

The morning session included a financial analysis, 2015 strategic plan progress & accomplishments update and capital projects discussion all led by County Administrator Scott Moulder. Josh Stephens, Deputy Director & Zoning Administrator, led an overview of the Oconee County Corridor Plan.

The afternoon session was facilitated by Dean Hybl, Executive Director of Ten at the Top. The session included an opportunity for the council members to discuss and prioritize short (1-3 year) and long-term (3-5 year) goals and objectives for Oconee County.

Council first reviewed the 2015 short-term goals list and identified which of those items had been completed and which still needed to be considered as priorities for 2016. They then discussed other issues of interest to add to the initial list as either short or long term goals.

For the prioritization exercise, council members each received a total of 12 dots for short-term goals and 12 dots for long-term goals. They could put no more than four dots on a specific issue. It was determined that goals to include on the priority list for 2016 would be anything that received a total of five or more dots.

Several of the issues in which goals were identified had both short and long term components. Through the prioritization process, the council provided some clarity on whether the issue/goal should be a focus within the short-term strategy or as part of the long-term plan.

The following summaries include the items that received enough support to be included in the 2016 priority list as either a short-term or long-term priority. The complete list of all items mentioned by council members is included as an appendix to this report.

Short-Term Goals

Council members identified 13 short-term goals for the county. During the prioritization session the list was trimmed to eight for 2016.

Of the eight top priorities, five are carry-overs from the 2015 priority list as some elements of those efforts have yet to be completed. However, the goals that received the highest and third highest amount of support from council members were new items.

2016 Short Term Goals *(in order of council support with the number of “dots” listed)*

1. Fund Oconee County Sheriff’s Office Salary Structure (10)
2. Sewer South – phase II to I-85 (8) (also on 2015 list)
3. Adopt Oconee County Corridor Plan with strategic plan (7)
4. Tri-County Technical College [TCTC] Oconee County Campus – workforce development (6) (also on 2015 list)
5. Boating Safety – increase law enforcement on lakes (5) (also on 2015 list)
6. Library – continue maintenance and updates (5) (also on 2015 list)
7. Increasing recycling rate focusing on the following tactics (5) (also on 2015 list)
 - a. Increase education
 - b. Attract private investments
 - c. Target high-producers of recycling commodities – partnership possibilities
 - d. Regulatory matters
 - e. Environmental impact/education
8. Fund/review/implement public transportation (5)
to Walhalla/Westminster

Long-Term Goals

Council members identified 16 long-term goals for the county. As indicated previously, several also had components that were part of the short-term priorities discussion. During the prioritization session the list was trimmed to six for future focus.

2016 Long-Term Goals *(in order of council support with the number of “dots” listed)*

1. Broadband – management/handoff (7) (also on 2015 list)
2. Increasing Recycling Rate (7) (also on 2015 list)
3. Recreation/ (Duke) Fall Creek safety plan (7)
4. Explore Airport as enterprise fund explore the capture of alternative revenue sources and diverse revenue options (6)
5. Consider new industrial park development (6)
 - a. Public/Private Partnerships
 - b. Infrastructure- rail site, I-85 access, etc.
6. New library construction (6)

Appendix 1

The following is the complete list of items discussed by council members during their brainstorming session. The number order for this list is the order in which they were discussed and captured during the discussion and not related to how they were prioritized by council. The number of “dots” each item received during the preference exercise is captured next to the item.

Short-Term Goals

(Continued from the 2015 list)

1. TCTC Campus OC – workforce development (6 dots)
2. Boating safety – increase law enforcement on lakes (5)
3. Library – continue maintenance and updates (5)
4. Sewer South – phase II to I-85 (8)
5. Increasing recycling rate (5)
 - a. Increase education
 - b. Attract private investments
 - c. Target high-producers of recycling commodities – partnership possibilities
 - d. Regulatory matters
 - e. Environmental impact/education

(New in 2016)

6. Fund Oconee County Sheriff’s Office Salary Structure (10)
7. Fund/review/implement public transportation to Walhalla/Westminster (5)
8. Explore alternative revenue sources enterprise/RQ and possibly CEV/airport (hangers, etc.) to capture additional resources in funding (2)
9. Adopt Oconee County Corridor Plan with strategic plan (7)
10. Increase square feet of industrial opportunity (1)
 - a. SPEC building
 - b. Seek public/private partnerships
11. Support municipalities in redevelopment (2)
12. YMCA partnership – continue (4)
13. Continue to monitor/improve roadways – maintain investment (0)

Long Term Goals

(Continued from the 2015 list)

1. Broadband –management/hand-off (7 dots)
2. Increasing Recycling Rate (7)

(New in 2016)

3. Increase financial resources to Sheriff's office to continue staff growth (4)
4. Work with cities to upgrade/expand water sewer service capacity (2)
5. Continue public transportation commitment to Salem, Fair Play, Long Creek, etc. (2)
6. Explore Airport as enterprise fund explore the capture of alternative revenue sources and diverse revenue options (6)
7. Recreation/ (Duke) Fall Creek safety plan (7)
8. Continue corridor plan to entire county (2)
9. Consider new industrial park development (6)
 - a. Public/Private Partnerships
 - b. Infrastructure- rail site, I-85 access, etc.
10. Support municipalities in redevelopment (2)
11. Connectivity of regional/state trails (2)
12. YMCA partnership (4)
13. Continue to monitor/improve roadways, maintain investment (1)
14. Assist rural trail/exercise developments (1)
15. New library construction (6)
16. Continue to monitor growth patterns/upgrade plans as needed (guided growth) (1)