

**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
LEXINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL
MAY 30, 2006**

Lexington County Council held a Special Meeting on Tuesday, May 30, 2006 in Council Chambers, beginning at 6:00 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to receive public comments and to consider and vote on a proposed millage increase for the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission. Chairman Cullum presided; Mr. Davis gave the invocation; Mr. Kinard led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members attending: M. Todd Cullum James E. Kinard, Jr.
William C. Billy Derrick George H. Smokey Davis
Debra B. Summers Bobby C. Keisler
Johnny W. Jeffcoat John W. Carrigg, Jr.
Joseph W. Owens

Also attending: Katherine Doucett, Personnel Director/Deputy County Administrator/County Administrator Designate; Larry Porth; Finance Director/Deputy County Administrator; John Fachtel, Director of Public Works/Deputy County Administrator; Jeff Anderson, County Attorney; other staff members, citizens of the county and representatives of the media.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the agenda was sent to radio and TV stations, newspapers, and posted on the bulletin board located in the lobby of the County Administration Building.

Public Hearing - Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission Millage Increase - Mr. Cullum stated that the purpose of the hearing was to obtain comments from proponents and opponents in regard to a proposed millage increase for the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission. He asked that each speaker provide their name and mailing address and that comments be limited to three (3) minutes. He asked if there was anyone present who had signed up to speak but chose not to speak, but wanted to concur with what has been said, it was acceptable to indicate concurrence. Mr. Cullum added that no one would be denied the opportunity to speak.

Mr. Cullum opened the meeting for comments from those in opposition to the proposed millage increase.

Bob Jones, 127 Burnsdowne Road, Columbia, SC 29210 - I am really upset and amazed that the Council can even give a tentative approval for this increase. The voters in the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission in that area, had a referendum and it was voted down by a large number. A lot more then people we've got here tonight. This is nothing more than a way of going around what the voters wanted, and I am strictly opposed to it. The voters have made their voice heard.

The Recreation Commission wants \$858,000 to tear down the B.C. Components property, tear the buildings down. Now I don't know where Mr. Wells and the Commission got the \$4.5 million dollars to buy the property with. If they can, so call, float a revenue bond for \$4.5 million dollars, then we are wasting our time here for \$700,000. Now Mr. Wells will tell you right quick this was not taxpayers' money. If it's not taxpayers' money, where does the revenue come from to make the \$227,000 payment each year on it. Now the people that use the parks, I guess, and the money coming in from where ever, I'm sure Mr. Wells is not going to take it out of his pocket and pay it. It just amazes me that they took that \$227,000 and didn't have to make that payment on that B.C. property, they would only be here looking for \$500,000. But, we can go on and on and on and in their report they say questions were asked about do we feed the elderly in Richland County. Mr. Wells said yes, we feed ten. We don't go by how much money they make, we go by the need. If you make \$100,000 a year, then the Recreation Commission can still feed you; that's not right. It's not right. Everybody needs to eat, but if you can afford to pay for it, then the Recreation Commission don't need to be furnishing it. Not in Richland County.

I guess that's about all I've got to say. I could go on for a good hour for the way they are trying to go around things to get them done. I'm really, really disappointed that you are even having this hearing. It has already been turned down. Evidently the voters don't count. What do they go to the polls for? Thank you.

Mr. Cullum asked if there was anyone else who wished to sign to speak in opposition. No one came forward.

Mr. Cullum closed the meeting for those in opposition to speak.

Mr. Cullum opened the meeting for comments from those in favor.

Gary L. Caudill, 153 Lake Tide Drive, Chapin, SC 29036 - I am going to start out, I am not a resident or a native to this area. I was in the military in Charleston. Came to work in 1977, knew nothing about this area until I asked some people in the Charleston area where is a good place to live around Columbia. They said where you live, live in Lexington County. I moved to the Chapin area in 1977, been there for 29 years, been involved with recreation for 20 years. I'm not going to come up here and tell you statistics, how much it's grown. If you don't know how much it's grown, you're really not doing your job. You look at this area right here in Lexington, when I first moved up here, I lived on Barr Road in a trailer for six months while I was building a house. If I hadn't been in this area, I wouldn't have been able to recognize what Lexington is today. The needs are in the area, the property that was bought in Irmo is called an investment. There are three types of people, I've got a sign in my office, its got three orangutans on it that says there are three kinds of people in this world - ones who make things happen, ones who watch things happen, and ones who wonder what happened. In my opinion, your job is to make things happen. The Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission has looked out for its residents and tried to make things happen ever since I've been there. I've been involved in coaching, I've been involved with the Recreation Commission, like I've said for about 20 years. There is a need, there is no doubt there is a need. I've watched the Lexington area under Jay grow and grow. I played soccer in this area over here, we played on cow

fields. Now look what's going on in all your areas, how much it has grown. And, the reason people are coming here is because of what the Lexington County people are providing. My property taxes pay for what I get. If I didn't want what I had, I could move to another county within ten miles of where I work and have nothing but a whole lot less taxes too. I choose to have what the County is providing me, what the Recreation Commission is providing me. So in final closure, I think you need to think about what I said as far as three types of individuals there are. One thing coming over tonight coming up highway 6, that's a reaction; not an action, but a reaction. The area has grown so much that, that should have been done ten years ago. But, now it's getting done during, basically a crisis. These buildings here, your new offices and everything, I was in them several years ago, this is very nice. Some people would say it is extravagant, I say it was a need. It was needed a long time ago. What the Recreation Commission is asking for, the millage increase, is a need. It is not a luxury. It is a need. That's all I've got to say. Thank you.

P. Malcolm Smurthwaite, 249 Tram Road, Columbia, SC 29210 - Good evening Council. Thank you for letting us appear before you and make a plea for continued development of the Recreation Commission.

Particularly, I want to talk about the programs, a service, we senior citizens, some of you may become senior citizens someday and participate in this, and I shouldn't be so facetious because there is a program that my wife and I have been involved in for 15 or 20 years called Project Love. It is a generational project with elementary students and grandparents. People with grandparents age. It is a marvelous program and the Recreation Commission operates that very effectively and very efficient. The administrators, the teachers, the children love it. But, they don't love it as much as us old folks. There are an awful lot of other services that I feel ICRC (Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission) does for us seniors and there are meals, and festivals almost or feasts at holiday time. There is a loan closet, which not many people know about unless you become disabled, and we are very fortunate to find that through the Recreation Commission, that loan closet to get various devices that help people who just can't operate without them and they are very helpful to us. But, you know the quality of life in this area is really great and I do give a lot of credit to our recreation program. I don't want to sale our house, we are not even thinking about selling our house. You look at me and you say you ought to sell your house; it's too much for you. But, we just won't face reality. But, when the time comes, we will have an easy time selling our house with all the great services of Lexington County and the Recreation Commission. Thank you.

J. Donald Sylvester, 79 Islay Lane, Columbia, SC 29210 - I'm an implant. I come from another state and I came here because of smiling faces, beautiful places. I was introduced to the Irmo Chapin Rec Commission and I do a lot of volunteering. Project Love is one of them. Stars Program is another. Stars is a special program for special needs kids. If you only saw the smiling faces, they are brought to beautiful places and it's done through the Irmo Chapin Rec Commission. We can't do it without your support. Your support is as important as what the volunteers do and what every member of Irmo Chapin Rec Commission does. They run one of the finest agencies in the state. They provide character to children. We can turn our back on anything we want, but please don't turn it on the seniors citizens, our citizens of this area, nor the children of this area. If we lose the children and don't build their character today for the small price that we are asking, tomorrow we

are going to pay a big price because we're going to be sending them to a place they are not going to like. They are not going to see beautiful faces, wonderful places; they are going to see sweat and stuff that they never wanted to see. I'd rather build those characters; I'd rather spend the money now and give them what they need. I don't want to see wasted money and the Irmo Chapin Rec Commission, if you only saw how this agency works and what these people do to try to bring in money to keep their costs as low as they can, you would understand that it comes a time when you need support. We need it from each and every one of you. One of the things that I'm glad about is to see that you offer it to people objecting. You offer this opportunity to people in favor. I'll tell you, I'm in favor. I'm a voter and yes, I heard how it was defeated. But, it was sad to see it defeated. We need to see those smiling faces of the kids. We need to help the seniors. We need to help the special needs. There are a very few agencies that give what we do. Please don't stop it. I don't want to see one sad face because that would be a crime. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak tonight and I hope that we will hear favorably from this commission.

Steve Lett, 109 Dove Trace Drive, West Columbia, SC 29170 - I would like to thank the members of Council to give me the opportunity to speak tonight on behalf of this budget increase. I've got a few facts and figures that I would like to share with you. I don't know if many of the people that have spoken tonight or will speak tonight may have shared this with you.

In 1994, Crooked Creek Park opened and at that time it had zero dollars allocated for their budget. Crooked Creek Park's current cost per year is over \$650,000 and this is very important just as the gentleman before me spoke on behalf of that it's time that we need to make sure that we keep seeing these young children with smiles on their faces because it is time they need some support. They are reaching out to you.

2002, Saluda Shoals Park was presented and asked for 6.9 mills and was granted 3 mills. This was the first such increase in over 14 years that they have been given. Saluda Shoals Park had their one millionth visitor on August 4, 2005 since it opened. That's just to let you know how much these facilities are being used, not just by the children, but the adults of the community. From the year 1970 to 2000 the district has seen a growth rate of over 300 percent from 12,000 to over 48,000 in the population growth. The senior citizen growth in that period of time has grown over 600 percent from 537 to over 4,000. So the growth rate in the Irmo Chapin Commission area is growing drastically. Those are just some of the figures that I wanted to share with you.

On the athletic side of the house for the children over there, the athletic staff has dwindled from six full-time employees in 2002 to three currently in 2006. From 2002 to 2006 the athletic program has grown from 5,600 children to over 7,600 in two years and this is mainly due to the 300 percent increase in population just in that area. So you can see that the need is there for the funding. The facility replacement and maintenance on four old trucks with over 100,000 miles of baseball and footballs and soccer fields that need to be maintained, lined and prep for games to ensure safety to go along with gym floor refinishing and painting for basketball floors, this is not only for children, but for adults as well. So it is a wide range of people that are using these facilities. The staffing is low, the budget is under budgeted, they need help, and they are asking for support.

Lastly, in summary, in 20 years of my service in the active duty of the United States Air Force, I've traveled throughout the United States and have been in various communities, but now this area is home for me. I personally have seen the greatness of athletic programs that children are being able to be involved in just like the ones that Irmo Chapin Recreation has and we do need to keep seeing those smiling faces on these kids and we're not going to be able to do that without some support from you guys, so we really need your help there. And, it would be a shame to have to tell one kid no because they are getting to the point now that they are overcrowded and they don't have enough facility or space to support these young children and their needs that they have out there. So, if we have to tell one kid no, that's going to be a travesty and that is where we are headed in the near future. I ask the Council to strongly consider this request, act swiftly and with just cause for the needs of the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission and to communities of Irmo and Chapin, mostly importantly to the children that live there so they can utilize these programs in the future. Thank you.

Jason Brian Owen, 129 Davenport Drive, Irmo, SC 29036 - I concur.

Mr. Ken Lowden, 1441 Old Chapin Road, Lexington, SC 29036 - Good evening. Thank you for this opportunity, I've never done this before, but I care a lot about what you are deciding tonight. My travels both personally and with Du Pont, I've traveled around the country and I have seen a lot of communities growing like ours, at least to me, they appear to be doing a better job than we are in investing in the facilities and programs that add to the quality of life. I haven't benchmarked that, I would like to do that. I think that it would be an interesting statistic in the state and around the country. Secondly, a good example of that is some of the statistics that you've heard here tonight is where the athletic program participation has increased 36 percent, the staffing has decreased 50 percent, and, also, volunteers at Saluda Shoals Park. So, I have seen, speaking of staffing, first hand how dedicated and hardworking those people are. Best example I can offer is a typical hour in a park ranger. One minute they are patrolling the paths and the trails ensuring the safety of the participants in the park, attendees in the park. The next thing you know they are teaching you in the environmental center, then they are taking out the trash and cleaning the shelters in between the picnic rentals. These people work hard. Ladies and gentlemen, they are talented and dedicated people that deserve our support. I am also a member of the Optimist Club of St. Andrews. Once a year we have a speaker from the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission and based on what they presented, I think they are doing a good job with stewards of our money. In government, that's refreshing.

Finally, you have heard the theme about youth. I think one of the best things we can do to ensure the success of our community in the future, like others, is to invest in our youth. If you go to that splash park, go to the summer camp; just walk along the trails; look at the kids in the canoes; watch them in the classroom when the ranger takes a snake, it's special. We need to give them opportunities to learn and grow other than some of the others things they are going to be exposed to in their lives. I ask for your support, I certainly support this initiative. Thank you for the time.

Mayor Stan Shealy, 100 Glenwood Drive, Chapin, SC 29036 - I'm in the minority tonight, I think. I'm probably the only native of Chapin and Dutch Fork here. But, I'm not a minority when it comes

to being in favor of this proposal. Gentlemen, we are facing in the Town of Chapin the same you are, lady, on County Council and Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission. We are all facing infrastructure needs and needs for coming up with the funding for things that we need to do. I certainly am supportive of what Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission does. In Chapin we just did a charrette, a planning session for our community. Recreation plays a huge part in it and what people find desirable in our community and they do a great job. Our growth, as you well know, went up 14 percent in the first five years of this decade. We are looking for much more in the next five years, and as Coach Lett, I believe pointed out, they've had one increase for maintenance operation in 14 years. I think we just have to support them.

Mitch Gaskill, 133 Loafers Glory Court, Chapin, SC 29036 - First of all let me tell you that I did not come tonight to debate the monetary side of this equation because I'm sure you are aware that there are plenty of people to debate that for ever and ever. I am here in support of the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission and of the notion in general for the importance of parks in the health of a community. I lived in Chapin for a little over 20 years and I'm not what you call a long-timer, but I have raised my family there. I have a 21-year-old daughter, a 19-year-old son. They played softball, basketball, soccer, volleyball at the park. Most of the time, I was at their side coaching them. It's given me an opportunity to be involved in this community and it's given my children a place to get exercise and to learn about sportsmanship and discipline. I believe in being involved with your community. I was on part of the advisory counsel at the park in '95 through '97 when they started. I helped establish the disc golf course at Crooked Creek Park and I've tried to do various things with the community service throughout my years, and the only reason I say that to you is, to let you know that I'm not here as just a casual observer concerned about my taxes being spent or not being spent but, that I'm a vested part of this community and that I very much support the notion of what the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission is doing in the Town of Chapin. What it has done for the benefit and health for the community. But, I have also seen how they have struggled over the years to deal with the growth and deal with the lack of funding and to really focus, forcing themselves to be focused on these activities that generate money. And, whereas I understand that for the bottom line, one of the things for instance that the disc golf course brings, that is something that through volunteer efforts we were able to put that course in and that is provided at no charge to the people of Chapin and anyone in the area. And, one of the things that's very important with the parks, if they are there for the community, is to supply those things, not only for those services that they'll pay for but the things that they provide to the community because they are part of the community. The playgrounds there, the disc golf, those types of things. I've seen the struggle and the pressure that has been put on the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission to find time for those things and they have still struggled and managed to do it. I have seen them work very hard. I am involved with the park again, and see them try to take care of the maintenance and keeping the park up. I'm very much in support of this increase to help in the efforts that they need and I'm just simply here to show my support and urge you to pass that millage increase. Thank you very much.

John Stickney, 252 St. Thomas Church Road, Chapin, SC 29036 - I concur with the previous positive statements.

Marylou Stinson, 145 Old Pond Lane, Columbia, SC 29212 - It is my pleasure to speak on the

behalf of the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission. I work with the Action Club of Seven Oaks, which is a community service group that is led by people with disabilities and the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission has graciously supported this group for well over two years by providing staff support and meeting space on a monthly basis. The Irmo Chapin staff has been very involved with the growth of the Action Club and this group is really meeting an unmet need in our community. The Action Club of Seven Oaks is the only group like this in our community and in addition to their work and support of the Action Club, the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission has also developed a series of recreation programs for people with disabilities in our community. And the CDC, they report there are over 54 million Americans living with a disability in our country and that represents 21 percent of our population. So as when we look at the growth of our community, we have to keep in mind that 21 percent of those individuals are living with a disability. I also wanted to say that in referencing the healthy communities, our country is also experiencing a shift back in the 1900s where people were dying of infectious diseases and today people are dying of chronic diseases; cancer and heart disease, and these all are impacted by our lifestyles and again, not only is Irmo Chapin providing these low cost opportunities for people with disabilities, but for our community as a whole. You look at the private fitness facilities in our community which cost over \$400 for an annual membership and Irmo Chapin really provides an affordable way for all members of our community to participate. So I certainly ask for your support and I thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Chuck Wendt, 315 Saxony Court, Lexington, SC 29072 - I am proud to be a citizen of Lexington County. I heard about the opportunity to come before you tonight and I hurried down from Newberry College to voice my in favor of your considering an increase in the millage.

In my former job at Lexington Medical Center, I had the chance to work with both parks and recreation commissions, intimately. You may remember several years ago, when we started a cardiac pulmonary rehab facility both at Tri-City and in Batesburg-Leesville and we also did one at Crooked Creek Park up in Chapin. So I got a chance to really get to know the parks and recreation game, if I can call it and how it is managed. From that led our interest into the Commission on Aging. As you know, Meals-on-Wheels, by statute in South Carolina, is managed and run through the Councils on Aging. So actually we are very fortunate in Lexington County to have two Meals-on-Wheels programs. My father, who could not afford a meal, but whose wife had a stroke and was at Lexington Medical Center Extended Care and in his failing years with Alzheimer's Disease, wanted to stay at home and the only way I could provide that meal at lunchtime was through Meals-on-Wheels, and we paid. And I would gladly pay for that service. If you look at their numbers, in Senior Meals program from 2004; 21,634 meals to the 2005; 22,736 they transport adults, senior adults to things like Senior Celebration, which the hospital has each year and if you haven't been to that you've missed a real opportunity. The ticket sales, sells out in a hour and fifteen minutes because our senior folks enjoy coming. And they transported in 2004; 94,800 people and last year 99,300. But the interesting thing is that staff from 1990 has gone from 7 full-time employees to 4. Now working with both parks and recreation commissions and having the opportunity to meet with other parks and recreation commissions in the state as a result of some of our programs, I am pleased to tell you that Irmo Chapin stretches a dollar and does more quality things with a dollar than anybody I have ever met. If you haven't been to Crooked Creek Park, you need to do yourself a favor and go

up there and see what they do and what they have done with that dollar. Literally, Seven Oaks Park was literally worn out four or five years ago and it has been renovated and in a very efficient manner. And one thing I don't want to get confused here, is that bond referendum that was defeated was for facilities and this is for operations. They definitely need your money. They need this millage increase which amounts to, I believe, about \$11 a thousand, a hundred thousand dollars. What it does to our community and, I think people get very shortsighted, it increases the value of the property that you own because of the services that are rendered. You folks do a magnificent job, I commend you for your work and I would ask that you seriously consider this increase. Thank you.

Carl Hust, 326 Townes Road, Columbia, SC 29210 - It has been my pleasure to live in this community around 40 years. I hadn't planned on saying anything, but after I heard speaker, Chuck Wendt, I said that I needed to follow someone of that caliber. I want to brief with just a little bit of history. I think sometimes we need to go back to our roots and I want to bring you up to speed in terms of the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission. I recognize some of you from my school board experience, 16 years, and my former councilman. Back in 1966 we moved to this community from Greenville where I was Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Greenville, 10 years. I came with Governor McNair to set up the State Commission. We looked around the community and there was no Lexington County Recreation Commission. There was no Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission. We set about to create such a body. 1969 we created the South Carolina Recreation Commission. 1969 we created the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission. The Delegation allowed us \$150,000 worth of bonds and 4 mill tax levy, is where we started. With that money we invested in a community in Chapin and we invested in Irmo. We bought 20 acres of property for \$5,000 an acre, where Seven Oaks Park is. People said we were crazy. Well, we just sold a piece of the property on the B.C. property for \$110,000, so we've come a long way but the price of recreation has also come a long way. Some of you were probably on the playgrounds and play fields in Lexington before they were created. A young man, Johnny Boozer, whose Recreation Building is named for. We worked very, very closely with Johnny Boozer. We worked with the Delegation. Then it was Senator Floyd Spence, A. J. Dooley, Lucious Porth, some of those gentlemen. And, we had a wonderful relationship. It's been my pleasure to serve on the Commission three terms. This will be my last term. I've dedicated myself, I wear this badge with courage, I wear it with pride and I'm supportive of the Recreation Commission. We are indebted to you as the County Council. Having served on the school board, I can appreciate your position. I used to look out in the audience, and I would look to my colleagues and I would say fasten your seatbelt, we're going to have a rough ride tonight. Well, you are not going to have a rough ride tonight. We are here in support of a process that we feel is dedicated to the environment. It's an investment and we appreciate your support for it. We hope that you will look favorably upon our request and thank you so much.

Leo Iniguez, 431 Pittsdowne Road, Columbia, SC 29210 - I am an active member of Action Club. And this is to the Board of Directors. Action Club is a great place to hangout. The reason why it is so great, is because there is compassion, love, perseverance, and generosity. These people who are in this club do everything they can to make this world a better place. We afford to help whoever needs the help. We have been making the trails of Saluda Shoals more realistic and better equipped and a better coherence sort of way of getting around to places. We have planted trees at Chapin Crooked Creek Recreation. We have made beautiful awesome pottery and pottery decorations to go

with it. We have founded a seatbelt campaign recently to help improve people's lives and their safety. We want and we would be full of gratitude and pleased if more people were involved to be volunteers and active members of this club. Thank you for giving up your time to listen to me speak. Sincerely, Leo Iniguez.

Emily Shuman, 131 Dinton Road, Columbia, SC 29210 - I concur.

Elizabeth Sowards, 315 Quail Walk Trail, Chapin, SC 29063 - I concur with the speakers in favor of the millage increase.

Bruce Loveless, 1061 Loveless Lane, Chapin, SC 29063 - I have been living there since 1979. I sat around all this afternoon trying to find a real stem-liner for you guys, but Don Sylvester came in 10 minutes and blew me out of the water. Let me get some facts out.

The B.C. Component property, we paid \$2.4 million for that property. That is a separate issue from what we are here to talk about tonight. Sixty-five percent of our operational funds come from fees, 65 percent. No other agency can come up with that. So we do a pretty good job. We now receive 11.9 mills, we are asking for an additional 2.7 mills, that an increase of 21 percent. Things that we have done right, since I've been recently appointed to the commission, on the saving side. We refinanced our bonds. We are saving \$500,000, thirteen years by refinancing bonds. We cut Chapin Theater, a savings of \$30,000 per year; we cut out a skate park, \$155,000, a one time savings; cut timber on two properties, \$45,000. On the income side of things, we run an after school program for School District V, that's a \$1.2 million program. We net out about \$300,000. We have two full-time employees that look after that. This, however, is almost like a month-to-month situation because we don't have a long-term agreement with them. Holiday Lights at Saluda Shoals, we raise money. This is a well-run organization. We just can't be in a growing community and do it on 65 percent fees. We got to have some money from you guys. I appreciate the opportunity to talk to you.

Jack Corbitt, 232 Oak Tree Turn Lane, Gaston, SC 29053 - I concur.

Torrance Jackson, 123 Savannah Lane, West Columbia, SC 29169 - I concur.

Dallas Manis, 449 Dallas Point Lane, Chapin, SC 29036 - I ask you to vote in favor of this recreation.

Mr. Cullum asked if there was anyone else who wanted to speak. No one came forward.

Mr. Cullum closed the meeting for those in favor to speak.

Mr. Cullum closed the public hearing.

Mr. Cullum recessed Council for 15 minutes.

Mr. Cullum reconvened the meeting in open session.

Mr. Cullum stated Council was required to vote on the proposed millage request tonight as Council is scheduled to have third and final reading of the FY2006-07 budget on Tuesday, June 20th.

Mr. Jeffcoat made a motion, seconded by Mr. Davis to approve the millage increase requested by the Irmo-Chapin Recreation Commission.

Mr. Cullum opened the meeting for discussion.

Mr. Owens asked Mr. Dan Wells, Executive Director, Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission to come forward.

Mr. Owens asked, if the referendum had passed, we wouldn't be here, would we?

Mr. Wells replied, if the first one had passed, the facilities

Mr. Owens interjected, how about the last one in November? Would we still be here?

Mr. Wells replied, no, sir, because the facilities that we had in both referendums were designed to produce more revenue than they did expenditures, thereby, eliminating or lowering the reliance even further on taxes.

Mr. Cullum said what Council is voting on is for a 2.6 mill increase. He said it is a CPI increase of .407 and an additional 2.193 millage increase.

Mr. Owens stated that he regrets that Council has been put in the position to make a decision that the voters overturned, overwhelmingly in November. He said the very people went out and voted and they turned this and some other things down and said the increase was much larger but, it appears that they spoke then. He said he did not vote for his own recreation increase (Lexington County Recreation Commission) that affected his voters and it would be difficult for him to support this request.

Mr. Davis stated the referendum was for capital expenditures and this is for operating.

Mr. Owens said he asked Mr. Wells, if the referendum had been approved, we wouldn't be here?

Mr. Davis stated many times in a democracy we are all guilty of not wanting to vote for a tax increase for ourselves, but will elect individuals to do that, and believe that is Council's role tonight.

Mr. Keisler stated he is very supportive of recreation; it is very good. He said the only problem he has with the request, is that the County just went through reassessment and feels that the millage increase will put a big burden on a lot of people. For that reason can not support the request.

Mr. Jeffcoat stated last year during reassessment Council passed a request from the Lexington County Recreation Commission for a much, much larger than this request. He said he thinks about

the youth in our community, the seniors in our community, and the 65 percent revenue that the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission generate with fees. He said the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission is doing the very best to avoid any increase and have certainly proved to him that the millage request is justified. He said he has not asked Council for support but is now asking that Council help the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission so they can continue the services they provide. They have cut personnel, in some cases in half, and he will have to help them. He asked if those who feel like they can help, that he would appreciate the support. He said it is not for him, but for the youth and seniors of our County.

Mr. Cullum stated in the four years he has been on Council, he usually had a clear understanding of which way to vote. But, tonight he does not know. He said he remembers speaking to the Recreation Commission that represents the area that he lives in (Lexington County Recreation Commission) and explaining that recreation is a part of the link that makes the circle, the life that each of live in the County. He said he would hope that those that represent their areas would stand up and support their areas and indicated that he is a product of recreation in the County.

Mr. Cullum called for the vote to increase the millage 2.6 mills for the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission.

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| In Favor: | Mr. Cullum | Mr. Jeffcoat |
| | Mr. Davis | Ms. Summers |

| | | |
|----------|-------------|-------------|
| Opposed: | Mr. Kinard | Mr. Derrick |
| | Mr. Keisler | Mr. Carrigg |
| | Mr. Owens | |

The motion fails.

Mr. Jeffcoat commented that this is the same body that gave a corporation over a million dollars recently, that they didn't have to give, even when the company stood up and said, you don't have to, we like for you to. We passed that and then we overlook these folks tonight.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana W. Burnett
Clerk

M. Todd Cullum
Chairman