

Notes from SIS Speaker Event 1/12/21
Speakers – Joe Passiment and Larry McElynn

Joe Passiment Remarks:

There will be a Beaufort County Council retreat in February where they will set specific goals.

Topics to be covered:

- Affordable Housing – all people, all stages of life
- Working people – do we have opportunities for them
- Tourists – do we have enough parks, theater, golf, etc.
- Infrastructure – do we have roads, sewer, gas, electric, internet
- Environment – only so much land available Beaufort County owns 468 parcels of land. How do we preserve it? Air quality issues?
- Government – how does county council interact with other forms of government
- Healthcare – do we have enough hospital beds, buildings, doctor offices, ER, clinics
- Education – USCB, TCL, K-12 system, private schools

Larry McElynn Remarks:

Major Issues Under Consideration:

- Budget being prepared – takes effect July 1
- Change in government from Council Administrator to Council Manager – treasurer and auditor would be appointed and not elected. Requires referendum.
- Census and Redistricting – redistribution of political power in the county, with the likely change from 5 to 4 representative North of Broad and 6 to 7 representatives South of Broad, and possibly another congressman in our area
- 278 Corridor
- Rural & Critical Lands Board needs a representative from District 10
- Economic development in the new Jasper Port

Joint Discussion:

Budget Retreat:

- we have to act not just talk with the culmination being our budget. This year no tax increase in budget – should we do that again?
- Need to vaccinate our people – need Beaufort County plans to get vaccine
- This year County Council has 4 standing committees
 - Assign topics to each committee
 - They will decide what they can do in their areas
- Will have public hearings on budget in June

Census & Redistricting

- 2010 – 165,000 people in Beaufort County
- 2020 – 200,000+ estimated, putting us in tier 1
- Response rates in Beaufort County

- 51% self -response
- 49% follow up required
- Total 99.99% response rate in Beaufort County

278 Report

- Started as replacement of 1 bridge now it's the whole 278 corridor.
- Down from 17 options to 6 options
- What is the impact:
 - On lives of people here?
 - Way it's done?
 - What will it cost?
- 9 different engineering firms working on the bridge project: areas including: environment, noise, aesthetics, etc.
- Independent review committee: what other enhancements in the project can we deal with?
- Feb/March – Department of Transportation will come to us with their preferred plan.
- Will be 6 lanes
- Will not be constructed before 2023

Bluffton Parkway Exit 5B issue: (Buckwalter to Bluffton Pkwy) does HH Hospital need extra land for a micro hospital

Convenience Center on Hilton Head

- Not going to close it
- Contractors and landscapers are increasing costs to us by \$500k.
- Providing decals for residence use only
- Town to allow us to continue to manage it and eliminate improper dumping. Going to enterprise system for convenience centers in county and better recycling

Jasper Port

- Once it gets going there will be a large number of people coming into work exacerbating highway issues

Housing Trust Fund

- Came out of SoLoCo – all municipalities contributed, firms selected, impact fees. Will have an impact on affordable housing.
- Eric Greenway, our interim County Administrator, is knowledgeable on this.
- We will be looking at and setting up grants for affordable housing