

Capital Project Sales Tax Commission Minutes – October 21, 2015

Call to Order:

Councilman Jerry Stewart called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and asked everyone to stand and say the Pledge of Allegiance.

General Attendance: County Councilman Jerry Stewart, Chairman, Executive Committee; Joe Croley, Lowcountry InsideTrack, Ltd.; Jocelyn Staigar, Hilton Head Association of Realtors; Scott Thompson, Bluffton Today; County Councilman William McBride; County Councilman Gerald Dawson

Staff Attendance: Allison Coppage, Assistant County Attorney; Rob McFee, Director, Facilities and Construction Engineering Division; Colin Kinton, Director, Transportation Engineering Division; Tom Keaveny, County Attorney; Josh Gruber, Deputy County Administrator

Commission Attendance: Mike Tripka, Andrea Siebold, Mike Sutton, Carolyn Smith, Dean Moss, Linda Maietta

Councilman Stewart, on behalf of Councilman Sommerville and Council members, welcomed the Commission and thanked them for serving. He provided a brief overview of discussions the elected officials and administrators of the County have had and what they are thinking about this capital project sales tax. He then proceeded to provide ideas/suggestions, which the Commission may or may not accept in your decision process, as a result of these discussions:

1. Referendum should not last longer than four (4) years. That would generate \$120-\$130 million of revenue for the projects.
2. Council should be allowed to issue bonds based on projected income.
3. Because we are considering a 4-year referendum, projects should be able to be completed in a 4-year timeframe or shortly thereafter.
4. The scope of the projects should be limited to capital infrastructure and present a real and immediate need.
5. Projects should be well-defined and supported by sound financial projections not only for the cost of the project but for the out-years. A source of funding should be identified for continued operation.
6. Projects should be of County-wide importance; not serving a specific group or community.

Councilman Stewart then addressed questions from the Commission. The meeting was turned over to Mr. Josh Gruber.

Mr. Gruber, on behalf of Mr. Kubic and himself, thanked the Commission members for their willingness to participate and the time they will devote to this project. The following hand-outs were provided and discussed:

1. South Carolina Local Option Sales Taxes – what it is, how it is implemented
Mr. Gruber did provide a general timeline: the referendum has to be given to the Board of Elections prior to April 15, 2016; this will require approval, with one reading by Council, by mid-to-end of July 2016. This would be the drop dead date.
2. Article 3, Capital Project Sales Tax Act – reviewed components of ballot question
3. Code of Laws, Title 30, Chapter 4, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) – Applies to all meetings of public bodies; meetings have to be done in public as an open and transparent

process. Communications regarding this process is also public information. Please be cognizant of the fact that emails and discussions can become public and to avoid gathering in one place at the same time as a quorum.

Mr. Gruber entertained questions. Access to staff – Linda Maietta is the liaison; she is the first point of contact. Questions will be distributed to the appropriate parties for answers/meetings.

Mr. Gruber handed the meeting back to the Commission members to commence with elections. Mr. Dean Moss nominated Mr. Mike Sutton for Chairman; seconded by Mr. Mike Tripka, and unanimously approved. Chairman Sutton took over the reins and called for a vote for Vice Chairman. Mr. Moss nominated Ms. Andrea Siebold, seconded by Ms. Carolyn Smith and unanimously approved.

Next order of business – setting a schedule for meetings. Best day looks like Tuesdays. Suggested at least two meetings in November – November 3 and 17; 3:00 to 5:00 pm. November 3 will be held at BIV #3; November 17, ECR. Public notice of meetings will be handled by staff. Chairman Sutton would prefer to receive a phone call if you cannot make it to a meeting. An agenda will need to be prepared for each meeting and should include a line item stating following meeting date, time and location.

Chairman Sutton feels that any entity that wants to submit a project needs to go through the local governing body, which one would be left up to the applicant to decide. A question was raised as to how much discretion the local governing body would have. If it is a project where the governing body would be County Council, an option would be to share it with the appointed Council representative for the district to vet, rather than the full body of Council. The Commission also needs an application process that would provide guidelines for criteria and instruct applicants to go to your local governing body. Presentation to the Commission should come from local governments. Municipalities will be the repository of these projects.

Reviewed guidelines provided in handout (see draft attached). Chairman Sutton requested that members review the list and edit for the next meeting. List will then be finalized to be sent out to the municipalities as their starting point for how they can start reviewing projects.

Mr. Moss made a motion to adopt Robert's Rules of Order for rules of procedure. Ms. Siebold seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Commission adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

By:
Linda Maietta
Capital Project Sales Tax Commission Staff Liaison

Approved 11/10/2015