



# Oconee County Planning Commission

415 S. Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

29691

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## Minutes

### Planning Commission Special Called Meeting

December 8, 2009

The Oconee County Planning Commission held a special called meeting on December 8, 2009 at 6:00 PM in the Conference Room at the Oconee County Administrative Building, 415 S. Pine St., Walhalla, SC 29691.

Members Present: Tommy Abbott (Chairman)  
Ryan Honea, (Vice Chairman)  
Bill Evatt  
Howard Moore  
Andy Heller  
Rex Ramsay

Art Holbrooks (Planning Director)  
Carol Harvey (Planner)

Media Present:  
Carlos Galarza, Daily Journal

**Item 1:** Chairman Abbott called the meeting to order.

**Item 2: Public Comment (limited to specific capital projects)-**

**Susie Cornelius** – Ms. Cornelius pointed out Commission responsibilities itemized in Title 6 of the State Code and suggested that Commission members ask for more detailed funding figures from various departments before making decisions regarding the capital projects prioritization.

**Larry Linsin** – Mr. Linsin questioned the \$50 million school project, suggesting that other alternatives should be looked at. He passed out information he obtained on the number of empty ‘spec’ buildings that exist across the state today as he questioned the validity of spending 2.2 million on another speculative project. He also questioned the operational costs projected for the sewer plant project.

**Larry Hinkle** – Mr. Hinkle acknowledged the need for the water/sewer systems near the interstate but asked Commission members to consider the need for water and sewer in the northeast part of the county, along the Hwy. 11 corridor north of Salem.

**Tom Markovich** – Mr. Markovich suggested that water/wastewater treatment facilities, including elevated water tanks for managing pressure, should be given higher priority than renovating the courthouse. He also suggested hiring a consultant to develop an IT Master Plan to outline how the county departments involved in the tax process can be

linked. He questioned the need for expanding the rock quarry, asking if expansion would actually increase revenues, and stating that a business plan should be developed to determine whether expansion is needed. He pointed out that the roles of libraries have changed and suggested considering multiple smaller IT centers at various locations rather than building one big brand new library.

**B. J. Littleton** – Mr. Littleton suggested that stormwater runoff issues should be addressed when considering additions to the county jail.

**Item 3: Consideration and Prioritization of Capital Project List** – Mr. Holbrooks informed Commission members that the updated Capital Projects List will be put online after results from tonight’s meeting are incorporated. He briefed the members on additional information that was submitted since their last meeting, describing improvements to the High Falls Park facilities, and asked them to also consider the Convention & Visitors’ Bureau Center for inclusion in the 5 or 10-year projects lists.

Mack Kelly, Public Works Director/Engineer, presented detailed information to the Commission about the roads requests, explaining which projects were already funded with state funds. When Commission members questioned how the bridge projects were prioritized, he confirmed that the Cobb bridge project was top priority because it is a one-lane, heavily used structure. He stated that the Dyar Rd. and Jenkins Rd. bridges are also high priority but are slated to receive state funding.

Swain Still, Director, Solid Waste Department, provided information on the proposed Solid Waste building, expansion of the solid waste facility, and emphasized the importance of paving the parking lot and roads at the Solid Waste complex. He also provided details on his top priority request for expansion of the C&D landfill.

Following those presentations, Chairman Abbott lead the Commission in further discussion of the draft Priority Capital Projects list. The Commission considered the the new information provided by Mr. Still and Mr. Swain and made revisions to the draft list, following discussions of each proposed project. They asked for additional information on several projects, some of which will be addressed by Jim Alexander, Director of Economic Development, already scheduled for the regular Commission meeting to be held on Monday, December 14. Mr. Holbrooks stated that additional information will be obtained or presentations will be scheduled for that Monday meeting, to address questions regarding the courthouse renovations, the elevated water tank at I-85, morgue facility, speculative building, and the County IT/tax system. Mr. Holbrooks reminded the Commission of the full agenda, since the following three activities are going on concurrently: updating the Comprehensive Plan, identifying the 10-year priority projects list, and prioritizing projects for annual budgets. He informed the group that the goals and objectives for the Comprehensive Plan have been combined in one section of the overall plan, a draft of which is posted on the web site for review.

**Item 4: Adjourn**