

**HAMPTON COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY; SEPTEMBER 12, 2005; 6:00 P. M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, B. T. DeLOACH BUILDING, HAMPTON, SC**

Hampton County Council held a special meeting on Monday, September 12, 2005, 6:00 p. m., Training Room, Estill Fire Station, 500 Second Street, Estill, South Carolina. Council Member(s) present: Lisa Ball, Virgin Johnson, Sr.; Margaret S. Parker, Chairman and Willard E. Wilson, Vice Chair. Council Member(s) absent: Lee S. Bowers. Staff present: Sabrena Posey-Graham, Administrator; Aline Newton, Clerk to Council and A. G. Solomons, Jr., County Attorney. Media present: Mr. Mike DeWitt, The Hampton County Guardian. The meeting was advertised as prescribed by law.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Parker called the meeting to order. She stated that purpose of the meeting was the follow up session with the Town Council Members of Estill. Chairman Parker stated that first they would have an invocation in which Council Member Johnson would give. Council Member Johnson stated that they could use the same prayer, but just the same. Council Member Johnson gave the invocation. Chairman Parker thanked the Estill Town Council. She stated that they did not have a meal this time but had good citizen participation.

DISCUSSION WITH THE TOWN OF ESTILL:

Chairman Parker explained to everyone that this is a response to the meeting that they had in the springtime and she stated that they asked back then to let them get through the budget year and then someone had a big wedding (referring to the Administrator). She stated that they Town Council Members had before them the answers to some of their questions that they received. She stated that they would sort of walk through those and then take one at a time, and they will give their response to question a and will have a discussion that is very open like they did before. Chairman Parker stated that the first four dealt with economic development and the Estill Industrial Park. Administrator Graham passed the report to Estill Town Council and County Council. Chairman Parker read the first question and response. She also stated that attached to the response was a detailed report for Estill dated September 12th. Mayor Owens stated that he wished that he had gotten the handout (response to questions) before today. He stated that he and his council should have gotten this beforehand. Mayor Owens stated that this was just questions and answers. He stated that they wished that the Town Council could have been involved in the process when the County was doing anything or to be informed that the County was doing something. Mayor Owens stated that these were just questions. He stated that this is from July to now and they just met. He stated that the first one that was gotten was from June 2004 to June 2005. Mayor Owens stated that the last meeting with them was March 28th. He asked what has been done since March 28th. Mayor Owens asked that they keep up clear on the dates that they met. He stated that they met March 28th. He asked what activities have been done since March 28th. He stated that most of the stuff that they were talking about was in the past-2004. He stated that the county played a major part in those activities. Chairman Parker asked that Mayor Owens look at page 2 of the Economic Development Report. Chairman Parker asked if this was confidential. Administrator Orr stated that the prospects were probably confidential. Administrator Graham stated that at this point, she asked Chairman Parker if she was going to call the names. Chairman Parker stated that she was wondering if any of those were still in the stages. Attorney Solomons stated that some are sensitive. Council Member

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Ball stated that why Town Council Members were not aware of some of these places, because the prospects like to be kept confidential. She stated that most of that stuff is stuff that they discuss in executive session. She stated that they do not even discuss the people's names. Mayor Owens stated that the County Administrator should have gotten with the Town of Estill's Administrator and updated him. Administrator Graham stated that they could share the project name. Council Member Ball stated that most of the time, they will deal with the Economic Development Director and that person will go. Mayor Owens stated that all the Economic Director has to do is to inform Mr. Orr, Town Administrator, that it has been done. Mayor Owens stated that Mr. Orr should have been aware that this had been done. Chairman Parker stated that if it gets to that point, then Mr. Orr is involved in that. Chairman Parker stated that they know when its happening, but they don't even get involved in that to a certain point. She stated that it is continuously being brought back to Council. Administrator Orr stated that he has gotten calls from the Economic Development Director in reference that something might be happening. Chairman Parker asked with looking at what he has; did he agree with those or all of those? Administrator Orr stated that with all intents and purposes, the ones that he is familiar with are the ones in which the company has contacted him directly. He stated that there were several on there that he had met with the Economic Development Director with these companies, but it was an invitation from the company themselves, not the Economic Development Director calling and saying that they were going to meet next week and that he wanted me to come and meet with them. He stated that the ones (companies) that he was familiar with, the invite came from the company themselves. Chairman Parker stated that the Economic Development Director is working these. Administrator Orr stated that he would like to just be part of the process. Chairman Parker asked if he has been aware of these projects in which a majority of them that are in the works right now. Administrator Orr stated that he was familiar with at least four of them. Chairman Parker stated that most of the things that they are talking about today in their executive sessions and development talks are working in Estill. She stated that the Guardian sponsored a luncheon along with the County, and it was kind of surprising Estill, Estill, and Estill. She stated that there were about five or six representatives there today. Chairman Parker stated that she would like to address something to the Council. She stated that they read back through the letters that they received. She stated that she wrote down some of the comments and felt that this was good time to talk to Council. She stated that she was very sorry that there was a perception that county government per say did not care about the Town of Estill. She stated that this was absolutely not true. She stated that in this county, part of our county. She stated that some of the quotes were that your needs and your wants fall on deaf ear. Chairman Parker stated, "absolutely not, absolutely not." Economic Development, they are working wherever they are in Estill, Hampton or Varnville. She stated that they felt like they were a voice in the wilderness. She stated that there were no other town councils that they held meetings like this. She stated that they would like to open the lines of communication and keep the lines of communication open. She stated that the first thing that you have to do is to trust each other, because when something good happens for Estill, something good happens for all of us. She stated that they were just talking about this. What industry is good for one of us is good for all of us, and this is the county's responsibility to oversee that. Chairman Parker stated now with the municipalities in which there are ten, have their own particular roles that are very distinct from the county's roles and responsibilities. She stated that there was another quote that they desperately need help. Chairman Parker stated that they are willing to lend a hand within reason and within their role of what county government is to do. She stated that not only do they have to think about Estill, they have to think about ten municipalities. She stated that it is the Council's role to work along with the (Town of Estill) establishing and realizing where the lines stop

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in realizing what the county can do. She stated that there were a lot of feelings that were literally put in writing so that was why she responded in writing to the Estill Town Council. She stated that they stated that they were the second largest town in the county. Chairman Parker stated that this was true. She stated that the letter stated that you see industry going to Hampton and stores closing in Estill; you see jobs opening in Hampton and jobs closing in Estill. Chairman Parker stated that she said that night that it had nothing to do with county council; she stated that they never have anything to do with where stations go; she stated that this goes to the towns as they well know. She stated that she said that night if you had Highway 278 and moved it over in Estill and switched them, you would start seeing changes in Estill. Chairman Parker stated that they had a discussion that night that they felt that they had just as much traffic going over in Estill as there was in Varnville. She stated that they started talking about how many stations there were in Varnville, etc. Chairman Parker stated that she wanted to get those facts, she stated that she would give a copy to them. She stated that this county has nothing to do with where the traffic is and where people want to put their businesses. She stated that the last count of traffic was made in 2004: (See attachment). Chairman Parker read report. Chairman Parker stated that this is where people are going. Mayor Owens stated that he knew this. Administrator Orr asked if they did not do a survey of the Highway 3 traffic. Chairman Parker stated that they did not do one, but if wanted he could call Rick Reynolds at the Highway Department, Department of Transportation. She stated that you can call Rick Reynolds. Mayor Owens stated that if they had fast food chains, etc., then he would travel there too. Mayor Owens stated that what he was saying is that he sent a letter on March 2, 2005 and that letter and a follow-up letter on May 12, 2005, he stated that there were five different things that were asked for before. Mayor Owens stated that the county has not fulfilled their needs. He asked if they were the only council that wanted the county to help them. He stated that he has not seen in any form or fashion an effort being made to support this side of the county. Mayor Owens stated that he has not seen the support coming. He stated that the second thing that he asked for was to have the Hampton County Recreation Department come together and start implementing some activities over in Estill. He stated that this was all that they asked for during the Council meeting. He stated that they sent the Recreation Director over here to have a meeting with Administrator Orr. He stated that he asked that they implement some activities over here. He wanted to know all the activities were being implemented over there. Chairman Parker asked that they just walk through the list. Mayor Owens stated that he understood what she was saying. Chairman Parker stated that she felt that they had an answer. Mayor Owens stated that if she felt that she needed to go through it, then she could go through it. Chairman Parker read the rest of the questions and responses. (See attachment). Administrator Orr stated that he had a question about the term shovel ready. He stated that they spend a lot of time talking about making a site shovel ready. He stated that apparently he was missing something, because there is a plant coming to Allendale County and that site is nowhere to being near shovel ready. He asked if they were targeting the right kind of companies to come to this county. He stated that he was curious because that term always comes up, "Shovel ready" and supposedly there's this plant coming to Allendale County, and the site that they picked had not even been cleared off yet. He asked if there was too much of an emphasis on having a site shovel ready and targeting those companies that want to come into a shovel ready site as opposed to a company that would come into this county period. Chairman Parker stated that this was the advice that was given from the Department of Commerce and that's the advice from the Alliance. Administrator Graham stated that they were not targeting either of the groups, they were just trying to be prepared for both. If they need a shovel ready site, then we have it or if they pick a site that's not shovel ready, but if that's what they want and we don't have it, then we're out of the game. She stated that

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they were trying to be prepared for any type of business. Chairman Parker stated that the reason for this was when Haven Homes said the Hampton County could not move fast enough for them. Council Member Wilson stated that what they were saying is that if they did not have it shovel ready when they come in, then by the time that they get it processed, the company has moved somewhere else. Chairman Parker continued with the answer and response regarding the cell tower. Chairman Parker asked Administrator Graham if she had any dates on that. Administrator Graham stated that they told them six months, and she believed that this month would have been the month to have that completed. She stated that they were simply waiting for them to install the tower. Chairman Parker stated that she wanted to hear any questions and comments from Council. Town Council Member Taylor stated that if he were an investor and passed by the entrance of the Estill Industrial Park, he would not invest his money in the way that it presently looks (sinage, etc.) He stated that they needed to beautify the entrance. Chairman Parker stated that she would like both Councils and the Administrators be updated as to what has happened quarterly or every two months, Chairman Parker asked what would be an agreeable time for them to keep the same list and put on a shorter form as a progress report that the Council can give to the Estill Town Council. She stated that if it was some way that they could say that Commerce says that we are on schedule, we still hoping for this date, etc. She asked amount of time was good to keep them informed. Chairman Parker asked if a quarterly report was okay. Council Member Taylor stated that they felt that they are at a dilemma since they met on March 28, 2005. He stated that they had not heard anything, and the Town Council got a little perturbed over that. Chairman Parker expressed to them like they were having like two or three nights committee meetings and one or two nights council meetings. She stated that she asked that they be allowed to finish that, and there were other happy things going on during that time and time to get the work done and here we are. Council Member Burison asked about getting the park shovel ready. Chairman Parker stated that is what they were doing right now. She stated that they have a grant to get that done. Administrator Graham stated that they are making two sites shovel ready. Administrator Graham stated that 10 acres each is the size of the two sites. Chairman Parker stated that she remembers what it would cost to do that. She stated that she could not recall. Chairman Parker stated that it is not costing us, per say, the tax payers. Council Member Wilson stated that they have been looking at some things, some projects. He stated that in a couple of weeks they should have something. Council will do whatever it needs to do to make whatever to happen. He stated that what it takes is all of them pitching in to make it happen. He stated that they won't sit back and let things slide by; they will keep them (Estill Town Council) updated. Council Member Ball stated that she felt that a lot of things don't happen as quickly as Council would like them to. She stated like they said, it was taking six months to get a cellular tower. She stated that it is getting done, site certification has been going on. Administrator Graham stated that you start and you have to wait. Council Member Burison asked about the taxes. Chairman Parker explained to her about having to have the meeting to override the 2.7% rate but it did not pass. Council Member Burison asked if they would be notified when it would come up again. Chairman Parker stated that they would have to talk about that. She stated that they will have to talk about that. Chairman Parker stated that she and Administrator Graham will talk and get together and tell Council how soon they will have to do that. She stated that they have to have one. Chairman Parker stated that decision wise, they needed to make decisions, because it is the middle of September and tax notices needed to go out. She stated that tax notices ought to go out a certain time or the county will not be able to pay their bills on time for operating the county. She stated that it is something that has to be dealt with. Chairman Parker stated that they wanted to talk about Thomas Pointe. Council Member Johnson wanted to ask a question. He stated that they were talking about the park in Allendale County. He

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asked Administrator Orr what he said about that. Administrator Orr stated that the plant that was coming to Allendale County was going to a site that is not shovel ready. He stated that he had concerns about the term, "shovel ready". He stated he was wondering if that was something that people were looking for to determine where they would locate. Council Member Johnson stated that the road is being cut now, that it getting shovel ready. He stated that on the left side where they're cleaning up, they are hauling in sand. He stated that they have already cleaned up two graveyards. Administrator Orr stated that this is not what they did prior to the plant committing to come. He stated that the plant had already said that they were coming. Council Member Johnson stated that he misunderstood what Administrator Orr had said. Chairman Parker continued with the questions and answer regarding Thomas Pointe. Administrator Orr stated that the response was not accurate. Administrator Graham stated that her understanding from the county staff was that the county had assisted the town in clearing the site when the project first began under a previous public works director. She stated that Mr. Orr informed her that this was not correct and the work was done at no cost. She stated that this was a correction that they needed to make. She stated that the clearing was done at no cost by the county, but that was her error and she apologize for that. Chairman Parker stated that they would mark out the first sentence on the answer response sheet regarding Thomas Pointe. Administrator Orr stated that the county will provide the town with a motor grader and an operator, but the town will be billed \$20 (twenty dollars) per hour. Administrator Graham stated that this is time and a half for the operator. Chairman Parker stated that Hampton County cannot provide financial assistance to this project. Mayor Owens stated that the town paid the person to clear the yard. Administrator Orr stated that this was correct. Mayor Owens stated that they paid the person. Administrator Orr stated that he assumed it was county policy, because when he made the request to the Public Works Director, Blake, that he delivered the equipment, and we would operate it and return the equipment. He stated that he assumed that was the county's policy. Chairman Parker stated that this was a year ago, a new policy. Mayor Owens stated that when he requested it; he received the paper back. Chairman Parker stated that they received a request from Fairfax at the same time. Council Member Taylor stated that their problem with that is that Fairfax is in Allendale County and Estill is in Hampton County; therefore, Estill should have gotten priority. He stated that it was not a doubt in his mind that they should have gotten priority. Chairman Parker stated that they felt that they could not let their equipment go out and do that when they should be out doing county roads. She stated that if they started that, and with nine other municipalities, they would be in use all the time. Council Member Taylor stated that Fairfax should not have come into the thing at all. Chairman Parker stated that this is why they needed a policy, because at that time, Mrs. Graham was brand new, and she said she had two requests to use our equipment. Mayor Owens said that one was from Hampton County. Chairman Parker stated that Administrator Graham asked what she should do. Chairman Parker stated that her response was that they did not have excess amount of money nor equipment and had to do county roads. Administrator Orr stated that their request was to have it delivered on Fridays and picked up on Mondays. Administrator Orr stated that this Thomas Pointe project, he's been working for two (2) years now. He stated that it is a three (3) million dollar project. He stated that previously they have discussed tax assessment, etc. in South District. He stated that twenty-seven (27) houses valued at \$88,000 - \$130,000 does a lot for the assessed value for South District. He stated that it would appear that the County would be forthcoming in doing whatever it would take, because what it meant is that you don't have to go and raise millage because the assessed value goes up with the production of these houses. Additionally, this would allow the Town of Estill to go away from the manufactured housing which depreciates to homes which appreciates. He stated that this would change the make-up of the county. He stated

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that this would allow the assessed value to go up instead of always going down. He stated that he felt that this was a big piece of them looking at raising the millage like the county is and the fact that they had to raise millage in which they went six (6) to seven (7) years without having to raise the millage at all. He stated that they also had problems with workers' comp and the price associated with the business side of government as well. He stated that they do, because contractors have already signed contracts; they came in today to speak with locals in reference to getting started. Administrator Orr stated that they were hopeful in going forward this week with putting up a model house. He stated that this is a three million dollar project, and it is being done through the town and the town's non-profit arm which is the Estill Area Community Development Corporation. He stated that he was in Charleston all last week, because it is tough on him when he is going outside the county to align partners up when it comes to a project for this county and the Town of Estill and not get the support that they feel that they should get from the county side even if it means laying down county policy somewhat to say, "I'll send the equipment; we typically don't like to send the equipment out without the operator, but I will send the equipment." He stated that a lot of stuff that they needed to get the site ready; the county has the equipment. Chairman Parker stated that unless it is an emergency, she doesn't want to start laying any policy down. Administrator Orr stated that this is an emergency. He stated that this is an emergency to the taxpayers, to South District. Council Member Wilson stated that the county stated that they allowed the equipment to come to Estill. Administrator Orr stated that this equipment comes at a cost. Council Member Wilson stated that the equipment is supposed to come with an operator at the cost of overtime, not regular time. Administrator Graham stated that this was correct. He stated that it was understanding that the county was to oversee that the roads and everything was put in right. He stated that the only cost was supposed to be the operator. He stated that this was his understanding at the last meeting. He stated that he is hearing different. Administrator Graham stated that Council Member Wilson was understanding correctly. She stated that they would have to pay the overtime for the operator. She stated that this is correct. Council Member Wilson asked if the county could not provide this during regular hours as far as not having to pay overtime. Council Member Wilson stated that this project should not take two or three months to do. He stated that if they can't provide three or four days out the run of a week, maybe two weeks in a row. He stated that maybe in two weeks, they would have it straight. He stated that the county could provide the operator for that piece of equipment, because the county would have to pay that person anyway. He stated that if the county could provide this, then at least, it is some help to the town and they would be showing some effort. Administrator Graham stated that the operator would be provided with the equipment and that the town would simply pay the overtime for that operator to do that, not any cost regarding the equipment or the fuel but the overtime for the operator. She stated that what he mentioned just now was to have the operator come during regular work hours and they are doing something just maintaining all the county responsibilities. She stated that if that is what the county so chooses do and not what they have directed as county responsibilities, then that is the decision that the council can make. She stated that at this point, the policy was that the operator and equipment would be provided and the only thing asked of the town, which they have not only done with Estill but with the Town of Hampton and Yemassee who have also submitted requests and have also received assistance, was simply to pay the overtime for the operator, nothing in relations to the equipment. She stated that county council does not budget a lump sum of money for overtime for public projects. She stated that the only thing asked is that the Town cover the cost that the county has not planned or have the funding to cover. She stated that if council changes that, then they are back to identifying the cost and the funding as well. Administrator Orr stated that the Town of Estill understands the county's

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issue with the budget. He stated that the town has issues with the budget as well. He stated that they did not want other parts of the county that this equipment was bought to actually do to suffer because of this project. He stated that what he meant when he said lay down your policy. He meant for them to drop their equipment off and let them handle the operator. He stated that this would not have been a cost that they would have to incur. He stated that there was a county project and the town needed the track hoe. He stated that they could not wait two months for a county schedule to clear up for them to deliver a track hoe. He stated that they had to go rent a track hoe. He stated that they rented a track hoe for 30 days which cost them \$6,000 to rent. He stated that they paid an operator to come and work it. He stated that if the county has the equipment, then they could leave it with them. He stated that they could handle the operator. He stated that this would have been a \$6,000 dollar savings to that project. He stated that they could have put that somewhere else in that project. Chairman Parker asked that they put themselves in their position. She stated that they are not there day to day, this is the Public Works Director. She stated that if Council says let that go to Estill, then Yemassee says "the track hoe". Administrator Orr stated that if they dropped it off to them on Friday and picked it up from them on Monday, this would be fine. He stated that would be a beautiful thing if the county stated that they would jump start Estill's project and put the resources here. He stated that typically the county equipment does not come to them until the weekend anyway which creates the overtime. He stated that if they are not going to get it until the weekend, then leave the equipment and they can take it from there. He stated that this would eliminate them from having to rent the equipment. Council Member Burison stated that she did not know how they went about scheduling people, but if Hampton needed it this month and Estill this month. Administrator Graham stated that the equipment is not spare equipment that they use. She stated that they use it daily for county operations. Council Member Burison asked if Estill is not part of the county. Administrator Graham stated that they are providing maintenance to the roads in Estill as well, so it is being used as well. Chairman Parker stated that they use the equipment everyday and it is on a rotating schedule. She stated that when the equipment is in the Estill area. She stated that far as working that out, this has to be something that the Administrator works out with the Director of Public Works, and if there is a policy change, then they bring it to council. She stated that this is what they brought to them was that they can't keep up with the work of the county. Administrator Orr stated that they are not trying to deprive the rest of the county from what they need. He stated that they travel on some of the dirt roads, and they need to keep a motor grader on some of them. Administrator Orr stated that the town felt like the magnitude of what they were doing and the impact it had on not only the Town of Estill and on Hampton County, that there would have been a little more latitude given in making sure that this project got off the ground. Council Member Gray stated that the thing that hurts the municipality more than anything; he stated that they could understand if were Yemassee that came at the same time, and then you put something in policy, in place, but someone from another county all together versus a municipality from this county. Chairman Parker stated that she will explain one more time. She stated that it was not, because it was Fairfax and Estill. She stated that she was brand new; she had two requests to use equipment, and she going, "I don't have policy, what do you do?" She stated that it was not because it was who it was, she just had two requests that happen to come up during her first month. Mayor Owens stated that Council could have handled that very easily; all Council had to say was that Hampton County comes first which is Estill. Mayor Owens stated that in turn the county passed a policy. Mayor Owens stated that he requested that and then passed a policy to say that if you need the equipment, then you will pay for it. Mayor Owens asked that the county admit to that. He stated that if Administrator Graham was new, then she should have known which was in Hampton County

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or Allendale County. Chairman Parker stated that they have tried to explain this. Mayor Owens stated that they do not agree with the explanation. Council Member Johnson asked if they could start fresh and go the right way. He asked if they can start this now. He stated that this is wisdom and to keep down confusion and not to let it happen again. Mayor Owens stated that yeah, they can start now, but you can't go to the people and say what has happened in the past didn't happen. Mayor Owens stated that you can't put that under the table. Council Member Johnson stated that they are not trying to sweep it under the table. Chairman Parker stated that she wanted to say this. She stated that when they discussed Thomas Pointe, she asked and council asked, and they agreed that they would get a business plan for Thomas Pointe, because she did not understand exactly what Thomas Pointe was. She wanted to know who's putting it together, what's the plan for it, how is it to be financed? She stated that she knew the last time that they said that they purchased the land and was at a standstill, because they had no money for infrastructure. She asked if they could explain about CDC or non-profits, etc.. She asked if they could get that to council in which they could totally understand it. She stated that she wanted to know exactly what it was, what were the plans, etc., where were they going to get the money for infrastructure? She asked if it was a grant from Senator Wilson's office or was that about the well. Chairman Parker stated that she has never received anything explaining what Thomas Pointe project is. Council Member Wilson stated that he understands what Chairman Parker is saying, but Estill as a town has evaluated the cost of the project. He stated that what they were asking of the county was to allow them to use the equipment to do the infrastructure, he stated that he felt that when you start getting into how they finance this and that; this is getting little deep. Administrator Orr stated that they appreciated what the county has done in regard to the motor grader and the operator on the weekend. He stated that they appreciated that, because it has helped. He stated that his concern was that there would be 27 additional homes built in Hampton County. He stated that there would be 27 additional taxes, 27 additional resources for tax revenue for your general operating budget. He stated that the magnitude of that would serve as a catalyst for getting more support. He stated that when the project was announced, and they did groundbreaking, the County Administrator at the time was actually a part of the groundbreaking ceremony, and they were given confirmation that the county would do whatever they could to help that project. He stated that since then, they have switched administrators, and in all fairness to Administrator Graham, she's been supportive, but it appears that there are a lot of policies in place to keep that open umbrella from happening to say that the town and county is going to do something that is going to impact us as well to say that we are going to lace our boots up and get in there with them and make sure that it happens. He stated that he felt that they have found a mechanism to create red tape between the extension of county activity. Chairman Parker stated that she asked what the plan for putting in infrastructure was - she wanted to know what the plan was for making it happen. Administrator Orr stated that they have already addressed that part in regards to water and sewer. He stated that they had to take route that involved the non-profit branch of the town taking out USDA loans. He stated that if the county could bring in some of their resources, then it would eliminate or at least limit the funds that they have to go out and borrow against the project. He stated that this project should have actually taken place the year before the federal prison came. Chairman Parker asked if they borrowed the money since the last meeting. Administrator Orr stated that they applied for the money since the last meeting. Chairman Parker stated that the last time it was for money to help with the infrastructure. She stated that it was more than the request for equipment. Mayor Owens stated that they left with the understanding that they would use the equipment. Mayor Owens stated that he felt that they would get bogged down with this; just move on. Chairman Parker moved on to the next item on the list regarding the water

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problem in Estill. Chairman Parker stated that this was the one in which Joe Wilson said there was a matching grant for \$200,000, but the town did not have that. She asked if they applied for that, what was that. Council Member Taylor stated that this was not something that they applied for. Council Member Taylor stated that he went to Washington and met with him and told him about the water problem that they were having in Estill. Council Member Taylor explained that the town really has shallow water wells. He stated that he said that it would take a \$200,000 match and the town did not have it. Chairman Parker stated that she spoke with the Chris Bickley at LCOG and he said that Estill had what they called a secondary contamination. She stated that the rust is the problem, the iron. She stated that what they were saying is that there are no funds, because it is not a primary health hazard. Administrator Orr stated that DHEC says that the water is usable. He stated that if you have a pitcher of water that looks like Tang, you don't want to wash your clothes in it, and you certainly don't want to drink it. He stated that people have been calling DHEC, and the town has gone to a tank cleaning system which will clean the elevated tanks, he stated that this will clean the iron that is built up in those tanks. He stated that they don't get half the calls that they got a year ago since they went to the tank cleaning system. He stated that there was still an issue of iron in the water. Chairman Parker asked if the countywide water system that Administrator Graham is working would be helpful. Administrator Graham stated that she thought it would be helpful in not to create one system but to put the services and maintenance features in place to assist all the towns with their systems in terms of hiring engineers and technicians instead of each municipality having to spend large amounts of dollars to hire their own. She stated that they could possibly pool money that they can hire a technician or two or two technicians that could serve all the town systems and do the testing as required by DHEC. She stated that this would save some dollars by doing this. She stated that all the systems would be maintained on a regular basis to DHEC's requirements if the funds are pooled. She stated that a technician could be hired. Administrator Graham stated that this was the concept as well as establishing an inventory of items that all of the towns could pull from versus each having their own inventory list. She stated that possibly they could have one to pull from for that. She stated that the cost savings would be to buy in bulk. She stated that these were some of the ideas. Chairman Parker asked Administrator Orr if this would be helpful. Administrator Orr stated that he is in favor of a countywide system. He stated that he is more inclined to think that the county grows a lot faster if the county goes after grants to put in water and sewer lines in areas that they haven't decided what they plan to do in those areas. He stated that there are a lot of private wells. He stated that there are a lot of citizens that run off of private wells. He stated that if they had infrastructure in place, it gives the economic development director more ammunition to go further with development in the county. Administrator Orr stated that he was basing that on Beaufort and Jasper who have water, sewer lines all over the place. He stated that it is a matter of driving someone around and saying if they want that spot right there, because the stuff is already in place. He stated that you are ready to go. Council Member Wilson stated that this gives them a chance to stretch out to other areas. He stated that they can get a grant that can save everything. He stated that the big neck mechanism that would save, because everyone would use one type valve. He stated that Allendale, Hampton and all the way back through Yemassee. He stated that this would allow to buy a bulk of valves and the cost savings is tremendous to everybody. Administrator Orr stated that they are in favor of it. Council Member Taylor stated Representative Wilson is not completely out of it at this point, he stated that Representative Wilson asked that they resubmit a letter to Washington. Council Member Taylor stated that he contacted Representative Wilson again and told him again that they did not have the match. He stated that Representative Wilson stated that he will try to work something out. Chairman Parker continued the list regarding the fire station. She

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stated that this was that. Chairman Parker read from the list regarding the recreation. After reading, Chairman Parker stated that she would like to say that there is no treatment that is unfair. She stated that they guarantee that they treat everybody fairly. She stated that there are some policies. She stated that a lot of the "good ole boy and girl" system has passed. She stated that it is strictly policy, and it is fairly done. She stated that the county whenever possible will help when they can. Administrator Graham has talked with the municipal association several times about collecting taxes, etc. Chairman Parker stated that whatever they could do that was in their purview to do. She stated that they have to remember what the town's responsibilities are and what the county's responsibilities are. She stated that yes, the town is a part of the county, but they are different governments, different council members. Council Member Taylor stated that since Estill is involved in building the homes now, and what is pressing is building the roads through there; he wanted to know what the time frame was for getting roads there. He stated that they are building homes right now, and there are no roads there. He stated that he was wondering if they could get some roads there to spot the houses. Administrator Graham stated that she would check with the Public Works Director to see what could be done. Council Member Taylor thanked the Administrator. Council Member Gray stated that he wanted to address a comment made. He stated that this Town Council wants to work with the county council, and he felt that what they brought tonight as far as quality of reports from one another is going to do a lot. He stated that he thought that the bridge of communication is probably one of their worse problems and with that being taken care of tonight, he felt in his heart that they will work together and move forward for the betterment of this county. Council Member Taylor stated that on behalf of the Town Council and Mayor of Estill and Administrator, he wanted to thank county council for taking time out of their schedule to meet again with them and to hear their gripes. Chairman Parker stated that she wanted to thank them also. She said that someone said that you are taking this meeting over to Estill to approve millage. She told them that if you do stuff, like her mom said, if you hide what you are doing, it is all wrong, whatever you do, go and do out in the public. Chairman Parker stated they certainly understand that everyone is concerned about taxes, and she thanked them for coming. She stated that this was their county, because they (the people) elected them. She stated that they have to answer the hard questions. Mrs. Christine Peeples asked if the county council has any control over overriding the general assembly in a one campus school system. Mrs. Peeples stated that she knew that the county's school systems are controlled by the general assembly; she stated that they decide whether you have one campus school system or several districts throughout the county. She wanted to know if council has any authority in overriding that. Chairman Parker stated that she could not answer that specifically and the attorney was not there. She stated that normally the state overrides the county. Council Member Taylor asked if the county could not pass a resolution and let the state know what they would like to see done. Chairman Parker stated that she did not know. Council Member Taylor stated that Hampton County is like two counties, County 1 and County 2; he stated that they have two separate school systems. He stated that he felt personally that they could operate one system more efficiently and more effectively than you can operate two. Mrs. Peeples stated that this is definitely less expensive. Mayor Owens told council that they can do this. He stated that he could get the documentation to council where they have the authority to do so. Chairman Parker asked Mayor Owens to get the information to Administrator Graham and the plans on Thomas Pointe. Administrator Orr stated that he will be in Columbia for the rest of the week during some training. He stated that if any member of Council wanted to come by the town hall, he would be happy to show them the plan. Chairman Parker wanted to see information on how the town is going to pay for this, what you are going to pay for that, here's how we sell the houses. Mayor Owens asked

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Chairman Parker why she would need that? Chairman Parker stated that she has asked in Columbia, and she has asked around about this project, the comments that she has received is that this project is very unusual. She stated that this was back when the town was asking for funds for infrastructure which was the town's original request. Mayor Owens asked Chairman Parker why would she need this? Chairman Parker stated that they can't give any funds unless they understand what they are giving it to. Mayor Owens stated by them letting her see the plans, this would allow the county to give them funds. Chairman Parker stated that this does not mean that. Chairman Parker stated that the original request was for money for infrastructure from this county. Mayor Owens stated that once they discuss their financial situation with you all, are you going to pick up the slack. Mrs. Peoples stated that she just wants to understand it. Chairman Parker stated that she was not going to vote to do anything. Mayor Owens told Chairman Parker to come by the town hall, and they would be happy to walk her through it. Chairman Parker asked if there was a business plan on how, step 1, 2, 3, 4. She wanted to know who's funding it, what's the non-profit side, etc., town side, who's going to have the ownership? Administrator Orr stated that it is not going to be a managed facility. Administrator Orr stated that the non-profit is the development arm of the project. Chairman Parker stated that how it is managed is not her concern, it's how the money comes?

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Council Member Johnson. seconded by Council Member Ball, to adjourn. Council Member Wilson stated that he wanted to say something before adjourning. Council Member Wilson stated that the funds are a mechanism of CDC (Community Development Corporation), and what they do is that they come in conjunction with the county or town to be able to get grants to assist with new projects that won't affect the grant system or the bonding part of the county or the town that is doing that. He stated that it is a new mechanism that they have set up by the State; he stated that it is an arm for all public, governmental entities, county, town, whatever. He stated that it goes along with the faith based and comes in with non-profit organizations that run and operate these things through the county. Motion carried. Chairman Parker adjourned the meeting at 6:50 p. m.