



GREENVILLE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes

Committee of the Whole

December 4, 2018

4:48 p.m.

County Square – Council Chambers

Council Members

Mr. Butch Kirven, Chairman

Mr. Willis Meadows, Vice Chairman

Mrs. Xanthe Norris, Chairman Pro Tem

Mr. Joe Dill

Mr. Mike Barnes

Mr. Sid Cates

Mr. Rick Roberts

Mr. Bob Taylor

Mrs. Liz Seman

Mr. Ennis Fant, Sr.

Mr. Lynn Ballard

Mr. Fred Payne

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting date, time, place and agenda was posted on the bulletin board at the County Square and made available to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned Citizens.

Council Members Absent

None

Staff Present

Joe Kernell, County Administrator

Mark Tollison, County Attorney

John Hansley, Deputy County Administrator

Regina McCaskill, Clerk to Council

Paula Gucker, Assistant County Administrator, Public Works

Bob Mihalic, Governmental Relations Officer

Others Present

None

Call to Order

Chairman Kirven

Invocation

Councilor Lynn Ballard

Item (3) Approval of Minutes

ACTION: Councilor Taylor moved to approve the minutes of the November 6, 2018, Committee of the Whole Meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item (4) Greenville County Redevelopment Authority – Affordable Housing Presentation

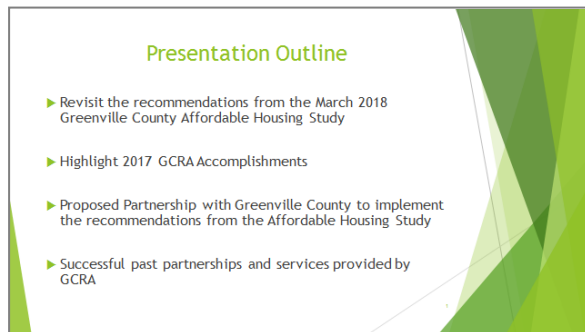
Presenter: **John Castille**, Executive Director
Greenville County Redevelopment Authority

David Doser, GCRA Board of Directors, stated the presentation would include a brief summary of GCRA's 2017 accomplishments and would revisit how GCRA's work in the community was consistent with the recommendations as outlined in the March 2018 Affordable Housing Study. He added that a concept of how GCRA could assist Greenville County in implementing the recommendations would also be included in the presentation.

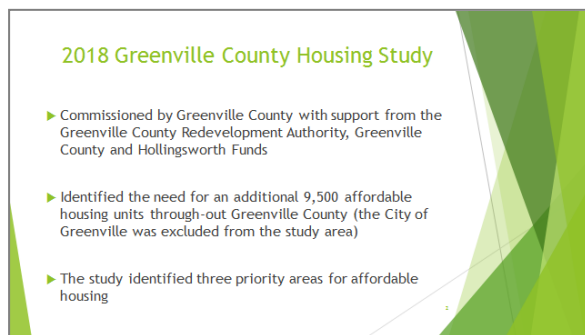
Mr. Doser stated that for over 40 years, GCRA had administered funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the unincorporated areas of Greenville County as well as the five (5) municipalities located in the County. Mr. Doser stated GCRA worked with the leadership of each of the municipalities in order to determine how best to use grant funds to address housing needs and public service projects in the communities. GCRA also worked with over 100 sub-recipients for public service efforts throughout the County.

Mr. Doser stated as Greenville County continued to be the location of choice for individuals and businesses to relocate, the Affordable Housing Study identified the need for a proactive plan to ensure that affordable housing was available for all segments of the community. He added that GCRA's work in the community over the past 40 years has provided a unique opportunity to maintain a partnership with Greenville County as well as to serve as the lead agency for Affordable Housing.

Mr. Doser introduced John Castille, Executive Director of GCRA.



Mr. Castille stated the intent of the presentation was to revisit the March 2018 Affordable Housing Study, highlight GCRA's 2017 accomplishments, discuss the proposed partnership with Greenville County to implement the recommendations from the study as well as successful past partnerships and services provided by GCRA.



The Affordable Housing Study was commissioned by Greenville County, Hollingsworth Funds and GCRA. The City of Greenville was excluded as they commissioned their own study. The study identified the need for 9,500 affordable housing units throughout the County.

The study made recommendations on certain groups within the community to focus on, in regards to affordable housing. The recommendation was made according to income guidelines.

2018 Greenville County Housing Study Priorities

- ▶ **Priority One (P1):** Preserving and upgrading existing affordable housing stocks
- ▶ **Priority Two (P2):** Home ownership opportunities for low-moderate and moderate income households
- ▶ **Priority Three (P3):** Increase the supply of rental housing that is affordable to low wage working households

Mr. Castille reviewed three (3) priorities as outlined in the Affordable Housing Study:

1. *Preserving and upgrading existing affordable housing stocks.*
2. *Home ownership opportunities for low-moderate and moderate income households.*
3. *Increase the supply of rental housing that is affordable to low wage working households.*

For households with incomes greater than \$60,000 per year, they were able to access housing in the current market.

GCRA 2017 Highlights

- ▶ Provided end mortgages to 2 households towards the purchase of their homes in Brutontown. (P2)
- ▶ Assisted 25 through the First Time Home Buyers Program with down payment/closing cost assistance. (P2)
- ▶ Ongoing development phase of GCRA sponsored rental project in City of Mauldin consist of 18 workforce housing units for low, moderate and middle income (duplex style). Target completion Summer 2019. (P3)
- ▶ Initiated 3 infrastructure projects serving residents in 3 separate low and moderate neighborhoods in the municipalities of Greer, Simpsonville and Fountain Inn.

Mr. Castille stated the GCRA had \$4.4 million in CDBG Home Program Income and Shelter Income. He stated that GCRA had to report to HUD exactly how the monies were spent and who was supported. Mr. Castille stated GCRA was able to complete 72% of its goals which was very good compared to other similar programs throughout the country.

GCRA assisted 38 senior and disabled citizens with the Residential Repair Program with loans averaging \$5000. Four individuals were also assisted with Occupied Rehabilitation Loans; monies accessed for homes requiring more than what would be provided through the Residential Repair Program. Mr. Castille stated GCRA provided end mortgages to two (2) households towards the purchase of homes in Brutontown. GCRA also assisted with approximately 320 mortgages, with 260 of those for homeowners requiring financing that was generally not available through a bank.

GCRA 2017 Highlights

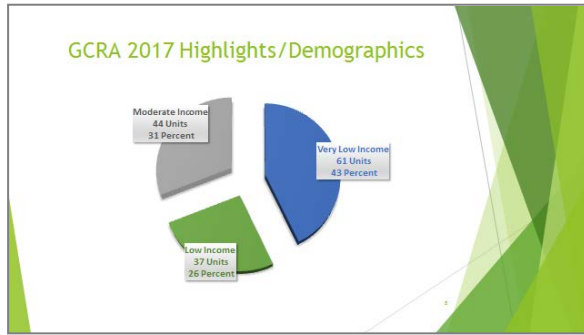
- ▶ Prevented and assisted 54 households from homelessness with rental and utility assistance, benefiting 124 persons. (P3)
- ▶ A total of 2,703 homeless persons were assisted via Continuum of Care Partners with shelters and outreach opportunities.
- ▶ A total of 11,824 persons were assisted with CDBG - public service activities providing activities for youth/senior recreation and enrichment activities, medical prescriptions for uninsured seniors, fair housing services, weekend meals for the homebound and mentally challenged, and a myriad of relief, medical and referral services for low income households.

Mr. Castille stated 25 households received assistance through the First Time Home Buyers Program with down payment/closing cost assistance in amounts up to \$5000.

GCRA 2017 Highlights/Demographics

- ▶ Sixty one of the total housing units or 43 percent are occupied by very low income families earning 30% and below of the Area Median Income (AMI).
- ▶ Thirty seven of the total housing units or 26 percent are occupied by low income households earning between 31 to 50 percent of the AMI.
- ▶ Forty-four of the total housing units or 31 percent are occupied by families with income between 51 to 80 percent of the AMI.

Mr. Castille stated a total of 18 workforce housing units for low, moderate and middle income households were scheduled to be built in Mauldin with a target completion date of Summer 2019. Infrastructure projects such as sidewalks were also completed to support neighborhoods and communities. A total of 124 persons (54 households) received rental and utility assistance which prevented homelessness; 2,703 homeless persons were assisted via the Continuum of Care Partners with shelter and outreach opportunities.



Mr. Castille stated approximately 31% of the households served were in the moderate income level, 26% in the low income level and 43% were in the very low income level.

- ### Proposed Partnership with Greenville County
- ▶ Implement the recommendations of the 2018 Affordable Housing Study by establishing a countywide Affordable Housing Fund (1 million dollars annually) to be administered by GCRA.
 - ▶ P1 - Preservation - target goal of 100 dwellings in year one (owner occupied rehabilitation) (2017 - GCRA completed 38 units).
 - ▶ P2 - Issue a notice of funding (December 2018) seeking partner agencies to produce affordable housing units based on the recommendations of the March 2018 Housing study. Financial support will consist of low interest loans for gap funding, forgivable loans, grants.
 - ▶ P2 - GCRA will continue to produce 20 -25 affordable infill units annually.

Mr. Castille stated GCRA would like for the County to implement an Affordable Housing Fund in the amount of \$1 million annually. The funds would be administered by GCRA with a target goal of 100 dwellings in the first year; in 2017, GCRA completed 38 units. A notice of funding would be issued seeking partner agencies to produce affordable housing units; financial support would consist of low interest loans for gap funding, forgivable loans and grants. Mr. Castille stated GCRA would continue to produce 20-25 affordable infill units annually. The creation of a non-owner occupied rental rehab program for landlords would also be proposed as recommended by the Affordable Housing Study. Mr. Castille stated a notice of funding seeking partners to construct affordable rental units would be issued.

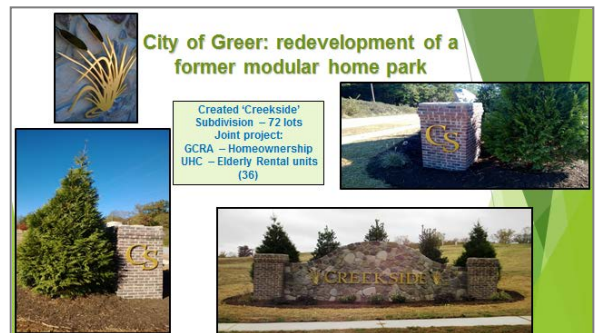
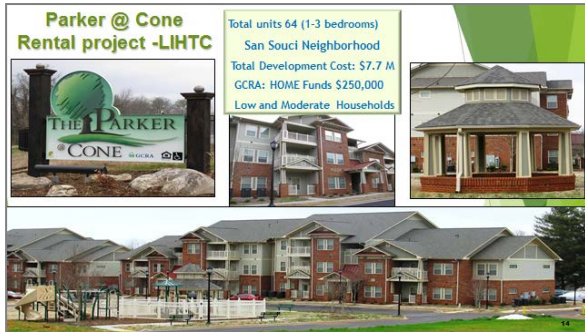
- ### Proposed Partnership with Greenville County
- ▶ P3 - Creation of a non owner occupied rental rehab program for landlords in Greenville County. Issue notice of funding in December 2018.
 - ▶ P3 - Issue a notice of funding (December 2018) seeking partners to construct affordable rental units in Greenville County.
 - ▶ Applications will receive a staff review and recommendation to the GCRA Administration Committee. Once approved by the GCRA Administration Committee, final approval by the GCRA Board.
 - ▶ Approved projects will be presented to the Greenville County Finance Committee as part of the Annual Action Plan for the County.

Mr. Castille stated staff would review applications and make recommendations to the GCRA Administration Committee; final approval would be granted by the GCRA Board. Approved projects would then be presented to the Greenville County Finance Committee as part of the Annual Action Plan for Greenville County.

Greenville County Redevelopment Authority

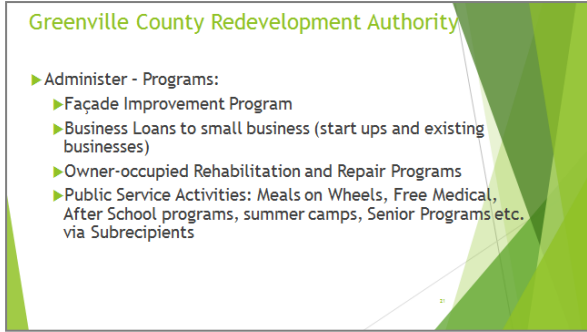
Examples of Successful Partnership projects

Mr. Castille reviewed some successful partnership projects within Greenville County.



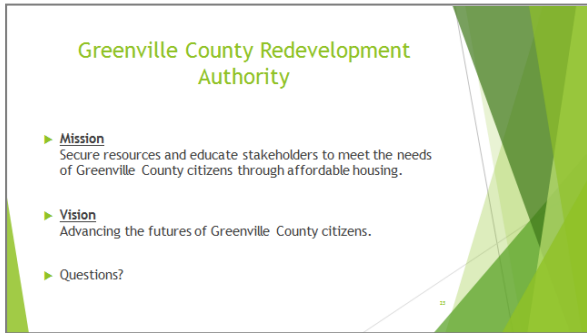
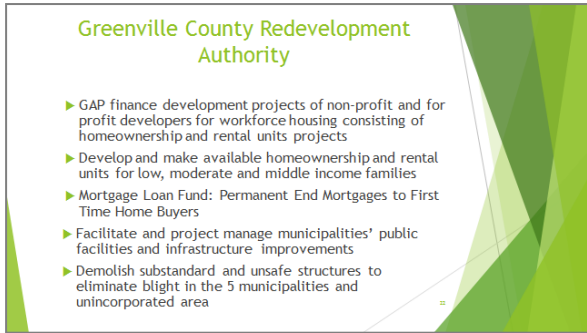


Mr. Castille stated the proposed Affordable Housing Fund would help GCRA move forward with the recommendations as outlined in the Affordable Housing Study. He added that GCRA had been around for 40 years and would continue to administer the County's entitlement funds consistent with the cooperative agreement with the County and the five participating municipalities. In-house financing and down payment/closing assistance would also continue to be available to first time home buyers.



The following programs would also continue:

1. Façade Improvement Program
2. Business loans to small businesses
3. Owner-occupied rehabilitation and repair programs
4. Public service activities such as Meals on Wheels, free medical, after school programs, summer camps and senior programs
5. GAP finance development projects.
6. Develop and make available homeownership and rental units for low, moderate and middle income families
7. Mortgage Loan Fund - permanent end mortgages to first time home buyers
8. Facilitate and project manage public facilities and infrastructure improvements for the five municipalities
9. Demolish substandard and unsafe structures to eliminate blight throughout the County and the municipalities



Mr. Castille stated GCRA was asking to deepen the partnership with Greenville County in an effort to advance the futures of the citizens of Greenville County.

Councilor Ballard stated it was his understanding that GCRA wanted to establish a trust fund and asked Mr. Castille to confirm.

Mr. Castille stated that was the proposal.

Councilor Ballard stated the City of Greenville recently established a housing trust fund. He added that he was on the board and the past year had been spent getting the policies and funding mechanism in place. He asked would it be better for GCRA to establish its own fund as opposed to partnering with the City of Greenville.

Mr. Castille stated the City of Greenville chose to establish a Land Trust Fund to support community development; however, the city's Community Development Department did not offer the same services as GCRA such as end mortgages and different financing options. He added that while the City of Greenville spent a year developing policies and obtaining funding, GCRA was ready to implement the proposed Affordable Housing Fund.

Councilor Payne thanked Mr. Castille for his leadership and stated he was sorry he would not be around to see the project move forward.

Chairman Kirven thanked Mr. Castille, Mr. Doser and the GCRA staff for the presentation and added that Council looked forward to moving ahead with the proposal.

Item (5)

Metropolitan Sewer Subdistrict – Proposed Annexation in Southern Greenville County

Chairman Kirven stated the proposed Metropolitan Sewer Subdistrict annexation of southern Greenville County was a very complicated matter that had been under discussion for quite some time.

Councilor Taylor asked how the annexation would fit with the Comprehensive Plan that was to be developed in 2019.

Councilor Ballard stated that he, along with Councilor Fant, Councilor Payne and Dan Tripp, had worked with Metropolitan Sewer Subdistrict for the past few months looking at its current situation and what was needed to move forward. He stated the proposal came about because there was a parcel of land designated for a business park but no sewer was available. Mr. Ballard stated the Metro district and the ReWa district used to overlap. In 1990, County Council decided to pull down from the northern part of the county and pull up from the southern part; the areas were cut out of the Metro area. There had been no problems until recently. Mr. Ballard stated there were a few private systems in District 26 that were either failing or were experiencing serious trouble; they needed help from Metro but were not located in its district. He stated Highway 418 was considered the division of the County. The area was a beautiful rural area and home to Cedar Falls Park, Happy Cow Creamery and the Yum Yum Shoppe. Mr. Ballard stated there were many plans for the area but no sewer. Goodwill Industries just broke ground at Sandy Springs Road and Highway 25 and had to put in a septic tank. Mr. Ballard stated Metro has been very reluctant to annex individual properties. In most cases, there was a need for sewer for several properties located near each other and a large pump station could be built to accommodate all of them. Mr. Ballard stated ReWa's area extended well into the southern part of the county and possibly all the way to the county line in the northern section.

Councilor Dill stated he had been laboring over the issue. He stated he had received a number of emails and phone calls as many of his constituents were very concerned. Early on, he had taken the position that it would not affect his district; but, when contractors were hired to develop an area, there was an expectation that infrastructure would either already be in place or be put in place. Mr. Dill stated he was concerned that many contractors' hands would be tied if needed infrastructure was not in place. He added there was even debate as to where the boundary lines were needed.

ACTION:

Councilor Dill moved to hold the item and include it with the Comprehensive Plan.

Chairman Kirven stated the proposal included 55 square miles of land area or approximately 30,000 acres. Over the years, small areas were annexed into a sewer subdistrict as the need arose. Mr. Kirven stated to annex the proposed area with no plan definition in place appeared irresponsible, in his opinion. He added he supported Councilor Dill's motion although he understood that for the future of Greenville County, a high-quality package of infrastructure was crucial.

Councilor Roberts stated when meeting with business leaders making location decisions, Pad Ready sites were brought up over and over. He stated the idea of building and then providing the needed infrastructure was not well-received in the corporate environment. Mr. Roberts stated that Pad Ready sites were needed in order for growth to expand to the southern portion of the County. He stated he was very happy to see Metro and ReWa meeting together and added that the presentation was very informative. He stated he appreciated all the work the Council Members representing the affected areas had put into the proposal. Mr. Roberts stated he did not feel the proposal would allow too much growth. It would allow the County to have a "few more cards to play" when talking to potential developers. Greenville County was one of the fastest growing areas in the country and to wait another year may not be a good idea.

Chairman Kirven stated the citizens of Greenville County did not have much trust in County Council to make decisions regarding growth. Cutting citizens out of the opportunity to weigh in on the issue sent the message that Council knew better what was needed than the citizens.

Councilor Payne stated the residents of District 26 wanted planning and wanted it done right. They wanted Council to consider the whole county in the decision-making process. He added if Council could assure the citizens, as well as Metro and ReWa, that everything would be considered then they would welcome the annexation.

Chairman Kirven stated all parties would have a seat at the table.

ACTION: Councilor Dill moved to amend his motion to include Metropolitan Sewer Subdistrict and ReWa in discussions of the Comprehensive Plan.

ACTION: Councilor Taylor called for the question.

Motion to hold carried by roll call vote of eight (Dill, Barnes, Meadows, Taylor, Norris, Seman, Kirven and Payne) in favor and four (Cates, Roberts, Fant and Ballard) in opposition.

Item (6) Southern Connector Resolution of Support

Councilor Fant stated growth in Greenville County was coming both west and south. Ways to open up the Southern Connector had been discussed and one alternative was a bond; however, the County did not have the capacity to obtain a bond to that degree and it would raise property taxes. A multi-county park proposal was also discussed which would allow for the area around the Southern Connector to provide the funding for the existing bond debt but there would not be enough money generated initially to satisfy the debt. Mr. Fant stated it was discussed with the Legislative Delegation that perhaps SCDOT would absorb the road into its system, but, it was recognized that the entire \$160 million needed would not be received from the State; there was hope that SCDOT could contribute some part of the needed monies. Mr. Fant stated they had agreed to contact Congressman Timmons and Congressman Duncan to see if there were any funds available through the Federal Highway Administration to offset the debt. He added that the entity that owned the Southern Connector was struggling financially. Currently, they were able to maintain the road but since they had defaulted on the bond, the interest rate would increase over time which made it almost impossible to pay off. Mr. Fant stated there was no way to build a 16-mile stretch of road for \$160 million; if the amount could be identified through State and Federal money the road could be opened up and available for economic growth. He stated industrial development, commercial development and retail development would all bring in property taxes, sales tax, business revenue taxes and personal income tax. Mr. Fant stated they were requesting a Resolution of support from Greenville County and the ability to explore financing mechanisms. He added they were prepared to approach the Legislative Delegation with the Resolution; there were members that were in favor and were willing to go to Columbia and "get the ball rolling." Mr. Fant stated if the area along the Southern Connector could be opened up for economic development, it would significantly decrease the need for tax increases.

Chairman Kirven stated he felt it would be wonderful if there were no tolls on the road and the County could receive all the benefits that Mr. Fant had described. He added the keys to getting things accomplished through the Legislature were communication and relationships. Mr. Kirven stated that while he supported the idea, he felt there were members of the Legislative Delegation that were unaware of the proposal. He stated presenting a Resolution and asking for

support without prior communication appeared "heavy-handed." Mr. Kirven stated an Ad Hoc committee specifically formed to meet with the Legislative Delegation on a regular basis as well as joint meetings appeared to be needed. He stated there were a number of issues outlined by SCAC that were important to Greenville County and Council needed to let the Legislative Delegation know how they felt about them.

Councilor Cates stated he was under the impression that the taxpayers of Greenville County were not responsible for the construction or maintenance of the Southern Connector, with the exception of law enforcement patrol.

Councilor Payne stated neither the State nor the County had contributed any monies to the Southern Connector up to this point. It was designed to be a private process; the initial investors had lost money.

Councilor Cates asked if it had been an agreement from the beginning that the road would not be a burden to the taxpayers.

Councilor Dill stated he was present at the ribbon-cutting and one of the speakers stated the road was being built by private money; there would be no taxpayer money involved.

Councilor Payne stated the Southern Connector was a huge asset to Greenville County and to the State of South Carolina. Mr. Payne stated he agreed with Chairman Kirven regarding the need to meet with the Legislative Delegation and discuss the proposal. Mr. Payne recalled when Greenville Technical College and a local university presented a proposal to the Legislative Delegation before discussing it with them; several members were very unhappy about the proposal and ended up blocking it.

Councilor Ballard stated he spent at least \$50 per month to use the Southern Connector as it made his commute much faster. Mr. Ballard stated immediately after he was elected to Council, many of his constituents asked him when Council was going to do something about the toll road. He stated that most truckers don't use the road because of the tolls; instead they use Highway 418 and Highway 8, which causes excessive wear and tear. Mr. Ballard stated it was his impression that the proposed Resolution was simply a way to ask the Legislative Delegation and the Legislature to assist. He added that he was fully in favor of the Resolution in order to help with development of the County.

Councilor Roberts stated he had reached out to several members of the Legislative Delegation and they were very supportive of the plan. He added they were very eager to hear Council's response to the proposed Resolution. Mr. Roberts stated the proposal would pay the taxpayers back if it could be put into action.

ACTION:

Councilor Fant moved to approve a Resolution in support of the State of South Carolina providing the S.C. Department of Transportation the funding necessary to retire the debt of the portion of I-185 known as the "Southern Connector" allowing for removal of the tolls.

Councilor Dill stated when he traveled he encountered numerous tolls in other states along with industry along the toll roads. He asked if the \$3.50 toll was a deterrent to industries.

Councilor Seman asked if it was the toll road that was preventing industries from relocating to the southern part of the County or was it something else.

Councilor Ballard stated the lack of sewer and water were also a contributors.

Chairman Kirven stated he discussed with GE the possibility of relocating either to the Matrix or Spartanburg County. He advised GE that they would arrive at work much more relaxed if they drove on I-185 as opposed to I-85. GE opted for the Matrix.

Councilor Ballard stated the owner RMF (Roy Metals Finishing), located in the Matrix, had spoken with him many times about removing the tolls on I-185. Truckers would not use the Southern Connector even though they could exit close to RMH. Instead, they were sent up to White Horse Road and down to Old Grove Road.

Chairman Kirven asked how long would it take to secure financing if the Resolution was passed.

Councilor Fant stated one year at minimum. He stated that children living on Old Grove Road, which was highly residential, had to jump in the ditch in order to avoid being hit by a truck. He stated residents on Old Grove Road had expressed the need for sidewalks. Mr. Fant stated truckers accessing the road was a safety issue.

Chairman Kirven stated he still felt it would have been courteous to communicate with the Legislative Delegation prior to discussing a Resolution.

Councilor Fant stated it would have more credibility if Council indicated to the Legislative Delegation that they were in favor of the Resolution and had explored all funding alternatives.

Councilor Payne suggested Council request a meeting with the Legislative Delegation to discuss the issue, as well as other pertinent issues, and asked Mr. Fant if he would be open to a meeting.

Councilor Fant asked Mr. Ballard and Mr. Roberts for their opinion.

Councilor Ballard suggested calling for the question.

Councilor Dill stated he had met with a group of people and was told if the County could get money for the Southern Connector then the potholes on Highway 276 could be fixed. Mr. Dill stated that Highway 276 was an economic thoroughfare. He stated he had tried to convince his constituents that the County would not be spending \$150 million.

Councilor Fant asked Mark Tollison if the Resolution could be held until after the holidays. He wanted to see if Chairman Kirven could get a meeting together with the Legislative Delegation. Mr. Fant stated he was not going to forget about the issue.

Councilor Fant withdraw the item.

Item (7) **Terra Pines Estates Special Tax District** (3 vacancies)

ACTION: Councilor Taylor moved to nominate Stephanie Braswell, Anne Holden and James Holis to fill three vacancies on the Terra Pines Estates Special Tax District and move the names forward to full Council.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item (8) **Adjournment**

ACTION: Councilor Cates moved to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Regina G. McCaskill, Clerk to Council