

M I N U T E S
LEXINGTON COUNTY COUNCIL
JANUARY 08, 2008

Lexington County Council held its regular meeting on Tuesday, January 08, 2008 in Council Chambers, beginning at 4:30 p.m. Mr. Derrick presided. Prior to the invocation, Mr. Derrick announced that Councilman Davis was absent as his wife, Alecia, passed away last night, and asked for a moment of silent prayer.

Reverend Robert China of the Lexington Medical Chaplin Association gave the Invocation. Rev. China is also the pastor of the Spring Hill African Methodist Episcopal Church in Gilbert, SC.

The White Knoll High School Special Education class gave the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members attending:	William C. Billy Derrick	James E. Kinard, Jr.
	Debra B. Summers	Bobby C. Keisler
	Johnny W. Jeffcoat	John W. Carrigg, Jr.
	William B. Banning, Sr.	M. Todd Cullum

Not Present: George H. Smokey Davis

Also attending: Katherine Hubbard, County Administrator; Joe Mergo, III, Deputy County Administrator; Larry Porth, Finance Director/Assistant County Administrator; John Fechtel, Director of Public Works/Assistant 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.

Lexington High School Economics Class - Mr. Derrick recognized students from Lexington High School attending as part of their economics class.

Presentation of Plaques - Vice Chairman Summers presented Chairman Derrick a plaque for his service as Chairman for 2007 and Chairman Derrick presented a plaque to Vice Chairman Summers for her service as Vice Chairman for 2007.

2007 Perfect Attendance - Mr. Derrick recognized seven Council members who had perfect attendance for calendar year 2007 and presented each member with an engraved perfect attendance award. The seven members with perfect attendance were: Mr. Kinard, Mr. Derrick, Ms. Summers, Mr. Keisler, Mr. Jeffcoat, Mr. Carrigg, and Mr. Cullum.

Elections of Officers - Chairman - Mr. Derrick opened the floor for the nomination of Chairman.

Mr. Jeffcoat nominated Mr. Derrick, seconded by Mr. Cullum.

Ms. Summers called for further nominations; no further nominations were made.

Mr. Banning moved that the nominations be closed.

In Favor: Mr. Jeffcoat Mr. Cullum
 Mr. Kinard Ms. Summers
 Mr. Keisler Mr. Carrigg
 Mr. Banning

Abstaining: Mr. Derrick

Mr. Derrick thanked Council for their support and allowing him to continue to serve as Chairman.

Vice-Chairman - Mr. Derrick opened the floor for nomination for Vice Chairman.

Mr. Kinard nominated Ms. Summers, seconded by Mr. Jeffcoat.

Mr. Derrick called for further nominations; no further nominations were made.

In Favor: Mr. Kinard Mr. Jeffcoat
 Mr. Derrick Mr. Keisler
 Mr. Carrigg Mr. Banning
 Mr. Cullum

Abstaining: Ms. Summers

Appointment of Parliamentarian - Mr. Derrick appointed Mr. Carrigg to serve as Council's Parliamentarian.

Chairman's Report - Mr. Derrick introduced the newly appointed Treasurer, James R. Eckstrom.

Mr. Eckstrom thanked Council and Administration for their help in this transition and said he is looking forward to his new position as Treasurer of Lexington County.

Administrator's Report - Martin Luther King Day - Ms. Hubbard announced that the County Administrative offices will be closed on Monday, January 21 in observance of Martin Luther King's holiday.

Director of Solid Waste Management - Dave Eger - Ms. Hubbard introduced Mr. Eger, the new director for Solid Waste Management.

Employee Recognition - Katherine Hubbard, County Administrator - Shining Stars - Ms. Hubbard recognized the following employees as the winners of the quarter for the Customer Service Shining Star award: The winners were: Ronda Wise, Procurement; Sheri Riffle, Human Resources; Jennifer Hendrix, Veterans' Affairs; Jimmy McGee and John Morrow, Assessment and Equalization; and Mary Lott and Susan Fort, Library Services (Ms. Fort was not present during the recognition). In addition, Ms. Hubbard presented each recipient an engraved acrylic Shining Star.

Employee of the 3rd Quarter - Nominees for the Third Quarter - Valerie Gray, Planning & GIS and Jason Jernigan, Public Safety/EMS.

Mr. Hubbard presented a plaque to Ms. Gray as the Employee of the Third Quarter and a Certificate of Excellence to Mr. Jernigan.

Employee Recognition - Ms. Hubbard recognized Robbie Derrick, Zoning Assistant with Community

Development.

Ms. Hubbard said Ron Scott, Director of Community Development, received a letter from Sgt. Devon Hughes, Traffic Coordinator/Alive at 25, commending Robbie for his assistance whenever he needs assistance working on a case. He said Robbie is very knowledgeable and is always willing to help.

Presentation of Resolution - Carl M. Hust - Presented by Councilman John Carrigg - Councilmen Carrigg and Jeffcoat presented a framed resolution to Mr. Carl Hust recognizing him for his 16 years as a board member of the Irmo-Chapin Recreation Commission and for more than thirty-five years of public service to his community.

Appointments - Museum Commission - Isaac D. Porter - Mr. Keisler made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jeffcoat to reappoint Mr. Isaac Porter to the Museum Commission.

Mr. Derrick opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Derrick	Mr. Keisler
	Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Kinard
	Ms. Summers	Mr. Carrigg
	Mr. Banning	Mr. Cullum

Midlands Workforce Development Board - Mr. Doug Combs - Mr. Cullum made a motion, seconded by Mr. Banning to appoint Mr. Doug Combs to the Midlands Workforce Development Board. Mr. Combs replaces Ms. Deborah Cannon.

Mr. Derrick opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Derrick	Mr. Cullum
	Mr. Banning	Mr. Kinard
	Ms. Summers	Mr. Keisler
	Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Carrigg

Bids/Purchases/RFPs - A motion was made by Mr. Jeffcoat, seconded by Mr. Keisler that the following Bids/Purchases/RFPs (Tabs H through S) be approved.

One (1) Lawn Mower - Building Services - Staff recommended the purchase of one (1) lawn mower for Building Services from Catoe's Moped Shed, Inc. through State Contract Number 03-S5826-A9587. Total cost including tax is \$7,420.33.

One (1) Enterprise Firewall - Information Services - Staff recommended the purchase of one (1) enterprise firewall for Information Services from Data Network Solutions through State Contract Number 05-S6850-A11536. Total cost including tax is \$11,582.30.

One (1) Wireless Switch & Software - Information Services - Staff recommended the purchase of one (1) wireless switch and software for Information Services from Data Network Solutions through State Contract Number 06-S6983-A11898. Total cost including tax is \$11,812.74.

12-Lead Cardiac Monitor/Defibrillator - Public Safety/EMS - Bids were solicited for a 12-lead cardiac monitor/defibrillator for Public Safety/EMS. Five (5) bids and four (4) no bids were received. The unit has been approved through the Supplemental Homeland Security Regional Medical Assistance Team (RMAT) grant. Staff recommended award of the bid to Southeastern Emergency Equipment as the

lowest responsible bidder meeting specifications. Total cost including tax is \$19,899.86.

2007-2008 Resurfacing Program - Public Works - Bids were solicited from qualified contractors for the 2007-2008 Resurfacing Program for 25 asphalt surfaced roads and 4 concrete roads. The project includes the resurfacing of approximately 11.98 miles of roadway. There is an estimated 14,060 tons of H.M.A. surface pipe, 200 tons of H.M.A. Intermediate Type C Binder, 5,000 S.Y. of removal and disposal of existing asphalt, 45,000 S.Y. of milling of existing asphalt, 1,000 S.Y. of removal and disposal of existing concrete, 9,536 S.Y. of paving fabric, 1,500 S.Y. of full depth patching, 100 tons of aggregate CR-14, 7,500 S.Y. of seal coat, 200 L.F. of crack sealing, 100 C.Y. of unclassified excavation, 500 L.F. of installation of 4" French drain, 100 L.F. of installation of 18" R.C.P., 2 construct catch basins, 500 L.F. of curb removal and replacement, and 790 permanent yellow bi-directional markers. Three (3) bids and one (1) no bid were received. Staff recommended the award of the contract to CR Jackson, Inc. as being the low bidder. The total bid for the project, based on estimated quantities, is \$1,128,499 including sales tax. Mr. Ben Whetstone, President of CR Jackson, Inc. is aware that the award will be for \$800,000, which is the amount budgeted.

Fifty-Four Radios with Accessories (Replacement) - Sheriff's Department - Staff recommended the purchase of 54 replacement radios with accessories for the Sheriff's Department directly from the manufacturer, Motorola, through State Contract Number OIR2002.07. Total cost including tax is \$66,122.79.

Fleet Vehicle Replacement - Sheriff's Department - Staff recommended the purchase of one (1) new Ford E-350 1-ton extended cargo van for the Sheriff's Department from Vic Bailey Ford through State Contract Number 08-S7608-A13407 and a prisoner transportation insert for the van through the sole source provider, Bob Barker Company, as they are the manufacturer and only distributor. The cost of the van is \$25,586 and the cost of the insert is \$10,046.65. Total cost including tax is \$35,632.65

Health Care Services RFP - Sheriff's Department - Competitive sealed proposals were solicited from potential health care providers to establish a contract for providing quality comprehensive health care services, medical and dental, to the inmate population of the Lexington County Sheriff's Department. The contract will be on a 24-hour/7 day per week basis, all labor, materials, equipment, services, insurance, licenses and applicable necessary taxes. The term of the contract will be for three (3) years with the option to extend for two (2) additional one (1) years periods. Staff recommended awarding the contract to Correct Care Solutions for the initial contract term of three (3) years. The amount of the contract is \$7,087,674.

Panasonic Laptops and Accessories - Sheriff's Department - The Sheriff's Department submitted a requisition for the purchase of twenty (20) Panasonic laptops and accessories. Staff recommended the purchase of the laptops from Howard Computers through State Contract Number 05-S6656-A11320 at a cost including tax of \$86,351.14.

Written quotations were obtained for the accessories. Two (2) quotes and one (1) no bid were received. Staff recommended the award of the quote to Software House International as the lowest bidder meeting specifications. Total cost for the accessories including tax is \$7,018.95. Total cost of the laptops and accessories is \$93,370.09.

Replacement Dishwasher - Sheriff's Department - Bids were solicited for one (1) replacement dishwasher for the Sheriff's Department. One (1) bid and one (1) no bid were received. Staff recommended the award of the bid to General Sales Company as the lowest responsible bidder. Total cost including tax is \$68,241.

Weapons Purchase and Disposal of Used and Confiscated Firearms - Sheriff's Department -

Competitive bids were solicited for the purchase of weapons and the disposal of used and confiscated firearms for the Sheriff's Department. The Sheriff's Department is selling seized and confiscated firearms and old service weapons to a firearms dealer in order to acquire new service weapons for their officers. The intent of the process is to purchase new weapons without using appropriated funds in existing accounts, thereby saving money.

Five (5) bids were received. Bids were set up to allow vendors to bid on four (4) separate lots. Lot #1 included the purchase of all items less the trade-in offer. Lot #2 and Lot #3 were for the purchase of guns and holsters respectively. Lot #4 was for the sale of the used service and confiscated weapons. Staff recommended the award of Lots #2 and #3 to Lawmen's Safety Supply as being the lowest responsible bidder meeting specifications for the weapons and holsters and award Lot #4 to Lawmen's Safety Supply as being the highest offer for the sale of used service and confiscated weapons. Total cost including sales option and tax is zero dollars (\$0.00).

Cat 938-G Front End Loader - Solid Waste Management - Competitive bids were solicited for the purchase of one (1) Cat 938-G front end loader for Solid Waste Management. Five (5) bids and four (4) no bids were received. Staff recommended the award of the bid to Blanchard Machinery as the low bidder meeting specifications. Total cost including tax is \$196,736.

Mr. Derrick opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Derrick	Mr. Jeffcoat
	Mr. Keisler	Mr. Kinard
	Ms. Summers	Mr. Carrigg
	Mr. Banning	Mr. Cullum

Zoning Amendments - Zoning Map Amendment M07-05 - 5609 Wescott Road - 3rd and Final Reading - Mr. Banning made a motion, seconded by Mr. Carrigg that Zoning Map Amendment M07-05 receive third and final reading.

Mr. Derrick opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Derrick	Mr. Banning
	Mr. Carrigg	Mr. Kinard
	Ms. Summers	Mr. Keisler
	Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Cullum

Zoning Map Amendment M07-08 - 1731 Bush River Road - 3rd and Final Reading - Mr. Banning made a motion, seconded by Mr. Keisler that Zoning Map Amendment M07-08 receive third and final reading.

Mr. Derrick opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Derrick	Mr. Banning
	Mr. Keisler	Mr. Kinard
	Ms. Summers	Mr. Jeffcoat
	Mr. Carrigg	Mr. Cullum

Zoning Map Amendment M07-10 - (Road Classification Change) Approximately 480 feet of Linwood Drive, Lexington Beginning at Current RL4 Boundary to Common Property Line of TMS

004200-03-042 and 004200-03-041 - Announcement of 1st Reading - Mr. Derrick announced first reading of Zoning Map Amendment M07-10.

Ordinances - Ordinance 08-01 - An Ordinance to Amend Language in the Building Code Ordinance Pertaining to Administration and Permitting Requirements - 1st Reading by Title - A motion was made by Mr. Banning and seconded by Mr. Carrigg that Ordinance 08-01 receive first reading.

Mr. Derrick opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Derrick	Mr. Banning
	Mr. Carrigg	Mr. Kinard
	Ms. Summers	Mr. Keisler
	Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Cullum

Ordinance 08-02 - An Ordinance to Approve a Contract of Conveyance of Certain Properties from the County of Lexington to the Lexington Medical Center - 1st Reading by Title - A motion was made by Mr. Banning, seconded by Mr. Cullum that Ordinance 08-02 receive first reading.

Mr. Derrick opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Derrick	Mr. Banning
	Mr. Cullum	Mr. Kinard
	Ms. Summers	Mr. Keisler
	Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Carrigg

Ordinance 08-03 - An Ordinance Amending the Lexington County Landscape Ordinance - 1st Reading by Title - A motion was made by Mr. Jeffcoat, seconded by Mr. Cullum that Ordinance 08-03 receive first reading.

Mr. Derrick opened the meeting for discussion; no discussion occurred.

In Favor:	Mr. Derrick	Mr. Jeffcoat
	Mr. Cullum	Mr. Kinard
	Ms. Summers	Mr. Keisler
	Mr. Carrigg	Mr. Banning

Committee Reports - Justice, B. Banning, Chairman - Contract with South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice - Mr. Banning reported the Justice Committee met during the afternoon to discuss and consider a request by the Sheriff's Department to establish a contract between the Sheriff's Department and the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (SCDJJ) to fund a Juvenile Detention Case Manager to manage juvenile detention cases and provide prevention and intervention support in the Sheriff's Department. SCDJJ will provide \$100,000 for the first year of operation. After the first year, it will be a 50/50 percent match between the two entities. The committee voted unanimously to recommend to full Council for approval.

Mr. Banning made a motion, seconded by Mr. Keisler to approve the request to establish a contract between the Sheriff's Department and SCDJJ.

Mr. Derrick opened the meeting; no discussion occurred.

Mr. Derrick reconvened the meeting in open session and reported Council will have to re-enter Executive Session following the public hearing.

6:00 P.M. - Public Hearing - Ordinance 07-11 - An Ordinance Adopting a Supplemental Appropriation for Fiscal Year 2007-2008 for a No-Kill Spay Neuter and Adoption Public Private Partnership Program - Prior to opening of the public hearing for comments from proponents in favor or against, the County Administrator, Katherine Hubbard, gave a brief synopsis of how the budget appropriation process works.

Ms. Hubbard said on an annual basis, County Council accepts requests from departments and other agencies for their annual budget and appropriated funds. Then the appropriation, by ordinance, requires three readings and a public hearing for a budget that goes into effect July 1 of each year. However, from time-to-time there are requests that require a supplemental appropriation and the supplemental appropriation has to follow the same process. The public hearing tonight has to deal with the supplemental appropriation of \$1.5 million dollars from an accumulated fund in the County's general fund.

Ms. Hubbard provided a history for the reason for the supplemental appropriation. She said over the last several months, Lexington County Council and Richland County Council have discussed controlling the pet population in the region and while there has been some general discussions about the terms of a public/private partnership, such as constructing a building in the Harbison area, the final terms of the public/private partnership would be finalized as a part of a proposal process. Ms. Hubbard said the County has received inquiries about whether this particular hearing including pet licenses or pet registration in Lexington County. She said the public hearing is not to add a requirement for pet fees. The public hearing is for Council to receive feedback from its citizens regarding whether Council should commit \$1.5 million dollars from the accumulated general fund balance towards a public/private partnership to control the regional pet population.

Ms. Hubbard asked if Council had any questions.

Mr. Kinard asked Ms. Hubbard, for the benefit of the audience, to provide what projects the County will have to consider in this year's upcoming budget.

Ms. Hubbard provided information on the following projects: The Communications Center and the new Operations Center are underway and the budget is \$1.7 million dollars. The plans have not been received from the architectural and engineering firms so it is unclear what the final cost will be until the project is bid. There are also renovations that are going to be made to the Red Bank Crossing facility, which was recently purchased to house some state agencies, with an estimated renovation cost of \$4 million dollars. Again, the plans have not been received from the architectural and engineering firms so it is unclear what the final cost will be. Staff is currently preparing a vehicle replacement plan, a capital replacement plan for the County's buildings, repairs and maintenance, and an Information Technology capital replacement plan that will all come in as part of the budget process. Also, there are airport capital projects, particularly on grants with the Federal Aviation Administration, that require matches that are tied to the general fund and the \$1.5 million public/private partnership being discussed this evening. In addition, there are a number of alternate road paving strategies and other road paving projects that may end up prompting some discussions about how to allocate the accumulated balances in the general fund. Also, the Telecommunications Committee has discussed the pending conversion of 800 MHz radios to P25 technology which is estimated to be between \$1 and \$1.5 million dollars in the County's budget as a one-time non-reoccurring cost.

Ms. Hubbard said last year, we talked about the West Region Service Center, which will house

Magistrate, Law Enforcement, and EMS, the renovation of the DSS complex on Gibson Road, the expansion of dog kennels at Animal Services, and moving the Lexington Magistrate to the old courthouse. There has also been some discussion about long-term planning for the library, fire service, and the pending closeout cost for the C&D landfill at the Edmund site. The early estimates for the closeout is plus/minus \$2.5 million within the next three or four years.

Mr. Cullum asked for a total and asked if it was in excess of \$10 million dollars.

Ms. Hubbard replied that she would venture to say that it is in excess of \$10 million dollars.

Mr. Derrick, for the benefit of everyone in the audience, reported that last year the State Legislature put in millage caps that prohibits Council from raising millage levels over a certain amount, so if this money is provided for this particular activity, then it cannot be replaced with tax dollars; it will have to come out of the general fund reserve fund and Council has no way of replacing the funds.

Mr. Derrick stated that the purpose of the hearing is to obtain comments from proponents and opponents regarding Ordinance 07-11. He asked that each speaker provide their name and mailing address and that comments be limited to three (3) minutes. He asked that 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. Derrick also asked that there be no disruptions including cheering, clapping, etc.

Mr. Derrick opened the meeting for comments from those in favor of Ordinance 7-11.

In Favor:

Mr. Ronald Roe, 510 Turkey Point Circle, Columbia, SC - It is a pleasure to speak before you tonight in favor of the regional no-kill zone. I am an engineer so I'll really be brief; that will save you a lot of time. This is the third reading (note: Public Hearing) so you've already read the numbers and done the math. Mr. Davis was so kind to run the numbers himself, and I think last time he voted in favor of this initiative.

This initiative is not just about spaying and neutering. It's about providing healthy pets to families; families who may not be able to afford these pets. If you've ever looked at the face of a child when it received a healthy pet, then you'll know that this is the right thing to do.

Often in business and in politics, we are torn between what is morally right to do and what is financially sound to do. I think this evening you have the opportunity to do both, what is morally right for Lexington and Richland County, the Midlands of South Carolina, and what is right financially. I think the numbers will show you that over a period of time this money will be returned in excess of what was originally invested.

I think it is wonderful when government and the citizens can come together to accomplish something that is positive for its citizens. I wish we could say that about our country. We have the opportunity here, for several people here. A lot of local people support this program, an awful lot. I can't tell you how many people who have called me today and wished they could have been here to support this. So, I would respectfully request that you consider this based on both issues. The moral issue, providing healthy pets to families and the financial issue. I respectfully request that you vote in favor tonight. Thank you very much.

Mr. Derrick apologized that he failed to mention, prior to the opening of the public hearing, that Councilman Davis is absent tonight as his wife, Alecia, passed away last night (Monday). Councilman

Davis wanted everyone to know that he will review the minutes carefully and make his decision based on the comments from tonight's meeting.

Mr. Lee Bussell, 205 Mill Point Court, Chapin, SC - I appreciate Mr. Chairman and members of the Council allowing me to be here before you tonight. I may not be as emotional as Ron Roe, but on the other side of it, I think, one of the points that I would like to make is that I am a proud resident of Lexington County. Johnny has been my representative, I guess, most of my life. But every day I get in my car and I drive across an imaginary line called the county line and I go into Columbia, South Carolina where I own property, pay taxes, and own a business. And when I look at the opportunity for Richland and Lexington County to come together on a regional basis, for the regional approach to this, as a taxpayer in both counties, I can't help but to think that this is the prudent thing for both counties to do on a cooperative basis. I applaud this council for their approach to regional cooperation. Certainly, we all understand that there are issues regarding animal control in Richland County and Lexington County, throughout the midlands, and it takes a regional approach to do that. However, there is one point that I think that is even stronger in this particular case. It's great when county and city governments can come together, but when you get the private sector coming together to leverage the tax money that ya'll put into this so that you put the infrastructure in place, not only to have a permanent solution to this problem, but when you put that facility in place, what you've got is a permanent group of supporters, these folks here, that's going to guarantee that the program is going to be successful and I would urge ya'll to vote for this. Thank you.

Vasa Cate, M.D., 600 Regatta Road, Columbia, SC 29212 - That is indeed in Lexington County. Been a resident of this county for 30 years and proud of it.

My wife and I support this proposal for two basic reasons. It is economically sound and it works. It has worked in other areas. Rudyard Kipling wrote that you can judge the heart of a man by the way he cares for his animals. And the people of Lexington County have big hearts and they care for their animals, particularly their pets, and they would like these homeless pets, who are temporarily homeless, to have the best of care. My wife and I both are very enthused about the project and as are many others, we are planning to do volunteer work in the facility. Thank you.

Ms. Donna Fusci, 121 Carlyle Circle, Columbia, SC 29206 - I concur with everything that has been said.

Mr. Tommy Bryson, 2731 Burney Drive, Columbia, SC 29205 - I would like to defer my time to Delores Mungo.

Mr. Bruce Loveless, 1061 Loveless Lane, Chapin, SC 29036 - Left.

Mr. Perry Lancaster, 3230 Duncan Street - I concur with Ron Roe.

Ms. Denise Wilkinson, P.O. Box 93, Ballentine, SC 29002- I concur with what has been said.

Ms. Tracy Johnson, 1836 Shadowood Drive, Columbia, SC 29212 -I concur with the sentiments so far.

Ms. Tai Macllwinen, 32 Millplace Court, Irmo, SC 29063 - I would like to defer to Cathy Novinger.

Mr. John Cantwell, 172 Rose Lake Drive, Lexington, SC 29072- I agree with everything that has been said.

Dr. Celeste Springer, 132 Morningshore Court, Lexington, SC 29072- I concur with what has been

said.

Susan Aude, Blythewood, SC - This is my very first time as a private citizen to be able to participate in the important legislative decisions that takes place in our county at all times. In the past because of my job, that would not have been appropriate. But, I feel very passionate and strongly about this issue and just feel humble and privileged to be able to finally take part in the process instead of just observing it from afar.

I am here tonight to thank the Lexington County Council members for their painstaking reviews and their work on behalf of, what we know from the experiences of other cities, will be a successful, regional solution put in place to address the shameful and sad issue of pet overpopulation.

I want to share a few facts with you that I'm sure most of you are aware of, but nevertheless, it is important to point out how important animals are in our lives. We have over 1700 dogs with our men and women in Iraq. We have 29 dogs that work with our men and women at SLED helping us fight crime. There are many people in South Carolina who are handicapped and need assistance from dogs and receive it every day just in an effort to function. At least one of which is here tonight, I saw. Cats and dogs are now trained to sniff out disease in the human body. Dogs search for survivors in collapsed buildings. We know pets provide a great service to our seniors in our nursing homes by giving the residents the physical contact and love that is so important to their well-being. I share all of these examples with you because pets do play such an important role in our lives as people have mentioned. We are the ones who have domesticated these animals for our benefit, and we are the ones responsible for their care .

Our citizens and counties need to make better decisions and take innovative steps such as regional solutions. Public partnering with private groups, prevent animals from becoming homeless. It is wrong to use euthanasia as a means to control the pet population, and I am proud to know that we have leaders in Lexington and Richland Counties who are working toward a more humane, compassionate and comprehensive solution. One that involves education of pet owners, training of pets, spaying and neutering, medical facilities, and a place where everyone of every age can be of service and find just the right pet to take home with them.

Everything else has been or is being tried and the problems continue and only a small dent is ever made in a huge, huge problem.

I commend you for going through a process that will ensure that the counties select the best not-for-profit to partner with Richland and Lexington Counties. This makes business sense, and it creates accountability. Taxpayers need to know that a group will be held responsible for the outcome of this project.

I have no doubt that once the new center is open and citizens and all the well-intentioned animal groups see firsthand the benefits, we will see the unity of spirit behind this project that will result in pride and cooperation, benefits to taxpayers, and most all, help for helpless animals.

It's time to move forward. The work has been done for years now. The way has been paved. This is not the time for vacillation or distractions from the goal at hand. The taxpayers of Richland and Lexington Counties will thank you. The animals will not be able to, of course, but if you've ever looked into the eyes of a rescued pet, you can see the gentle, grateful look that says everything.

Thank you for your time, your patience, your hard work and your willingness, and yes, your courage to take this innovative and long-term approach on behalf of a regional adoption and outreach education center for our area.

Cathy Novinger, 610 Meeting Street, West Columbia, SC 29169 - I am not a resident of Lexington County but was at one time. One day I'll learn my lesson and come back, but I do have two businesses located in Lexington County. I live in Richland County. I'm a taxpayer in both counties. Made a sizeable investment on your street, Todd, recently, so I'm delighted to be here and say I'm a taxpayer in your county.

I am here not necessarily as an advocate for pets, although I've had my pets in years gone by and enjoy and love them. But, I'm an advocate, if you will, for what regional cooperation could do. And I serve with many of you on the regional COG (Council of Governments), and we work together to find those regional solutions. Billy, you know that and we are now a part of a new group of local governments working together to see what we can do to bring regional solutions to regional problems. So, I've committed a great deal of time as you have to that. I know of no better example, if you will, of how you can leverage \$1.5 million dollars and the resources and leadership of another county along side with you and the leadership and resources of the private sector; people who are here tonight because they are passionate about the issue we are talking about and because they are here from the heart. These people aren't the folks that are going to be here tonight and go away. They're going to be with you holding your hand as we go forward on this venture with Project Pet.

You know we've got a track record, Johnny, of what regional cooperation can do. Sometimes we feel like we get the short end of the stick but overall, I think we have had some very successful examples. We've got the airport, we've got the zoo, we've got what River Alliance can do, and we've got other examples and it works. And it does enable us to leverage our dollars in a way that we couldn't do in a single fashion.

I am especially grateful that you are not looking at a band-aid approach to how we deal with over population of animals. Billy, you mentioned what the general assembly did recently in trying to deal with a band-aid approach to property taxes and you folks get stuck with spending caps that keep you from doing the job at hand. We know what a band-aid approach can do quite often and it's not the answer. Certainly, a strategic comprehensive program that deals with all aspects of animal control and animal protection and awareness of disease and training and all those things that are necessary. Certainly that's the kind of regional and strategic approach we want to support. So, I ask you for your last consideration of your \$1.5 million dollars to be matched by Richland County at \$1.5 million dollars recognizing that the private sector is committed to raising the rest of the \$3.5 million dollars, and I'm here to tell you we'll do it. Thank you for your due diligence. I know all of you have spent a great deal of time, Bill, addressing this issue. There has been a lot of questions answered, a lot of data put in front of you, a lot of examples from other communities, and I thank you for your strong due diligence and your stewardship of taxpayers' dollars. I have been to councils where I didn't feel like that was the case before, Johnny, so I commend you for that. Thank you and we appreciate your vote of support.

Mr. Richard Jackson, 198 Cameron Lane, Lexington, SC 29072 - I have been married a little while and I know when to defer. This thing has been covered well and I know you have put a lot of time into it. This proposal by Project Pet is well thought out. It's proven; it's researched; it will do the job. The job needs doing. Let's join together and get it done. Thank you.

Ms. Anabell Wright, 244 E. Columbia Avenue, Leesville, SC 29070 - I am here to speak for those who can't speak for themselves. They talk, but we don't listen, take the time to listen, and they need to be heard.

As you know, I've worked as a volunteer for three years at the County shelter in the late 1990s. Some of you may remember me, I don't know, and know what the routine of unwanted homeless stray dogs' final

days are like. For most, it's a nightmare. Chances are very slim to none of ever being adopted with so many to pick from. The thousands that should never have been born and whose fault is that, that they were born? People who know better but really didn't care. After all the County will take care of it. There are no laws or limits to stop it. One woman told me that she just wanted her dogs to have puppies so her daughter could experience seeing the birth. How about experiencing the euthanasia? I believe as lawmakers you people need to take on the responsibility of putting laws into effect to deal with the problems and if it means taxes on dogs and cats that are not spayed and neutered, so be it. Why should the county have to deal with this problem of overpopulation because the people are letting it happen out of choice? It can and must be controlled and you, as lawmakers, need to deal with it. I suggest a committee, maybe a person from each rescue organization in the county to work on ideas and suggestions to present to the council on what they believe would be effective ways to stop overpopulation and someday have no more homeless pets. Stop the backyard breeders. Professional breeders need license and inspections. Remember this – you can't spend it on building more shelters, that's like building prisons for people; it doesn't do anything to stop the crime. Years ago in North Carolina a shelter actually euthanized a dog on the local news station and it had a real impact. The shelter was cleaned out. Once you see it, you never want to see it again. In conclusion, please give your money away wisely for the animals' sake. It's your responsibility. Thank you.

Ms. Deloris Mungo, 160 Blackburn Road, Irmo, SC 29063 - Prior to Ms. Mungo's presentation, she provided Council a copy of a letter from the Richmond SPCA.

I am President of Project Pet and I want to thank the Lexington County Council and Richland County for considering the regional no-kill initiative. I would like to thank you for all the time you have given them.

Project Pet has spent a great amount of time and resources researching the best national models for our community to become no-kill. One of the programs that we want to model after is the Richmond, Virginia SPCA program and this is the letter that you are passing out that shares the successes they have achieved since 2002 and they are now recognized as a national teaching model for the American SPCA. This is the model we plan to follow if this regional no-kill initiative moves forward and Project Pet is selected as the third-party partner for the counties. A regional program that supports the construction of a central adoption and outreach center on Bower Parkway will offer a humane and comprehensive approach to pet control, pet and population control on a long-term basis. We can all be proud of this facility for years to come. It will send a message throughout our state that we no longer believe that euthanizing healthy treatable pets is the right way to solve this problem. This addresses medical and educational services, adoptions, and training. These are all critical components to addressing the problem. Our communities are growing, which means our pet population continues to explode. What we have done in the past has simply not worked. Those who were telling you that the building might be too expensive or, this or that, is a center based on criteria that is recommended by animal experts across the nation. It addresses disease control and longevity issues and it requires an upfront investment, but it will prove to save tremendous community dollars in the long term.

I also believe Council is making a wise decision by selecting one organization that will be accountable to the county and its taxpayers.

I am fully aware that there are community animal groups that have suddenly come to Council members with scare tactics asking you to convert the allocated dollars for construction of this center to a spay/neuter voucher. This is already in place. Project Pet led the effort to get this legislation passed. This is only one piece of the required comprehensive plan and it is a knee-jerk reaction. Some groups would prefer to be in charge than to save animals. Project Pet is willing and able to put our own resources up to be an equal partner with Lexington and Richland counties in helping solve the problems in the region. Your dollars will be used to build the foundation of a program that will help generate additional

resources. As a community, we need to do 30,000 spay/neuters each year to solve this problem. This center will also eliminate the need for duplicity and different clinical programs across this area.

I ask that Council move forward with this well thought out proven regional adoption center on Bower Parkway. Challenge all the other animal groups who have the ability to partner with the two counties to come forward with their qualifications and then, please, choose the organization that has the ability to make this a success. This plan works. I employ you, please, to make the decision to save taxpayers millions of dollars while saving lives in the process. Thank you very much for your consideration. Thank you very much.

Ms. Jan Hammond, 141 Stephen Lane, Columbia, SC 29212- I concur with Deloris Mungo and all the other speakers.

Ms. Joyce Staley, 1803 13th Street, Cayce, SC 29033 - I concur.

Ms. Linda Abernathy, 1712 Shadowood Drive, Columbia, SC 29212- Not audible as she was in the audience.

Dr. Brian Springer, 132 Morningshore Court, Lexington, SC 29072 - I concur with what everybody has said.

Steven C. Bowen, 1123 Myrtle Road, West Columbia, SC 29172 - I concur with what everybody has said.

Ms. Jonna Betts, 6040 Lakeshore Drive, Columbia, SC 29206 - I concur with what has been said.

Ms. Constance Sears, 3509 Percival Road, Lot 11, Columbia, SC 29223- 4221- I concur.

Mr. Bruce Harper, 737 Abelia Road, Columbia, SC 29205 - I concur with Deloris Mungo, Cathy Novinger, Lee Bussell, and Ron Roe. I support the project.

Ms. Susan Amick, 125 Middlebrook Drive, Lexington, SC 29072 - I concur.

Ms. Mary B. Sesler, 125 Foley Lane, Lexington, SC 29072- I agree with what everybody has said.

Mr. Jason D. Watkins, 126 Arborgate Circle, Columbia, SC 29212 - I concur.

Ms. Lynn Butt, 1303 Geiger Avenue, Columbia, SC 29201- I agree with all the previous ones, and I strongly support the program.

Ms. Angie Hass, 2021 Charlestown Road, Leesville, SC 29070 - I agree.

Ms. Pattie Dieterly, 409 Greenetree Lane, Lexington, SC 29072 - I concur.

Ms. Bonnie Trigg, 131 Richmond Farm Circle, Lexington, SC 29072 - I concur.

Ms. Bell Zedi, 105 Richmond Farm Circle, Lexington, SC 29072 - Concur.

Ms. Chelsea Burbage, 301 Cape Romain Court, Lexington, SC 29072- I concur.

Mr. Allen Marshall, 108 Rustic Court, Columbia, SC 29210 – Left.

Ms. Judy Murphy, 221 Rollingwood Drive, Lexington, SC 29072 - I concur.

Ms. Diane Watson, 120 Alston Circle, Lexington, SC 29072- I concur.

Ms. Ingrid Kubilus, 70 Sugar Maple, Chapin, SC 29036 - I concur.

Ms. Rene' Quattlebaum, 306 Water Crest Drive, Lexington, SC 29072 – I concur.

Ms. Jeanne Blackburn, 120 Stoney Brook Lane - I concur.

Ms. Andrea Mays, 1405 Waterhill Drive, Columbia, SC 29212 - I concur.

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

Mr. Derrick opened the meeting for those in opposition to speak.

In Opposition:

Ms. Elizabeth Miller, 501 Reddington Way, Irmo, SC 29063 - I apologize Mr. Chairman and Council people because I'm an Irmo High School graduate and like a lot of people who went to Irmo High School, I never really knew what county I lived in. But as a matter of fact, I have lived in Irmo in Richland County and Lexington County so I'm starting to understand how it all works as I reach the tender age of 40. But, I normally speak at Columbia City Council meetings and there we just speak.

I thought Linda Patternauster (?) would be here tonight to speak on behalf of the Mungo family and talk about what good stewards they are. I'm going to leave the word Christian out of that out of respect to Ms. Aude, who is one of my favorite people in the world.

I was late tonight because I have to drive a woman from the Cornell Arms, which is on the USC campus, out to Highway 6 in Lexington. She is blind and depends very much on her dog, Maggie, a blond lab.

Ms. Broome, like me, doesn't have a lot of money, seems like a lot of people in this room do. With all due respect, I'm a taxpayer anyway and so is she. Since I've grown up in Irmo my entire life, I've very familiar with the Mungo family and I know Mr. Mungo is a very good Christian steward, Mr. Mungo, Sr. I know that it says in the bible, we must render unto whoever our creator is, what is his, and render unto Caesar what is ya'lls. What I don't understand and, I was hoping that Mr. Davis would be here to clear this up, and I am very sorry about his tragedy. I know the Mungo family is one of wealthiest families in the state of South Carolina. They can fund this themselves. There is my dime. Good night.

Ms. Jane Brundage, 300 Orchard Drive, West Columbia, SC 29171 - I am representing Pets, Inc. I was surprised as listening to all the comments here at how much we all agree. You know I found that it is shocking at the terminology that I heard; it sounds everything I hear within our own walls. The regional approach and cooperation, bringing the private sector in, leveraging the efforts of the private sector, all of these things are commendable. It's certainly something that we all agree with.

What we find at issue here is - should we put the funds that are available into bricks and mortar or do we put the funds that are available into services. So we wanted to present an alternate proposal for the services. I did e-mail the proposal to each of the council members; I hope you have had the chance to review them. I brought some copies with me if anybody would like a printed copy.

We are fundamentally; first and foremost, I'd like to say that this is not a competition. It's not a contest

between Project Pet and Pets, Inc. Pets, Inc. is asking for no funding here. We don't want any special consideration. This has nothing to do with our organization individually. It has to do with all the organizations within the community and this is a time when they seem to be in step, all with the exception of Project Pet. And I really don't feel that they are that far out of step with what the rest of us believe, too. We find common ground here for the first time, maybe in the history of this area, and we need to jump on that and move forward. The council has found the wisdom to fund a solution to this unnecessary spay and neuter and we really want to look at the most responsible way to do that. We feel that actually approaching the services, putting the money where the need is will accomplish a great deal more than building a monument to animal love and consideration. So, what we have recommended is a proposal that brings all of the organizations into one committee to administer a fund. If you will read the details of it, you will find that the county is the beneficiary of a great deal of labor and efforts that will keep the fund flowing without any effort from the council.

This puts the money in the areas where the need is actually evident. By having a voucher system for the funds that are available, people who cannot afford discounted spay and neuter services can apply to have their animals altered. And I know that we all understand the need that it is admirable that Project Pet wants to put out more discounted services, but they are available already. Facilities are available. What we don't have are the funds to provide the services. So when we have the phones ringing off the hook, all our organizations, you're going to find as you look around the room you've got representatives from many, many organizations here and, unfortunately, they all couldn't be here that actually endorse this.

Take a few minutes and let's really look at this before you make this decision. Look where the actual spay and neutering of animals that are out there tied to trees and reproducing in peoples' backyards is going to be more prudent than putting up a building and pulling animals out of animal control. Sad as it is, the pets that are in the animal control facilities are no reproducing. There are not keeping people awake at night barking. They are not turning over trashcans or causing auto accidents; they are not causing neighbor disputes. It is sad, but it is a fact. We need to get to the ones that are still out there. And our proposal will do that and do that in a tremendous way. So that as you go through the next few years, actually in one year, what can be done during the construction period will accomplish more than what could be done in the first five years with that new facility.

With this said, we would like to bring the only organizations that is not in unison on this to the table and challenge Project Pet to please join in; get in step with the rest of us, and work with us in funding this fund beyond what the council can fund. Beyond what the taxpayers can fund. We can keep this going in perpetuity if we have your funding as a jumpstart.

Finally, I really want to say that I don't think you will find anybody in this room that doesn't agree with virtually everything that has been said on the Project Pet side that we want to do a regional approach and bring in the community. Thank you for your time.

Mr. Forrest Brown, 157 Mossborough Drive, Lexington, SC 29073 - I became interested in this about 2 o'clock yesterday afternoon when I found out that Project Pet wanted to go their own way, so to speak, and to be in charge of this operation. And maybe, it just doesn't fit with the experience that I've had with these people. If I can approach you, I want to show you something here and let ya'll meet Molly (Mr. Brown presented Council a picture of Molly, his dog).

Molly was a two-month old golden retriever lab that was put down on U.S. 1 right where they built that awful looking fireworks place across from Hardees. She stayed there until April, and we went and fed and took care of her. We finally found out that it was a putdown dog. So, then we called Pets Inc. and they said they would get a crate or a pen to trap Molly so we could bring her home. Well, in about a week's pass, they couldn't get the crate so I called Project Pet. I left my number, told them I was in a

jam, told them I needed help; never heard a word from them; never called me back; never acknowledged me. About two weeks later, giving them the benefit of the doubt, I called them back. Never heard from them; never got anything from them; never had anything from them. At the end of May, Pets Inc., we found a coyote trap, we trapped Molly. They took her; they spayed her; they gave her, her shots; they gave her everything; they treated her and brought her personally to my house. Put her in my backyard. I never heard from them. Three months later, I called Project Pet because I was in a jam with trying to catch her to get a collar off of her. Left word to call if they could help in anyway. Never heard a word from them; never called me back. Today, thanks to Pets, Inc. and a lot of help from trainers, here is Molly (presented another picture of Molly). She is almost a year old. She's grown; she's in good health. But if it hadn't been for other people, other than Project Pet, that dog would have been dead, and I love that dog. And you've got somebody that wants to control everything that won't return calls and that dog would either have been run over on US 1 or had puppies like we are talking about and it is now perfectly healthy. She is in our backyard. But, now you are asking somebody that won't return calls and won't help you out to head up a situation like this. I don't know if I'm the only one or not and they can say, well, that's an isolated incident. Well, to me they advertise that they were going to do certain things; they didn't do it. So, to me that's important. So, what I think needs to be done is for the people to get all these people together, Pets, Inc. and Project Pet and make them sit down and come to an agreement and work it out and then you give them the money. I mean don't let one take off and be the head of the whole kingpin. The dogs and cats and all are the ones we want to look after, not who is going to run it, not what kind of big building we've got, not how much we can show what we can do, but to put the money where the animals are. You've got to spay these animals. You're in a bar fight and you kill five people, ten come through the door, you're not going to win. I mean you are going to have to fight ten and fifteen will come. You've got to stop it some way or no building in the world is going to handle it. But, that's the best thing to do - get these people together. Quit letting one try to be king of the hill. Let them all work together for the good of one thing and then give them the money. But just don't let one take it and look after it because sooner or later, the expenses are going to be so high that adopting a dog is going to be more than you can go buy one for as a pedigree, if you start adding the charges to it. So, consider that, the committee, and get them together before you just hand out this money to somebody, and I appreciate it.

Mr. Derrick reiterated that the public hearing is for the sole purpose to address the appropriation of \$1.5 million from the general fund to benefit the controlling on the pet population. And, if the \$1.5 million appropriation is approved, then there will be a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to select the organization that will receive the appropriated \$1.5 million dollars.

Mr. Robert Kirby, 233 Greenview Court, Lexington, SC 29072 - I am here to object to the expenditure the way it is proposed. You are elected council people to wisely spend the taxpayers' money in the best and most prudent possible manner. Part of that responsibility of yours is to set priorities of what should be funded and what shouldn't be funded. So far all I have heard about in the news and here tonight, we've got three or four groups that are arguing about getting this \$1.5 million dollars and how they are going to spend it. I have heard nothing and no one has talked about a business plan. Who is going to be paid what? Who is going to control what? Is there going to be a board of directors? How do you know that your money is going to be wisely used once you give it away, and that's what you're doing, giving it away.

What upsets me more on this, and I think it is a sad testament to our priorities. There was a recent news article on TV; I hope all of you watched it. There are seven places in the midlands to drop off abused animals; there is one place to drop off an abused woman and child. We are talking about spending all this money when we've got senior citizens who have to cut their prescriptions in half to be able to survive. They don't have warm safe houses. The one shelter we have is called Sister Care. They turned away 180 families that desperately needed help. We are talking about a shelter for Lexington County. We have no

shelter in Lexington County for abused women and children. We've heard about morals tonight; we've heard about looking at a puppy's eyes. I spent 20 years in law enforcement. I've seen women beat terrible; you should look in their eyes. Children who don't have a place to go, you should look in their eyes. You're gonna to kind of vote tonight, or very shortly, on whether you think it is more important to take care of our senior citizens and our beaten women and children or take care of stray animals. Thank you.

Ms. Christa Campbell, 645 Two Notch Road, Lexington, SC 29073 - I am a resident and I am an animal lover. After listening to tonight's talks, both sides of the coin, I am for you not supporting this bill for one reason and I am for you for supporting it for another.

I feel asking for \$1.5 million dollars through taxation for this is a bit of a concern for me. I don't think it is very appropriate when our general taxation fund should be used for human needs within this county. Animal care and control is extremely important. Both of my dogs came from Pets, Inc. and I support them wholeheartedly and all shelters that do not kill. But, I do believe, that it should not take precedence over current human issues. Such as school expansion, public works, and Sister Care. I volunteered at Sister Care for a year and one-half in college and I have seen what that man is talking about. Money for a shelter for humans is one thousand times more important than a shelter for animals. If that money has to go to animals, it should not be for a shelter. It should be for the people out there who do not care about their animals. Who let them run wild, in the streets, breeding, and things like that? A \$3 million dollar shelter should be raised by donations, not by my tax dollars. If I'm going to give my tax dollars to this county to be appropriated in a positive productive way, I would like it to be used towards the human needs within this county, the human need of housing, shelter, food and clothing and if that money has to go toward animals, not a prison for animals, but a way to control them. The shelter will not control them. Spay and neuter controls them, laws against abuse controls them and things of that nature. So, I ask you to just consider whether you choose yes or no, consider where that money is going and who needs it more. I truly don't think that the shelter itself is the best way to go and you said there has to be a RFP. Don't you have to have a \$1 million dollars in order to submit that, which I think is an extremely unfair way to go, especially for an organization like Pets, Inc.? Where are they going to get \$1 million dollars to bring their proposal in? Or where would Sister Care get a \$1 million dollars to bring in their proposal for their \$1.5 million. So, I ask that you please consider carefully what you do with this money.

Ms. Joyce Dillon, 105 Torbay Road, Columbia, SC 29212 - I would like to thank each of you for seeing the need to take care of the animals in Richland and Lexington Counties. I am on the Board of Directors for the Animal Protection League, and I know firsthand the heartache that people go through with animal organizations. That's why everyone here is so passionate about what they are doing, because they care.

The only thing that I would like to say is, I do think we need to appropriate money to take care of the animals. They need to be spayed and neutered. We need to reach out to the areas where these people live because they are not going to come to us. History has proven that. We need to go to them and find a way to reach them and to teach them individually on their own in their own area so that they will become educated and they will teach their children to be educated. That's where it has to start. I would just like for each and every one of you to think very carefully about how you spend the money. Make sure that it goes for the care of the animals. Thank you very much.

Mr. Robert Adams, 1645 Old Lexington Highway, Chapin, SC 29036 - I am a Lexington County resident. I'm not for this plan as it is shown. I have been in animal welfare work as a volunteer for about 20 years. I am with the Animal Protection League. I believe that the money could be handled a lot better if it's put into services and if the County is going to put \$1.5 million dollars into it, I think the County should control it. For instance, building a bigger facility where you have your Lexington County facility

now and to put it into services and not with a private company. Thank you.

Ms. Pat McQueen, 215 Thornhill Road, Columbia, SC 29212 - I am with Pets, Inc. I have been with them for 17 years. I am one of the founders and I can tell you, I'm not a professional speaker but, when I speak, it is from the heart. I can tell you from the bottom of my heart that what we do is because we love animals and why we work so hard is because we hate to see what is happening in this community with so many animals.

Since we started 17 years ago, we have adopted out over 29,000 animals and have spayed and neutered about 34,000. That is just a drop in the bucket. I believe that the Project Pet proposal was 1,200 animals from each pound, 2,400 a year, and 1,000 for the pet owners. That's just a drop in the bucket. We need to address the animal overpopulation, and we need to take care of it. You don't see starving animals or litters walking around Bower Parkway or Harbison. I can pinpoint to you exactly where they are. In our 17 years of experience, we have over 30,000 records on our shelves. We can go to them, and we can tell you where these animals that are filling the pounds are coming from. They are not coming from Irmo; they are not coming from Harbison; they are not coming from Blythewood, the expensive areas, they are coming from the rural areas like Gaston and Red Bank and Pelion and Hopkins and anyplace where you have low income people living and people should never say that they shouldn't have pets if they can't take care of them. That would be an ideal world but, unfortunately, they will have pets and these pets will reproduce over and over. And the strays you see out there, these are someone's pets or these are the result of someone's pets being abandoned. These are the animals that need to be addressed, not the animals in the pound. As sad as it is, the animals in the pounds will never reproduce again. So taking animals from the pound, when there are thousands and tens of thousands of stray animals out there reproducing, we're just filling the pounds with these animals. Nothing has been done to cut down or curtail animal overpopulation. We have to go to where the problem is and there are people who cannot afford even the spay and neuter prices of \$45 or \$65 dollars. They need to get their animals spayed and neutered free. We need to put an immediate stop to the reproduction of all of these litters, and we can do it. We just don't have the funds to do it. One policy we have, and it has made a big difference, that every time someone brings us a litter, they don't get out of our door until we've had every animal in their household spayed and neutered because we don't want to see their faces again, and we don't want them bringing us another litter in six month. We have got to address this problem directly and the only way is not to operate an expensive ostentatious facility for few animals but to get out in the boondocks and get the ones that are reproducing over and over. Thank you.

Mr. Lance Tucker, 805 New Brookland Place, West Columbia, SC 29169 - I am a 45-year resident of Lexington County. I own two businesses in the County, and I really don't have any comments, but I do have a couple of questions. Unfortunately, Smokey couldn't be here tonight and, that is well understood, and I know our hearts all go out to him and his family.

It was reportedly in the newspaper that Smokey was quoting as saying that he would like to see an independent analysis to support the Project Pet plan before he votes for it, and he did vote for it. So my first question is – who did the analysis and is that information available to the public? He also requested a business plan. Has everybody reviewed that business plan and is that document available for public review?

Mr. David Whetsell, 165 Cannon Trail, Lexington, SC 29073 - Some of the people complained in here earlier and I'm also the President of Stop Tax who my organization and two other organizations are the ones that put the cap on county council and the school board and got the 15 percent assessment cap and now everybody got their tax bill this year and it is about 50 percent less. But, I'm an animal lover; I bred dogs and cats all my life; I've quit now. I loss three this past year, they died of 17 years old. That's a pretty long time for a dog. I don't think we ought to build a big fancy building to warehouse these dogs

because you're going to have a problem like the jails as it will be overcrowded and you are going to have to do something. The county cannot keep building buildings just to put animals in. I think the money ought to be used wisely, but I think the money ought to come from somewhere else beside property taxes off of taxpayers out of the general fund. I think a fee is fairer than property tax. Property tax is not based on the ability to pay, where a fee is. If they would put a fee and the people who own pets would pay a license, like some people suggested, only the people who cared about their animals would come forward. The people who live out in the sticks and let the dogs run wild, they would never bring their pets forward and get a license for them. So I think, if they are going to have money to fix these animals, and these animals do need to be fixed, is that they need to get the money from a fee. Assess every homeowner a fee because then the people who's causing this problem will also help pay the fee. But, on the property taxes, most of them are renters and they don't pay the property taxes anyway, in a sense of speaking. So, if you've got to feed them, it would come out of their own pockets. Thank you.

Ms. Leah Lockhart, 11 Southbury Drive, Columbia, SC 29209 – I live in Richland County. But, as we've been saying, animal welfare is a regional problem and we need a regional approach. I'm sorry, my dog ate the notes.

For 26 years, I was with a small private organization called the Spay Neuter Association. What our group did was to subsidize the cost of spay and neutering, largely at the SCPA clinic for people who needed financial help. And, in all those years, we were able to subsidize the cost for over 7,000 animals. I care deeply about animals and the greatest cause of animal suffering is unwanted litters being born for homes that they are no homes. I think the first thing we ought to approach is getting the numbers down because when the supply of animals exceeds the demand, there is going to be animal suffering, there's no two ways about it. Everybody here is concerned about animals, and I think that is wonderful. However, the idea of a no-kill shelter for a very few animals really is not the answer. No-kill shelters should really be called limited access shelters. It is a wonderful thought, but we've got to get the numbers down. I'm all for using the money that, you, I hope, will be appropriated for spaying and neutering and education and used by all the many groups. So many people care about animals; all the many groups in Richland and Lexington counties who are trying to help animals and trying to find homes for them. But, the bottom line is – when the supply exceeds the demand, we are going to have a lot of the suffering we have now, and we have let our animals down in this community and many communities. But, I think this approach of the counties working together is the answer to the problem, and I think the first problem is to get the numbers down then we won't need so many shelters. Thank you.

Ms. Patty Wark, 167 Broken Arrow Trail, West Columbia, SC 29170 - I have lived in Lexington County since 1971. I also a retired attorney and had my business here in the 80s and 90s and now I'm enjoying retirement; it is just wonderful. I recommend it to anyone.

I have been with Pets, Inc. since day one. They started out in a parking lot, and I was there then. There were five or six animals at that time. Of course, it's grown. I have fostered about 100 dogs for them and every one of those was adopted. I have great respect for the two women who have talked to you today that are with Pets, Inc. and it was interesting to me to hear as I've learned some things here tonight, and I hope that all of you have too.

I didn't realize that there were seven organizations. I suspect maybe there are a few more than that. But, why not and I ask you, have you talked to those organizations and why not have those organizations work together rather than build some big building for one organization. How many of those organizations have come to you and asked for \$3 million dollars to build a building? To me that is insane. Every one of these organizations is doing a good job. Every one of them is trying to take care of the pet population here in Lexington County, and I think if they could work together, we can get something here that people from other states would come to see, to see how we could do something that Lexington/Richland

Counties has done. We could be proud of all of that. I go out to Harbison quite a bit, and I know where that land is that Lexington County gave to Project Pet approximately four years ago. There is a sign on there that says there will be a shelter there in 2007. Now, I realize that it has been leased for a \$1 a year, my understanding. Anyone who owns a business in this room would love that deal, especially in Harbison. There is no shelter there. So now they've come back and they are asking for millions of dollars to build a shelter on this land. When that building is built, then what is going to happen? Are we all going to be back here because they are going to want operating expenses? Where is the limit to the funding that Lexington County is going to give in this respect when there are other organizations that can pool their resources and get this job done much more efficiently, much more efficiently. So, I wish you would consider that, and I know it's at the very end and this is something that's fairly recent. But, I think it is important enough that each of you need to think about this and consider it. This money is not your money; it's our money. You as taxpayers, it's your money. We have elected you to consider the best use of the funds for the citizens of Lexington County. I am a citizen, and I ask you, and I'm sure everybody in this room would ask you to consider that and vote no on this proposal. Thank you.

Ms. Tessa Keller, 408 Avon Court, Gaston, SC 29053 - I just happen to live in the midst of everything we are talking with all the unwanted animals and unsprayed and neutered ones. Unfortunately, in the area where I live most people cannot afford to even drive to Shop Road to have their animals spayed and neutered if they were able to come up with the money. I have personally taken animals from my neighborhood and had them spayed and neutered for my neighbors, given them back, helped them with many, many unwanted litters, and have taken them to Pets, Inc. to have them adopted. The ones that weren't adopted, I've kept as they've grown up. I live on five acres and most of the people in my area have several acres so they've already paid their taxes. Ones that aren't adopted, when we see them, are on the side of the roads. They've caused accidents. I urge you to consider putting the money into the vouchers, so the people out in the areas that cannot afford it can have their animals spayed and neutered. Thank you.

Dr. Rita Weeks, 145 Pond Ridge Road, Batesburg, SC 29070 - I co-own a small animal hospital in Batesburg/Leesville, and I consider myself an animal advocate. The issue tonight is a very emotional one for many people, including myself. I would like to give you my opinion and ask you to consider some questions.

The adoption and neutering of animals are only the beginning of an average commitment of 12 years of pet life expectancy. Neutering a pet is an affordable surgery for those owners that truly want it performed. The no more homeless license plate program is one low cost solution, which allows people on any form or governmental assistance to have their pet neutered for \$15. Owning a pet should be a privilege to those who can provide adequate housing, restraint, proper nutrition, and medical care. The responsibility of such long-term ownership should fall with the individual who chooses such, not the government. I believe that the taxpayers of Lexington County want an animal control facility that will safely shelter loss pets, assist individuals with humanely removing unwanted animals from their property, and providing an adoption location for neutered animals. Our current facility does all these things. Certainly, if a facility in a more upscale of the county may aid more adoption, but will it really serve those areas of the county where there are more unwanted animals. For many people, scheduling and transportation to and from a neutering procedure is more than what they are willing to do for their pet. The idea of taking an unwanted animal to a no-kill facility is a desirable one. But would the current county facility serve as a kill service for the overflow that would certainly occur at the no-kill location? Much of the positive moral of the employees at Animal Control facilities come from the adoption of animals that the officers care for personally. Will that be taken away? Why build a \$4 million dollar facility to take care of problems created by irresponsible people? Why not enforce current county leash laws to keep animals confined to prevent unwanted breeding? Why not spend more money on officers to ensure the welfare of the current animals in our county? I agree that part of the solution to the unwanted

pet population is spaying and neutering the current pet population. I question if this concern should be funded by the taxpayers of Lexington County. I believe that the money generated to fund such a facility of service would fall on the already responsible pet owners that do not currently utilize the services of our present Animal Control. I see the role of the county in this issue is to serve as the liaison for the multiple private animal welfare groups already operating strongly in our area. They all have great ideas concerning implementation. I will be glad to serve on any committee to research the proposals. Ultimately, the societal culture of our county residents should dictate what our county should offer. Maybe you should ask them at the next election what they would be willing to pay for. Thank you for what you do for Lexington County.

Ms. Paulette Brown, 157 Mossborough Drive, Lexington, SC 29073 - I think some good points have been made. Most of us agree on most of those issues. Some concerns have been voiced about money being spent on animals opposed to people needs. And one thing that has not been mentioned at all, even if you don't care about pets or animals, are safety issues involving stray animals. South Carolina has a lot of incidents of rabies and that is an issue when you have pets out running around or strays out running around. That's not been mentioned. Even if you don't have any concerns for the animals, themselves, you need to be concerned with the people that may come in contact with them. And that is one reason that the County has to spend money on this because it indirectly affects the citizens.

Another big concern I have is the turnout here tonight. It looks very large on one side. And, before I came here, I went to the website for Project Pet, and I looked at it. I've looked at it before. I looked at it back when I was making phone calls to them trying to get help, which were not returned. And, when I looked at it tonight, I looked at the board members and names trying to familiarize myself with this and I've noticed a lot of people here tonight that work for companies that have members on the board. A lot of these people did not speak, themselves, they just deferred to what the other people had said and it makes me wonder, and I'm not accusing it, but it makes me wonder if a lot of these seats are not just recruited seats by board members. That concerns me a lot. It also concerns me quite a lot back in May when I first went to that website to get a phone number to try to get help from them and I saw a link on the website to Mungo Homes. Now it's no longer there. It has been taken off. That concerned me considerably. Those are the only points that I wanted to make. I think we have agencies that are providing everything that we need now except getting these pets neutered so they don't continue to reproduce. Thank you.

Mr. Murray Craft, 123 Squirrel Drive, Swansea, SC 29160 - I'm from Lexington County, lived here 53 years except when my father was overseas and we went. Many of these organizations, I think most of them know me, I've worked in health so this is how I make my living and we are currently starting to work service dogs. I have spoken with Mr. Mergo and there are several good things going on in different places and so forth and for a long time I just wanted to share. In the last 24 hours, I've had at least three telephone calls from clients regarding dog aggression. I have been on WIS several times, I think with Ms. Aude and Dawn Mercer, and we did a special and there were over 10,000 animal bites per year in South Carolina. We went back seven years except for one year, it was 9,600. This was several years' back, that is just reported.

I think it is good to have a shelter and that sort of thing and we have many of these people who work so hard to adopt so many animals, but the training aspect, I can tell you story after story – this little dog is a rescue. I have picked up several that I keep to head off from having them to deal with. I could tell you one that Lexington County, the family in Lexington County was going to take it to the shelter and it was causing havoc in the neighborhood, scratching pool liners, and he is now at a 40-year-old's house up in the upstate who has severe seizures, he has had brain surgery. The dog will go get his medication and bring it to him and that helps reduce the intensity of the seizures. I have a personal issue regarding this, my son, who was less than a year old, started having 40 to 80 seizures a day when he was eight or nine

months old, and through that whole process and getting involved with the Medical University of South Carolina, they asked me if I could do this and I said, well find out what they need to do and I probably can. Well, there are so many animals now in the shelters, in the rescue places, and bless their hearts, all these people have big hearts, and everything else, but there are so many animals and an attorney called me yesterday and asked me if I would be an expert witness where a dog that had shown no signs of aggression, bit a three-year-old child in the face. Well, there are a lot of ignorance regarding animals and people that just don't know, and the Lexington County Animal Control, they work so hard to just play catch up and they do a good job, but there are so many more things that we could do regarding education. We are working with a lot of homeschoolers; we are doing a lot of things. I am a one-man operation myself. I have six kids and the oldest is eight. We homeschool; we have a pretty busy plate. But there are a lot of people in this room that would also have a lot to offer toward this cause. I'm not going to say I'm for or against. I'm just saying as a taxpayer, and I pay more than I can stand here, too, like Ms. Weeks is on the frontlines and there are a lot of things we can do enhance services if more people were available, etc. I wasn't going to say anything, but I have been on the phone with pretty heavy-duty people today, and I'm going to say this and I don't mean it regarding Lexington County, but there are so many chiefs and so many good 'ole boy networks going on that they're some really good things that can be done that we continue to excel in complacency, the word I got the other day. I have been in other states that are doing incredible things like they mentioned, Richmond, Va. I was in a prison in Ohio that is doing incredible things. I came to the prison system to say, look, we have so many prisons here; we could have prisoners doing a lot of stuff. They are prisoners working with these dogs. They don't have anything to do anyway, and they are doing these dogs. I have personally taken two or three that we are working toward placing with citizens in South Carolina, service dogs. So, I would like to see us before somebody jumps on spending a bunch of more money in something, I don't want to be for or against, because I love all these people in what they do, but I think that if there was a united effort to get real serious – we've talked with some people regarding laws and really being very strict about some of these things. A lot of people have no business with dogs. They are going to continue to do it and as you know, they've got that report that you can take one dog and then it develops into 50. I personally know people who are very wealthy people in this town that have been fined and they should be put in jail because of their irresponsibility. I just think there are a lot of things that we could do, and we need to take a look at this thing a little more carefully. Thank you.

Mr. Derrick stated no one else had signed up in opposition and closed the public hearing.

Executive Session/Legal Briefing - A motion was made by Ms. Summers and seconded by Mr. Kinard that Council resume Executive Session to continue discussing legal matters.

In Favor:	Mr. Derrick	Ms. Summers
	Mr. Kinard	Mr. Keisler
	Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Carrigg
	Mr. Banning	Mr. Cullum

Mr. Derrick reconvened the meeting in open session.

Matters Requiring a Vote as a Result of Executive Session - Mr. Derrick reported Council discussed the legal matters during the Executive Session and indicated there were no motions to be considered.

Budget Amendment Resolutions - The following BAR's were distributed and signed:

08-067 - An appropriation transfer and a supplemental appropriation increase in the amount of \$25,726 to cover additional costs on the Violence Against Women Act grant that was not covered by the grant in the Sheriff's Department.

08-068 - A supplemental appropriation increase in the amount of \$100,000 to establish a contract with the Sheriff's Department to provide a Juvenile Detention Case Manager to help manage the juvenile cases throughout the county.

08-069 - A supplemental appropriation increase in the amount of \$311,950 received from Mid-Carolina Electric Cooperative (\$300,000) and Central Electric Power Cooperative (\$11,950) for electric co-op infrastructure. The funds are to establish a budget for Project Jefferson for Economic Development.

08-070 - A supplemental appropriation increase in the amount of \$256,000 to appropriate the funds received from SLED for the Buffer Zone Protection Plan grant.

08-071 - A supplemental appropriation increase in the amount of \$8,000 received from two citizens for Public Works to put crusher run on Etheridge Road.

Old/New Business - None

Motion to adjourn - Mr. Kinard made a motion, seconded by Ms. Summers to adjourn.

In Favor:	Mr. Derrick	Mr. Kinard
	Ms. Summers	Mr. Keisler
	Mr. Jeffcoat	Mr. Cullum
	Mr. Banning	

Not Present: Mr. Carrigg *

*Mr. Carrigg was not present when the vote was taken.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana W. Burnett
Clerk

William C. Derrick
Chairman