

MINUTES
Spartanburg County
Legislative Delegation
Monday, May 2, 2005
5:00 p.m.

A public meeting of the Spartanburg County Legislative Delegation was held on Monday, May 2, 2005, at 5:00 p.m. in the County Council Chambers of the Spartanburg County Administrative Office Building. Representative Doug Smith presided. The following members were present or absent as indicated:

Senator Glenn Reese – Absent
Senator John Hawkins – Present
Senator Jim Ritchie – Present
Senator Harvey Peeler – Present
Representative Brenda Lee – Present
Representative Lanny Littlejohn – Present
Representative Scott Talley – Present
Representative Phil Sinclair – Present
Representative Joe Mahaffey – Absent
Representative Ralph Davenport – Present
Representative Bob Walker – Present
Representative Mike Anthony – Present

In compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, notices of this meeting were mailed in advance to the local news media and other interested parties.

Invocation was rendered, and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Representative Lanny Littlejohn.

1. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 7, 2005 MEETING MINUTES

Representative Ralph Davenport moved to approve the February 7, 2005 meeting minutes as printed. Representative Bob Walker seconded the motion. The motion carried.

2. REPRESENTATIVE DOUG SMITH – SOUTH CAROLINA HEALTH SCIENCES COLLABORATIVE

The Spartanburg Regional Medical Center has been accepted into the South Carolina Health Sciences collaborative thanks to Representatives Littlejohn and Davenport. Spartanburg Regional has asked for a member of the Delegation to sit on the board. Representative Smith has asked Representative Davenport to serve on this board in an ex-officio capacity. A letter will be sent to Spartanburg Regional with this information.

3. MS. BETH SUMMER-STRAIT, MENTAL HALTH ASSOCIATION OF THE PIEDMONT – PROGRESS IN MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT AND CHALLENGES

May is Mental Health Month. Studies show that one in four individuals will be impacted by mental illness. In Spartanburg and Union counties, that number would represent around 70,000 individuals. Mental illness today gets such a bad reputation. So many people are ashamed to admit they have a mental illness. Mental illness is just as real as a physical illness. The good news is that mental illness is just as treatable as physical illness. Depression is successfully treated 80 to 90 percent of the time. So often it is the fear of the diagnosis and fear of ridicule and stigma that keeps an individual from seeking a diagnosis, therefore, from receiving the needed treatment. Studies show that five of the top ten leading causes of disability are psychiatric disabilities. Studies also show that the lack of diagnosis and treatment cost the American economy \$113 billion a year.

The Mental Health Association is a small private non profit organization offering a wide variety of free services throughout Spartanburg and Union Counties. The Mental Health Association has an entire resource library available with information on Mental Health disorders, treatment options and local treatment providers.

Ms. Summer-Strait asked the Delegation to get involved and learn more about the Mental Health Association in order to have positive laws passed.

The Delegation has all been involved with parity issue this year. The Mental Health Association supports full parity. The Mental Health Association requests full parity across the board for all mental illness treatment.

Again this year, the Mental Health Association will host a leadership breakfast on

Wednesday, June 22 at 8:00 am. Invitations will be forthcoming.

On May 3, the state Mental Health association is hosting a luncheon on the state house grounds. Luncheon attendees will include two Spartanburg County citizens, Hattie Haulbrook and Pamela Graham. Hattie Haulbrook will be named volunteer of the year for the entire state of South Carolina, and Pamela Graham will receive the award for media professional of the year.

4. MR. HAROLD MITCHELL, REGENESIS – THE REGENESIS PROJECT UPDATE

The Arkwright connector, from Highway 295 to Highway 221, currently under contract with the South Carolina Department of Transportation will open up approximately five hundred acres of unused land for commercial and residential development.

ReGenesis is currently involved in negotiations with NAPAC, a Swiss Company, to locate their manufacturing facility at the former Arkwright Textile Mill site.

ReGenesis has been contracted by the Spartanburg Housing Authority as a community-based organization charged with ensuring participation by minority and woman owned business entities and Section 3 workers in the demolition of the Phyllis Goins housing complex and the construction of the new Collins Park subdivision.

ReGenesis held a job fair for area residents seeking employment during the project. Seventy-two licensed minority contractors attended the job fair. The first follow-up meeting with the minority contractors will be held on May 4, 2005 to discuss the bidding process.

ReGenesis went into a partnership with Spartanburg Regional for the Physicians Family Care Center on the south side of Spartanburg. The Community Health Center/Spartanburg Regional Health System collaboration currently employs 28 residents of the area, and has over 6,000 patients of which 600 are diabetic patients.

ReGenesis is currently utilizing USC-Upstate Metropolitan Studies Institute for data and other related collection information. There are two pending grants with the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences and the EPA to fund collection of scientific and sociological data concerning the effects of environmental contamination on the residents of Spartanburg with its focus on Arkwright and its surrounding communities.

Several weeks ago, ReGenesis partnered with Christmas in Action with about 1000 volunteers to rehab about 38 homes in the community.

The ReGenesis area is a national showcase pilot program by the Environmental Protection Agency. Currently, congress gave EPA \$3M to replicate this project in a new grant program for sites across the country. A delegation from South Africa visited the site to learn how to revitalize brownsfield initiatives. Next weekend, a group from Savannah, Georgia, will visit the healthcare center, the Housing Authority, as well as the University to see how to replicate this project.

ReGenesis is starting to galvanize the residents in the area, not only to revitalize the south side but the entire Spartanburg County.

Representative Brenda Lee has suggested Mr. Mitchell contact the Spartanburg County Transportation Committee with regard to the construction of the Arkwright Connector.

5. MAYOR ELAINE HARRIS – ENDORSEMENT OF PROPOSED SOUTH EAST CORRIDOR

Mayor Harris is asking on the behalf of the community of Pacolet for delegation members to endorse the proposed Southeast Corridor concept that would link I-85 and I-26. Mayor Harris has already received endorsements from Spartanburg County Council, Union County Council, City of Union, Towns of Pacolet and Cowpens, Spartanburg County School District 3, Spartanburg Leadership Council, SPATS, CTC and the Appalachian Council of Government. Other endorsements will be sought from Cherokee County Council and the City of Gaffney.

Representative Littlejohn moved to approve an endorsement letter to support the concept of the Southeast corridor linking I-85 and I-26. Seven routes have been proposed in order to connect three counties of Cherokee, Union and Spartanburg. Pacolet endorses the most southern route to connect I-26. The motion was seconded by Representative Walker. The motion carried.

6. DR. SHEILA BREITWEISER, PRESIDENT, SC SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND – UPDATE

Dr. Sheila Breitweiser thanked the Delegation for support of a request from the South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind for life safety needs in the amount of \$1.98M. The request has made it through the senate and is before the budget conference committee. Primarily, this request is for fire safety. The school has worked very closely with the Croft Fire Department as they look for the fire safety needs for the children. The bulk of the money will be used to install new state-of-the-art fire alarms and sprinklers to protect children with disabilities and to give them extra opportunities to be made aware of emergencies. The remaining dollars will be used for accessible bathrooms that will accommodate wheelchairs, as well as walkways to help provide safe travel around the campus.

7. JANET B. AGNEW – CONCERNS ABOUT THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATORS, AND RETIREES FROM THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Ms. Agnew shared her educational and teaching experiences in the Spartanburg County school system and is concerned that we are forgetting the three most important people in the educational process of a student.

The first teacher a student has is their parents. The parents are to teach the student how to behave, respect for others, respect for an education, how to get along with others, and a value system along with many other things.

The second part of the program is the students themselves. Students of today are much different from students of years gone by. They mature in different areas at different times; therefore, the idea that one side of the model fits all simply does not work.

To give every student an opportunity to learn, the public schools of South Carolina need to be strong - stronger than ever before. Most students feel that all administrators, legislators, and state officials should have to spend at least a week doing the work of a teacher. For the teacher is the third part of this equation.

We need students that want to learn and realize that learning is a process that takes time at school and home to master most subjects. We need parents to put education before the want of the student to have a car to drive to school so that the student does not have to work to pay the payments and insurance. We need administrators and legislators who have been in the classrooms of today so that they know what its like to be a teacher today.

Ms. Agnew would like for delegation members to think about the public school system in Spartanburg County. Ms. Agnew feels that public schools of this county have come a long way since her grandmother's generation and we do not need to take a huge step backwards by adopting any part or form of the "Put Parents in Charge" bill.

As the president of the Spartanburg County Retired Educators Association, Ms. Agnew thanked the delegation for keeping the state insurance premiums and benefits the same as they were last year for both active and retired state employees. There are many state retired employees who receive a small retirement checks and are concerned about their health insurance, because the COLAs received barely offset their premiums.

Ms. Agnew understands there are two versions of plans for the retirement system on the table for discussion and compromise, as one has passed the House and the other has passed the Senate. Members of the retirement system are concerned that both bills plan to invest a higher percentage of the retirement system money in the stock market. Their main concern is about the low yield market returns and the high fees that are being paid to investments groups. Ms. Agnew asked the delegation to take the time to fix the retirement system.

8. BOBBY G. HYDER – QUESTIONS REGARDING THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Mr. Bobby Hyder requested answers to the following questions regarding the Freedom of Information Act: 1) What is the Freedom of Information Act to the taxpayer? 2) Why the need for the Freedom of Information Act in Spartanburg County? 3) Who can enforce the Freedom of Information Act? 4) Should a Commission board support the Freedom of Information Act? And 5) Do Taxpayers have rights anymore based on the Freedom of Information Act?

Representative Davenport requested the answers to the questions from the House Judiciary Committee legal counsel. (See exhibit I)

COMITTEE REPORTS

9. SENATOR GLENN REESE, DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

a) Discover Upcountry South Carolina

Mr. Tim Todd from Discover Upcountry of South Carolina is requesting \$5,000 from the Game and Fish fund to promote fishing, hunting, and outdoor resources for Spartanburg County. The funds partially subsidizes the printing of the publication, but primarily would be used to advertise and market the region to potential visitors interested in the area's natural resources, particularly the lakes, rivers and hunting areas.

The subcommittee will meet and make a recommendation at the next meeting.

10. REPRESENTATIVE BOB WALKER, COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (CTC)

As printed in the newspaper, there will be more federal dollars allocated to Spartanburg County for state secondary roads.

The County has implemented a vehicle fee which will generate money to help with the resurfacing of county roadways.

Some funds are available from the Council of Government (COG) for Spartanburg County municipalities located outside the SPATS areas.

The CTC is investigating the state truck restriction on SC 92 in the Enoree area. Inman Mills has been impacted by this truck restriction. Representative Walker moved to request the delegation write a letter to Ms. Mabry asking the SCDOT to look at all options to keep the roadway open until funds are available for the necessary road repairs. The motion was seconded and carried.

11. REPRESENTATIVE SCOTT TALLEY, PARD

No report at this time.

12. REPRESENTATIVE PHIL SINCLAIR, SPARTANBURG COUNTY HEALTH PLANNING

No report. The committee has not met in sometime, although the subcommittees are continuing to function.

13. REPRESENTATIVE DOUG SMITH, SPATS

No report. The next SPATS meeting is scheduled for June 13, 2005.

14. SENATOR JIM RITCHIE, SPARTANBURG AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce sponsored Spartanburg County Day in Columbia. The format, this year, was changed to a luncheon on the Statehouse grounds as opposed to a reception after hours. It was a great success. The governor and lieutenant governor also made an appearance this year. If there are any suggestions as to how to make Spartanburg County Day event even better, please make Senator Ritchie aware of your ideas.

The Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Greenville Chamber of Commerce has selected a new lobbyist, John DeWorken.

15. REPRESENTATIVE BRENDA LEE, SPARTANBURG CHILDREN'S SHELTER

No report.

16. REPRESENTATIVE LANNY LITTLEJOHN, COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (COG)

The Appalachian Council of Governments provides services such as grants, small business loans, governmental, planning and information services. A report is distributed

quarterly.

**17. REPRESENTATIVE DOUG SMITH - SPARTANBURG COUNTY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

The Economic Development Corporation continues to meet on a monthly basis. It continues to make every effort to bring in new companies and assist current industries to expand.

APPOINTMENTS

18. SPARTANBURG AREA MENTAL HEALTH BOARD

Term of Les Howard. Application received: Angela J. Howe

This seat requires the position be filled by a medical doctor. There are no indications that Ms. Angela Howe is a medical doctor. Therefore, this position will be carried over until the next meeting.

19. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Term of Kathryn Murphy Behlert. Application received from J. C. Caldwell, II.

Representative Brenda Lee nominated Mr. J. C. Caldwell, II. The motion was seconded and carried.

**20. SPARTANBURG COUNTY COMMISSION FOR TECHNICAL
EDUCATION**

Terms of District 1 Timothy Crawford (Deceased). Application received: District 1, John Edwards.

Representative Ralph Davenport made a motion to nominate John Edwards. The motion was seconded and carried.

21. STARTEX-JACKSON-WELLFORD-DUNCAN WATER DISTRICT COMMISSION

Resignation of William E. Cox. Applications received: Wanda L. Fowler, Alfred (Al) Shealy Boland, Roger Allen Nutt, Jim Craig, Sanford Carlton, Winston E. "Bo" Cantrell, George Floyd, Sr., and James Wilfred McAbee.

Representative Phil Sinclair made a motion to carry this appointment over until the next meeting as there is pending legislation to be addressed. Senator Jim Ritchie seconded the motion. The motion carried.

22. COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Terms of Sam Evatt for House District 34; B J. Workman for House District 35; and Dan Bridges for House District 36. Applications received: Sam Evatt, B. J. Workman, and Leland Harvey, Sr.

Representative Phil Sinclair made a motion to nominate all three applicants by acclamation. Representative Scott Talley seconded the motion. The motion carried.

23. VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICER

Term of Marvin Sanders (Retiring). Applications received: Gerald Anthony Kiehl, David Whitener, Melody Jennings, Jerry Blanton, Gary L. Wilson, Dickie Lynn Adams, Caretha Diann Gary, Benny Derrell Cheatham, Wendell A. Button, David P. Smith, Mark Darryl Gwinn, Anthony Allan Knighten, Jason Bulsa, Earl N. Alexander II, Charles W. Miller, Jr., Robert F. Rinker, James L. Scoggin, John Sterling Wines, James M. Merrill, Carl C. Scibetta, William Larry Bishop, Mack Wayne Neelands, Lindsey M. Wahl, Kimberly R. Jackson, Darryl E. Goodwin, and Charles W. Garner.

Representative Bob Walker moved to nominate Mr. Gerald Anthony Kiehl. Senator Hawkins moved that the nomination be closed and Mr. Kiehl be elected by acclamation. The motion carried.

Senator Hawkins met with Mr. Kiehl. Representative Walker had said nice things about

Mr. Kiehl. Mr. Kiehl has had twenty eight years in the Marine Corp and finished as an E9 Master Gunnery Sergeant. Upon his retirement from the Marine Corp, he returned to Wofford College and received his Bachelor of Arts degree. Mr. Kiehl is currently serving as the VA Officer in Polk County, North Carolina.

24. MAYO FIRE DISTRICT COMMISSION

Term of Jack Crocker. Application received: Jack Crocker

Representative Doug Smith moved to nominate Mr. Jack Crocker. The motion carried by acclamation.

25. REIDVILLE AREA FIRE DISTRICT COMMISSION

Term of Franklin W. Vaughn. Application received: Franklin Vaughn

Representative Phil Sinclair moved to nominate Mr. Franklin W. Vaughn. The motion carried by acclamation.

26. CHILDREN'S FOSTER CARE REVIEW BOARD

Term of Juanita Thaxton. Application received: Juanita Thaxton

Representative Brenda Lee moved to nominate Juanita Thaxton. The motion carried by acclamation.

27. FORESTRY BOARD

Term of Jim Sexton. Application received: Angela J. Howe

Representative Bob Walker made a motion to carry this appointment over until the next meeting. The motion was approved.

28. BOILING SPRINGS AREA FIRE DISTRICT COMMISSION

Terms of John N. Owens and Pamela Miller Connelly. Applications received: Pamela M. Connelly, John Owens, Curtis Cochran, and Sharon Hyder.

Representative Ralph Davenport moved to nominate John Owens and Pamela Miller Connelly for re-appointment to the Boiling Springs Fire District Commission. With no other nominations, the motion carried.

29. DRAYTON AREA FIRE DISTRICT COMMISSION

Term of Leon Tennyson. Application received: None.

There were no applications received for this appointment, therefore, this appointment will be carried over until the next meeting.

30. OLD BUSINESS

No report.

31. NEW BUSINESS

Representative Walker announced the Speaker David Wilkins has been selected to serve as the Ambassador to Canada and will be leaving the House of Representatives. Therefore, Representative Walker moved to make a motion asking the Delegation to present a letter to all House of Representatives supporting Representative Doug Smith in his endeavor to be elected as the next Speaker of the House. The motion was seconded and carried.

WITH NO FURTHER BUSINESS, THE MEETING ADJOURNED.

Doug Smith, Delegation Chairman

Attested:

Carol Crowe