



## Richland County Council

### SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

March 9, 2018 – 4:00 PM

Council Chambers

2020 Hampton Street, Columbia, SC 29204

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:** Joyce Dickerson, Chair; Bill Malinowski, Vice Chair; Greg Pearce, Seth Rose, Calvin “Chip” Jackson, Norman Jackson, Gwen Kennedy, Paul Livingston, Jim Manning, Yvonne McBride, Dalhi Myers

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Michelle Onley, Jamelle Ellis, Brandon Madden, Sandra Yudice, Kim Williams-Roberts, Gerald Seals, Beverly Harris, Trena Bowers, Dwight Hanna, Stacey Hamm, John Thompson, James Hayes, Jennifer Wladischkin, Larry Smith, and Ismail Ozbek

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Ms. Dickerson called the meeting to order at approximately 4:00 PM.

Ms. Dickerson stated she knows many of you have read in the newspaper and heard the report about the Supreme Court’s ruling. Because Council has not been briefed, she felt it would be best for all of Council to get on the same page and receive the same briefing from Legal to ensure what is being said reflects what is actually happening.

2. **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA** – Mr. N. Jackson inquired if the whole meeting will be held in Executive Session or will we have time to discuss it publicly also.

Ms. Dickerson stated she does not know. Once the agenda is adopted she is going to turn it over to Legal and she will follow Legal advice.

Mr. N. Jackson stated the public is interested in knowing what is happening. The court was done publicly. The decision is public. We are having a discussion and getting some information from the attorney, but the public wants to know. He does not want to have everything in Executive Session. He wanted to know if there is something on the agenda or a space on the agenda where the public can hearing from Council. He does not want to have a meeting where everyone is out of the meeting or in the back and when we are finished the public did not know what was discussed.

Ms. Dickerson stated no one sent her anything to add to the agenda. She was sure, if we go into Executive Session, we will be able to discuss what happened in Executive Session in the public.

Mr. N. Jackson requested that it be noted he wants to have a public discussion.

In Favor: Malinowski, C. Jackson, Myers, Pearce, Kennedy, Dickerson, N. Jackson, Livingston, and McBride

Opposed: Manning

The vote was in favor.

3. **LEGAL ADVICE: RICHLAND COUNTY AND CMRTA v. SCDOR v. RICHLAND PDT** – Ms. Dickerson stated she was turning over this portion of the agenda to the County Attorney.

Mr. Smith requested that Council go into Executive Session for the receipt of Legal advice.

Ms. Myers moved, seconded by Mr. Malinowski, to go into Executive Session.

Mr. C. Jackson echoed what Mr. N. Jackson said and that there be a period of time before we adjourn that we are able to have some public discussion as well.

Mr. Malinowski stated he concurs with Mr. N. Jackson and Mr. C. Jackson, but it also depends on what type of advance we get and what the attorneys say, as to whether or not it is public information or not.

Mr. C. Jackson stated maybe he was not clear on what he was stating. He was not talking about discussing what was discussed in Executive Session, but having a discussion of this topic. If we cannot discuss something that was in Executive Session but he would still like there to be a discussion of this topic in public session before we adjourn.

Mr. Manning stated he also has some of the same concerns. He very strongly feels like anything about the court hearing and the court order and what part of that would be public that we could talk about before we go into Executive Session. He would also like to say that anything that we start talking about in Executive Session that is not totally qualified under the law for the Freedom of Information for us to be in Executive Session that conversation not be held until we come back out into the public.

In Favor: Malinowski, C. Jackson, Myers, Pearce, Kennedy, Dickerson, N. Jackson, Livingston, and McBride

Opposed: Manning

The vote was in favor.

*Council went into Executive Session at approximately 4:04 PM and came out at approximately 5:38 PM*

**POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE** – Mr. Manning stated, with respect to the constituents he represents in District 8, he would like for them to know that at 2 different occasions during Executive Session he asked if what we were discussing indeed qualified legally for Executive Session and the County Attorney said no on both of those accounts.

Mr. N. Jackson stated his concern with the Penny Tax Program was that all the funding from the Penny Tax was for Transportation. None of the General Fund was to be used on the Penny Tax Program. Everything was temporary until the funding was exhausted. His concern, based on the Supreme Court ruling, if we cannot spend any funding on the SLBE program we have to make a decision tonight. Whether to suspend that program or find some other means of funding that program. If we cannot use Penny Tax to fund the SLBE program and the General Fund was not to be used for the Penny Tax Program, we have a decision to make tonight.

Mr. N. Jackson moved, seconded by Mr. Malinowski, to suspend the SLBE Program.

Ms. Myers stated her understanding is that during the last budget cycle Council agreed some of the funds for the OSBO, which houses that program, would be coming out of the General Fund. Is that correct, Mr. Seals?

Mr. Seals responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Myers stated, therefore, there is a portion that is already continuing without Penny Tax funds. She inquired if Mr. N. Jackson's motion would also suspend the portion that is currently being funded by the General Fund, as is appropriate, consistent with the budget.

Mr. N. Jackson stated his understanding is the SLBE Program is only working on Transportation Penny Tax projects. Even though 50% or a portion is coming from the General Fund, the office is only working on programs with the PDT. If all they are doing is working on Penny Tax program then it has to be suspended.

Ms. Myers inquired if that was factually correct.

Mr. Seals stated he does not believe that is factually correct.

Ms. Myers inquired if someone from that office could answer if that was factually correct.

Dr. Ellis stated, from the beginning of this current fiscal year, we have started to solicit or certify more businesses that are geared toward general contracts across the County. She did not have a breakdown, in terms of the percentage of transportation-related contracts to general or County-wide contracts, but there are other contracts that office is working on, actively or in the process of certifying.

Ms. Myers offered a friendly amendment to not suspend the programs that are appropriately and fairly being support by the General Fund, so those programs in the Office of Small of Business Opportunity and the SLBE Program would continue irregardless of penny funding, as approved in the last budget cycle.

Mr. N. Jackson stated his motion then would be any program in the SLBE that is used for Penny Tax be suspended. He would like to see a report of what percentage of the programs are being used. He would not like to have an office operating and spending taxpayers' money on like 5%. The SLBE Program and the office was set up for the Penny Tax Program only. Until DOR said we could not use it for that purpose, only for Penny Tax, that is when we used part of the General Fund in that office. The office is purely concentrated and we have an ad hoc committee that deals with Penny Tax Program only. That is what the staff has been updating the website and using the programs for. He would want to make sure the portion of the money we would use from the General Fund is not wasted on something we do not need. He guessed the Council would have a decision to make soon if we continue along that line or abandon the program totally. He will amend his motion that the portion that is used with Penny Tax money, that portion be suspended immediately.

Ms. Dickerson stated Mr. Malinowski seconded the motion for discussion. She wants Council to know she is going to listen to what Mr. Seals...and then she has Mr. Livingston and Rose.

Mr. Seals stated he is not an attorney, but he believes in order to accomplish what has just been said you have to look at the ordinance. Because what has been stated indicates that staff is acting in a fashion that is inconsistent with the ordinance. The ordinance is what set the stage and which stipulates what in fact is supposed to be done. In order for that to change, Council needs to amend the ordinance or to in some way rescind it. He would say is subject to advice...that is his understanding.

Mr. N. Jackson stated he disagreed. His concern is that in the ordinance he does not see where it mentioned General Funds be used for the Penny Tax Program. In the ordinance it talks about the funding collected for the Penny Tax Program and that is what was being used under the SLBE Program, so he does not see where we have to rescind or amend anything with the ordinance. The ordinance was specific. Now we used General Funds to help or complement that program because DOR stated we could not use Penny Tax funds for other programs. Now if the Supreme Court is saying we cannot use those monies under the SLBE Program, then we have to suspend that portion. He does not see any way of getting around it. We do not have to amend the

ordinance because the ordinance did not mention General Funds being used. It mentioned Penny Tax funds. That is why he disagrees with the Administrator's statement.

Mr. Livingston made a substitute motion, seconded by Ms. Myers, whatever balance is left, as it relates to the General Fund in the SLBE budget, those funds remain and be expended to continue the SLBE Program.

Mr. Rose requested clarification on Mr. Livingston's motion.

Mr. Livingston stated if he remembered correctly 50% of the funding for the SLBE Program was from the General Fund. His motion is to continue the SLBE Program with those funds that are left.

Mr. Rose stated he was trying to understanding how that is different than what Ms. Myers had stated.

Mr. Livingston stated Ms. Myers did not make a motion.

Ms. Dickerson stated Ms. Myers was amending Mr. N. Jackson's motion.

Mr. N. Jackson stated he amended his motion, but it is still specific. Mr. Livingston's motion, if the office continued with the General Funds, we cannot use General Funds for the Penny Tax Program. That is where concern lies. If the General Funds were not supposed to be used for Penny Tax Program. Only Penny Tax money for Penny Tax Program. What Mr. Livingston is saying is more ambiguous. To continue the SLBE Program with General Funds.

Mr. Livingston stated no one said General Funds could not be used for SLBE.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we told the public we were going to get \$1.07 Billion for a Penny Tax Program and we would not use General Funds for the Penny Tax Program. Now the Supreme Court is saying we cannot use Penny Tax Program for SLBE Programs and now we want to use the public money, General Funds, for that program. He does not think it is right or fair to the public. He is saying that if we cannot use it, we cannot use it.

Ms. Myers stated on Mr. Livingston's motion, she thinks we voted on that in the last budget cycle and so that discussion was had in the last budget cycle. She thinks Mr. Livingston's motion, in harmony with what she was trying to say, was that portion of it that we voted on in the last budget cycle, which does not relate to any Penny funds or projects at all, should be maintained.

Mr. N. Jackson stated that contradicts Mr. Livingston's motion because it says it could be used for anything. What we passed in the budget was the General Fund portion would be used for items that is not in the Penny Tax Program. That is why we split it 50/50.

Mr. Malinowski stated he there was some belief in the 50/50 split that any amounts used that were toward the Penny Tax would come from the Penny Tax and the County would be reimbursed for any of that 50%. However, he believes what Councilman N. Jackson is saying is that we cease and desist whatever percentages determined of the SLBE Program that is being used for the Penny Tax Program. So if it is 55%...it is 0% of the 50%...with that clarification from Administrator Seals he is done.

Mr. Rose stated as he understands it the Supreme Court Order that came down specifically mentioned 3 things, which are the SLBE, the public relations and the mentor/mentee programs that should be funded out of the Penny. That is the public opinion published by the SC Supreme Court. Right now we are talking about one of those things and not mentioning the other 2. Two years ago, he sponsored a slew of motions that we aimed at addressing the Department of Revenue's concerns. One of which was to not fund the SLBE out of

the Penny and that failed. He sponsored a motion to not fund the public relations and to bring it in house and that failed. He thinks we should not address one while leaving the others that have specifically come in the Supreme Court ruling. We need address everything not just one.

Mr. Rose made a second substitute motion to not fund the SLBE Program out of the Penny, the portion that is being paid from the Penny, the public relations and the mentor/mentee program out of Penny proceeds. He personally believes the public relations should be brought in house. But for purposes of today, he would make another motion that we address the 3 concerns mentioned in the Supreme Court ruling. As he said the 2 major ones he has already sponsored 2 years ago. To no affect. His motion is to unfund the SLBE Program, the public relations, and the mentor/mentee program from any portions that receive Penny revenues to specifically address the Supreme Court's ruling.

Ms. Dickerson stated the motion dies for lack of a 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Mr. N. Jackson stated for clarification we will be addressing each portion. You take one at a time. When he came with the SLBE Program...

Ms. Dickerson stated that is not clarification.

Mr. N. Jackson stated he is clarifying because Mr. Rose is saying we are only addressing one. He is just clarifying that we are not addressing just one. This is the first one of 3 items we will be addressing.

Ms. Dickerson stated that is not what Mr. N. Jackson's motion said.

Mr. N. Jackson stated his motion is specifically to the SLBE Program.

Ms. Dickerson stated Mr. N. Jackson did not specifically say which ones in the SLBE Program.

Mr. N. Jackson stated that is one of the programs, Madam Chair. We have 3 things the Supreme Court ruled on. He started with the first one. Then we can go on the other two.

Ms. Dickerson stated that is not what we came out to say. That is not what Mr. N. Jackson originally said.

Mr. N. Jackson stated his motion is addressing one. Any other Council member can address the others.

Mr. Livingston stated he shared Mr. Rose's concerns that all 3 should be addressed. The only reason why he chose to address this one at this time is because this is the only one that is receiving General Funds now. He is simply saying to allow that to continue with those General Funds. That is the only reason why he is choosing this particular one. Mr. Rose is right they will all eventually have to be addressed.

Mr. Manning stated his question is that Mr. N. Jackson gave an opinion about how we could do this. And then our County Administrator said he was not an attorney, but he gave his opinion. Councilman N. Jackson indicated he disagreed with that. The fact that we invoked the idea of not being an attorney to be able to address whether that would be an ordinance change and if he is counting right we have 6 attorneys being paid Richland County tax dollars to be here. Could we get a legal opinion between the 2 we that we have from the County Administrator and Councilman N. Jackson?

Ms. Dickerson stated she needs his question answered.

Mr. Smith requested Mr. N. Jackson to restate his question.

Mr. N. Jackson stated from what he recalled the Administrator said we would have to do an amendment to the ordinance if we do not use Penny Tax funding. He requested the Administrator to repeat what he said just to be clear and he does not misunderstand it.

Mr. Seals stated he responded because his understanding was that a statement was made about how to end the program that Council had authorized by the budget and also was pursuant to an ordinance. What he said is that he believes if Council is going to end that that carving it up required some action to the ordinance. Either to amend the ordinance or rescind the ordinance.

Mr. Smith stated his recollection is that the ordinance may not necessarily specifically speak to programs, but projects. He would have to go back and take a look at the specific language. As he recalls, the 2012 ordinance, talks about the funding of projects as opposed to programs. He does not know there is anywhere in the 2012 ordinance where it talked one way or another about the funding of the SLBE Program.

Mr. N. Jackson stated if that is correct then we would not have to amend the ordinance because it spoke of projects and SLBE is a program.

Mr. Smith stated, as he recalls, there was a standalone ordinance that addressed the SLBE Program. That was not in the 2012 ordinance. It was a subsequent ordinance.

Mr. N. Jackson stated we need some clarification before we can move forward, but that portion has to be suspended by the Supreme Court ruling.

Mr. Seals stated he was not trying in any way to subvert the effort to do whatever Council wants. It was that we were stressing that it was based on the ordinance. What he wanted to alert Council to is we all have different recollections of the ordinance, but he specifically recalls there is a specific ordinance germane to it. It may just be a matter of getting a look at the ordinance and when Council meets again they will have all of that outlined and they can do what they wish to do.

Mr. Malinowski inquired if Council needs to be making any motions to try to change items that we have already been ordered by the Supreme Court to do. It seems like we have been told by the Supreme Court do (a), (b), and (c); therefore, they have to be done. Do we have to bring motions forward to agree to do those things as a Council?

Mr. Smith stated he does not know that Council necessarily has to make motions to do what the Supreme Court has directed us to do. There may be certain things that Council may have to implement in order to carry it out, but he does not think Council needs to vote on whether or not they will or not. Because Council has basically been directed to do so.

Mr. C. Jackson inquired if there is any motion on the floor at the present time. One died for lack of a second.

Ms. Dickerson stated there are 3 motions on the floor.

Mr. C. Jackson stated 2...Mr. Livingston's motion is the latest one. Because he is very concerned about the public's trust. He is very concerned about the perception the public has of how we conduct business, particularly when the highest Court in our land has issued a directive, not a recommendation, but a directive on what we should do. No disrespect to his colleagues, but to be continuing to debate around the issue of what we should do about this matter. He thinks it pretty clear cut, Madam Chair and colleagues. We should do as we have been instructed by the courts to do. In the interim all of the attorneys that are being paid by the County get together and come up the guidelines that we have been instructed to do. If in fact those guidelines indicate there is an opportunity to continue to operate the SLBE in manner that is consistent with

the legal and lawful terms then we do that. If there is an opportunity within the guidelines to address the mentor/mentee program that is legal and ethical, we do that. If there is an opportunity to address the marketing piece in the guidelines that are being developed that we do that. Until those guidelines are developed, he thinks it is only the right thing to do to temporarily suspend those programs. Because there are 2 motions on the floor, he cannot, he does not think, do a 3<sup>rd</sup> motion.

Mr. N. Jackson stated you can.

Mr. C. Jackson stated, in that case, that would be his motion.

Mr. Malinowski seconded the motion.

Mr. Livingston inquired as to what will be the trigger point to make it un-temporary.

Mr. C. Jackson stated that the legal team would come back with the guidelines that they are being charged by Supreme Court to draft and develop that would indicate whether or not we can proceed with those programs that are currently under suspension.

Mr. Smith stated, to Mr. Livingston's question, they have estimated it could take 2 – 3 weeks to get that done.

Mr. Rose inquired if Mr. C. Jackson was referring to the 3 specific things mentioned in the Order.

Mr. C. Jackson stated he was referring to the Court ruling and decisions that involve work we have to do. Those 3, as well as develop the guidelines and anything else that is in the Court ruling that came out yesterday.

Mr. Rose inquired if that was something that would be determined by the County Attorney.

Mr. C. Jackson stated they have already been directed to develop the guidelines.

Mr. Rose stated he is kind of confused because he just sponsored a motion that did not get a 2<sup>nd</sup> that basically aimed to effectuate that.

Mr. C. Jackson stated he was sorry Mr. Rose's motion did not get a 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Mr. N. Jackson stated if we wait 3 weeks before we make a decision, was not the Supreme Court decision to be immediate?

Mr. C. Jackson stated his motion is to make it happen immediately.

Mr. N. Jackson stated the attorney said it is going to take 3 weeks.

Mr. C. Jackson stated he is asking that it be suspended until he gets the guidelines developed. So his motion is to make the suspension immediate.

Mr. N. Jackson stated 3 weeks until they get the guidelines. That is your understanding, Mr. Smith?

Mr. Smith stated his understanding is those things mentioned are going to be suspended. We will be given 2 – 3 weeks to develop the guidelines. If they fall within the guidelines we will bring that back and it will be examined and reviewed.

Mr. N. Jackson inquired if they will be suspended immediately.

Mr. Smith responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Livingston stated he is still trying to understand what suspended is. If someone is out there working on the road, tomorrow they stop working. Suspended has got to be defined for him.

Mr. Smith stated he could not speak for Mr. C. Jackson, but maybe what we could say is suspend payment because that seems to be the issue. That may help clarify this for that period of time to give us an opportunity to get the guidelines done.

Mr. C. Jackson stated he would be happy to amend his motion to say suspend payment then.

Mr. Livingston stated he does not want work and everything to stop.

Ms. Dickerson inquired if Mr. C. Jackson was accepting the friendly amendment to the motion.

Mr. C. Jackson responded in the affirmative.

Ms. Dickerson inquired if Mr. Malinowski was still seconding the motion.

Mr. Pearce stated, for the benefit of the public and the media, he thinks it is noteworthy that we are working collaboratively with the Department of Revenue and the PDT on this item. It is not that we are making a decision in a vacuum here tonight. We are working vigorously with them. It does not affect the motion. It just adds a little more light on this subject.

Ms. Dickerson stated she wanted to agree with Mr. Pearce because that is the advice Council was getting from our attorney and he has mentioned that several times while we were in Executive Session. They are working on guidelines to define it and once they were adopted then all of that will be brought back and we will be able to review it. She thinks what she is hearing is a lot of redundancy, but the guidelines have to be established. The attorneys...which a couple of us, but we are not here as attorneys. We are here for policy makers. That was supposed to be a part of allowing our legal staff, DOR and the PDT team to work collaboratively to come back with some guidelines that can be taken to DOR that we can agree on.

POINT OF CLARIFICATION – Mr. Manning inquired about suspending payment. So this will be payment like if someone has been doing the work this week. They were out doing the work Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Their payment will be suspended until this 3 week period.

Ms. Dickerson stated at least 3 weeks.

Mr. Manning stated work is not going to stop. We are just anticipating that while people are not going to be paid by us for what they have already done. They will just keep on working, for at least the next 3 weeks, and may then learn they are not being paid for that either. He stated if that is the motion, he is fine. He just wants to make sure he is understanding what suspend payment means. He inquired if the way he described it was correct.

Ms. Myers stated we received a memorandum earlier that explained how these payments in question would be made. She would just like it to be clear for the record. She was not here 2 years ago when Mr. Rose's motions were made. She is a new Councilmember. She is entirely committed to doing what she promised folks she would do when she ran. She is an honest broker. She thinks this Council has taken in hand to get this stuff together. Notwithstanding some of the flip comments that have been made in the public or in the

media. As far as she can tell, no one up here is interested in breaking the law. No one here is interested in flouting the law. Our administrative staff has been working since this Order came out and they provided us with pretty detailed memoranda to support this. To tell us how, if payments could not be made under the Penny, they could otherwise be made by reserve funds that have already been put aside. She wants this public to know that as a Councilmember she takes this seriously. She is responsible and accountable to you. We are not going to hold payment for work that has been done. There is a word for that. It is not a nice word. Richland County stands behind its word. She is deeply troubled by the notion that we are all crooks. We are all criminals. She has had the privilege today of having her 12-year old niece with her who stood out in the hallway and was shocked that we were all being called crooks and cheats. Her niece sent her a text and said, "well who is stealing?" Well certainly she is not and she would like to make it clear that she does not think her colleagues are either. We may be confused by where we are and trying to work through Order, but we are not engaged in illicit activity. She wants it to be clear that while it may look like there is some grandstanding going on. For her part, this is an honest effort to get to the point where we are compliant with this Order, which has told us to do certain things. We pay our vendors who have done certain work and we move forward. 99.9% of the money spent on this Penny is not in question. The Order speaks to less than 1% of the dollars expended to date and the public has a right to know that. We have expended over \$400 Million. This Order speaks to less than \$10 Million. She thinks it is important to understand that. It may well be that are things we need to clarify and do better, but those things are not things that we have violated the law to do or flagrantly just ignored. She wants it to be clear to the public, to the media, to everybody that is writing stories on this, that yeah, that is a lot of money. One nickel of an error is a problem to her, but in a program this large she does not think that small an amount of money, by comparison to the large amounts that have been properly assigned to projects means that we are somehow all the criminal element in Richland County. She wants it to be clear, and on the record, that we are at this state. At almost \$450 Million and the questions we are dealing with are programs that were developed to help small businesses access the very Penny those persons in Richland County are paying into this project. It is not going into our pockets. It is a program that we developed to help small businesses. We might have developed it improperly. We might need to clean it up, but that is where we are.

Mr. C. Jackson stated there were multiple questions being asked that could not be answered because no one had a copy of the ordinance in the room. Therefore, his purpose for making the motion that Mr. Rose indicated he made earlier that did not get a 2<sup>nd</sup>, but his purpose for making the motion that did get a 2<sup>nd</sup> was simply to move us forward, to get the issue resolved and to make an intelligent decision regarding what we do next. Rather than sitting here and debating it all night. Simply, temporarily, have an injunction, if you will, until the ordinance could be reviewed and a legal determination could be made whether or not we would be able to continue, if at all with those programs. We have been assured by the legal staff that can happen within 2 – 3 weeks. The guidelines can be done. Most vendors get paid. They have a 30-day window by the time they do work and get paid. He does not think having them wait 2 weeks for that sort of determination to be made is unreasonable.

Mr. C. Jackson called for the question, seconded by Mr. Pearce.

In Favor: Malinowski, Dickerson, McBride, Livingston, Rose, Pearce, Kennedy, C. Jackson, Myers, and N. Jackson

Opposed: Manning

The vote was in favor of calling for the question.

In Favor: Malinowski, Dickerson, McBride, Livingston, Rose, Pearce, Kennedy, C. Jackson, Myers, and N. Jackson

Opposed: Manning

The vote was in favor of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Substitute motion.

Ms. Dickerson stated in order to try to make sure that we do not put out misleading information or anything that is going to be a conflict or impede what we are attempting to do, or what we have been ordered to do. Hopefully, we can go out from here tonight trying to follow the guidelines and advice of our attorneys. She would hope that we would continue to work with DOR, PDT Team and our legal team to make sure we can come up with a good conclusion on how we go forward and that we follow the guidelines the Supreme Court has ordered.

Mr. Livingston stated he does want to know where we are in terms of the statement with DOR and how we want to proceed with that.

Ms. Dickerson stated that is the next thing.

Mr. Smith stated that was a joint statement that was crafted between the public information office of DOR and Richland County. Certainly the Council can publish the statement, if they so wish to do.

Mr. Livingston moved, seconded by Mr. Manning, to accept the joint press release.

In Favor: Malinowski, Dickerson, McBride, Livingston, Rose, Pearce, Kennedy, Manning, C. Jackson, Myers, and N. Jackson

The vote was unanimous to accept the joint press release.

Ms. Dickerson stated she will need someone to help her articulate the Richland County statement and whether we want to entertain the statement, delay or whatever. She needs some discussion or clarity on this particular one that was given to Council.

Mr. Malinowski moved, seconded by Mr. Livingston, to approve the release of the statement on behalf of Richland County the Administrator provided.

In Favor: Malinowski, Dickerson, McBride, Livingston, Rose, Pearce, Kennedy, C. Jackson, and Myers

Opposed: N. Jackson and Manning

The vote was in favor of releasing the statement on behalf of Richland County.

4. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:21 PM