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Legislators Provide Overview, Speakers Address Issues at SCAC's 30th Annual Mid-Year Conference

One hundred and fifty county officials representing South Carolina's 46 counties attended SCAC's 30th Annual Mid-Year Conference on Feb. 15 at Embassy Suites in Columbia. There, they received a legislative overview of the 2017 Session of the S.C. General Assembly and heard several speakers address important issues facing county governments.



Julie J. Armstrong
SCAC President

SCAC President Julie J. Armstrong (Charleston County Clerk of Court) presided over the conference.

After speakers made their presentations, Armstrong explained the Association's legislative policy process. SCAC staff members then provided a legislative overview before county officials visited the State House to meet state legislators from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m.

SCAC held its annual Legislative Reception from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

Overview of the 2017 Session of the General Assembly

Sen. Greg Hembree (District 28) and Rep. Garry R. Smith (District 27) provided an overview of what to expect during the 2017 Session.



Sen. Greg Hembree
(District 28)

Sen. Greg Hembree (District 28)

Sen. Greg Hembree addressed many issues, but focused on the state pension fund, the Local Government Fund (LGF), and one of the most challenging issues facing the S.C. General Assembly—reforming the S.C. Department of Transportation, and the deteriorating condition of the state's roads and bridges. He strongly supports a Local Option Gas Tax that would benefit some counties—especially counties like Horry County, which has so many tourists.

Sen. Hembree talked about the state's tough automatic stay legal procedure that is often used by some environmental groups

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SCAC'S 30th Annual Mid-Year Conference, Embassy Suites, Feb. 15



to extract money from governmental entities. He supports a bill that would help governmental entities by shifting the burden of proof to the groups using the procedure to stop projects. When an automatic stay is granted, the party requesting the stay would



Rep. Garry R. Smith
(District 27)

be required to make a good faith effort to show the administrative law court within 30 days that a project poses a serious threat or will cause irreparable harm.

Rep. Garry R. Smith
(District 27)

Rep. Garry R. Smith addressed many issues as well. He expressed some of his thoughts about President

Donald J. Trump's administration and what to expect, and explained a bill to standardize business licenses across the state to make it easier for businesses to register. Rep. Smith then talked about the LGE, and problems counties face planning budgets due to the uncertainty of funding each year. He then explained some of the problems the state faces when dealing with its own budget.

Rep. Smith spoke at length about the problems facing the state pension system and reform. He explained how the flatness of the revenue collected from personal income and sales tax, and transfer payments (including Social Security, 401Ks,

retirement systems), the fastest growing part of personal income in the state which is non-taxable, affects the state budget. Rep. Smith then talked about Internet sales, the fastest growing segment of the nation's economy and state's economy.

He made several recommendations, including that county officials become familiar with the Heritage Foundation headed by a former South Carolina senator, James Warren "Jim" DeMint of Greenville. He encouraged county officials to prepare themselves for the new commitment to federalism that he believe exists based on his recent experience working on the American Legislative Exchange Council; with some of the leadership in the U.S. Congress, including U.S. Representative Paul Ryan, Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives; and the new administration. Rep. Smith said that the federal government wants to take and do what it is supposed to do and get out of things that the states are supposed to do.

Speakers Address Several Important Issues

Details of the presentations speakers made during SCAC's 30th Annual Mid-Year Conference are provided on the Association's website at www.sccounties.org. Click the Recent News tab on SCAC's home page to learn more about each presentation.

State Retirement Systems Update

Sarah Niegsch Corbett, CPA, Chief Operating Officer, S.C. Public Employee Benefits Authority, provided an update on the S.C. Retirement System (SCRS) and Police Officers Retirement System (PORS).



Sarah Niegsch Corbett, CPA
Chief Operating Officer
S.C. Public Employee Benefits Authority

Corbett explained the ongoing funding challenges of both systems. She summarized Act 278 of 2012, which the General Assembly worked on from March 2011 to June 2012 to reform the state's public pension plans, noting that it was a prudent

way to address some sources of the rising unfunded liability. She then explained the benefits-related reform and funding-related reform measures taken for the SCRS and PORS.

Corbett provided details on the history of the funding and contribution rates for the two retirement systems, and provided figures showing the unfunded liabilities of both as of June 30, 2016. She also explained investment returns, which have been challenging for South Carolina's public plans and the nation as a whole, and the three sources of income—investment income, employee contributions and employer contributions—that provide benefits for each pension system.

According to Corbett, no decrease in contribution rates may be made until the state's retirement system is at least 90



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percent funded. Meanwhile, employers and employees will be required to share any additional increases required to sustain the pension plans. The S.C. General Assembly's Joint Committee on Pension Systems Review will continue studying various options to fund the system.

New Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement

Danielle W. Maynard, Legal Counsel for the S.C. Emergency Management Division (SCEMD), explained the state's new statewide mutual aid agreement.

SCEMD reports directly to and advises the governor during major emergencies and disasters. It leads the state level emergency management program to minimize the loss of life and property from all hazards and events, including hurricanes, tornadoes, winter storms, fires, earthquakes and pandemics.

The state's first statewide mutual aid agreement, drafted in 2001, has more than 500 signatories representing all 46 counties in the state. The new agreement already has 28 signatories. But the more signatories that it gains, the more effective the agreement will become and the more resources it will be able to provide.

The new agreement helps local emergency management teams when they become overwhelmed and need additional emergency resources from other member communities to support their response and recovery. However, the agreement is flexible enough to be implemented for small events and does not require a major disaster declaration. The agreement outlines common expectations, including insurance, liability coverage and reimbursement.

Benefits of the new agreement include: access to response and recovery capabilities without incurring the costs to purchase or maintain an inventory of underused resources; an established agreement prior to an event or disaster that outlines basic terms and conditions; and it facilitates Federal Emergency Management Association's Public Assistance reimbursement process.

For more information, including how to sign the new statewide mutual aid agreement, contact Danielle Maynard at (803) 667-2180 or dmaynard@emd.sc.gov.

Mosquito Abatement Resources

Robert L. Cartner, Vector Biologist, and Travis L. Shealy, Vector Program Coordinator, S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC), discussed mosquito abatement resources.

They described the life cycle of mosquitoes and various species and provided an overview of the broad range of resources

available to reduce mosquitoes at various stages (aquatic and terrestrial) in urban areas, swamps, salt marshes and other locations, including bottle caps, tires, gutters and tree holes.

They identified the ingredients of mosquito control resources, explained the effectiveness of each resource in various situations and the importance of knowing which mosquito control methods to use, such as thermal fogging, barrier treatment and aerial spray. They also explained the types of resources that can be used, how they work, and when and how to use them.

They emphasized the importance of being prepared,
(Continued on next page)



Danielle W. Maynard
Legal Counsel
S.C. Emergency Management Division



Travis L. Shealy
Vector Program Coordinator
DHEC



Robert L. Cartner
Vector Biologist
DHEC

Announcing SCAC's 2017 Awards Competition

SCAC is pleased to celebrate the 45th year of its annual awards program which recognizes innovative projects completed by South Carolina counties during the past fiscal year. The J. Mitchell Graham Memorial Award recognizes counties that address community challenges, implement operational improvements, or enhance their citizens' quality of life in a unique way. The Barrett Lawrimore Memorial Regional Cooperation Award highlights the critical need for regional partnerships, strategies, and solutions.

The 2017 awards brochure will be sent to counties in April. This year's submission deadline is June 23. The awards competition will be held July 30 during SCAC's 50th Annual Conference in Hilton Head. All participating counties will be recognized during the conference general session on August 1, and the winners will be announced at the banquet that evening.

To access the online video library from the 2016 awards competition, visit the Association's website at:

<http://www.sccounties.org/awards>



County Officials Speak and Ask Questions Following Presentations

County officials attending SCAC's Annual Mid-Year Conferences always have an opportunity to speak and ask questions. Shown below are some of the county officials who stepped up to the microphone and did so when given the opportunity at this year's Mid-Year Conference on Feb. 15.

► Gene Baten
Sumter County
Council Member



◀ Byron Thompson
McCormick County
Council Member



► Jason Ward
Dorchester County
Administrator



◀ Lynn Ballard
Greenville County
Council Member



► Scott Cooper
Edgefield County
Council Member



which includes contracting for mosquito control services and maintaining properties to prevent the creation of mosquito larval habitats.

SC DHEC provides technical assistance to local governments' mosquito control programs and tests mosquitoes for Zika and other arboviruses.

For more information, visit www.scdhec.gov/mosquitoes.

Grant Funding Opportunities

Bonnie J. Ammons, Executive Director, S.C. Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA), described the types of grants, loans and technical assistance that RIA provides local governments and public utilities statewide.

Projects include those that improve water, wastewater and stormwater facilities to protect public health, bring systems into compliance with environmental quality standards and improve capacity of existing infrastructure to support economic and employment opportunities.

Ammons provided examples of some basic infrastructure projects such as upgrading water and sewer treatment plants, and replacing pump stations to address sanitary sewer overflows. She also provided other examples, from upgrading small galvanized water lines and replacing sewer lines for infiltration and inflow to rehabilitating water tanks and improving interconnections.

For more information, contact RIA at (803) 737-0390 or visit www.ria.sc.gov.



Bonnie J. Ammons
Executive Director
RIA



SCAC President Julie J. Armstrong holds up a copy of SCAC's *Policy Positions for the 2017 Session* to remind county officials to review the recently published resource.



SCAC Provides Legislative Update

SCAC Deputy General Counsel Timothy C. Winslow provided a legislative update by explaining the four major

Timothy C. Winslow
Deputy General Counsel, SCAC

issues that the General Assembly was addressing that affects South Carolina's counties: 1) retirement 2) the state budget and the LGF 3) the business license bill and 4) the roads bill.

Winslow encouraged county officials to take advantage of the transportation that would be provided after lunch to allow them to visit members of the General Assembly at the State House. He then offered some advice to county officials and remained after his presentation to answer any questions that they had.



Institute of Government for County Officials

The Institute of Government for County Officials was held on Feb. 16 after SCAC's 30th Annual Mid-Year Conference. The following courses were offered: Public Speaking, Measuring and Reporting County

Performance, Building an Effective County Team and Economic Development. A Council Chairperson's Workshop was also held.



John K. DeLoache (above), SCAC Senior Staff Attorney, speaks at the Council Chairperson's Workshop shown at right. Anna B. Berger, SCAC Director of Research and Training, also spoke.



William E. Tomes (above), Fellow, Joseph P. Riley Jr. Center for Livable Communities, College of Charleston, taught two courses: Measuring and Reporting County Performances, and Building an Effective County Team shown at right.





SCCWCT and SCCP< Hold 2017 Annual Trusts Membership Meeting

By John D. Henderson, ARM, LCM
Director of Risk Management Services,
SCAC

The S.C. Counties Workers' Compensation Trust and S.C. Counties Property & Liability Trust (SCCWCT and SCCP<) held the 2017 Annual Insurance Trusts Membership Meeting Jan. 25–26 in Myrtle Beach.

The purpose of the meeting, attended by 147 county officials, was to promote risk management education and brief members on the Insurance Trusts. Attendees heard from several speakers on a variety of risk management topics. The meeting included presentations from Robert Collins, Robert Benfield, John Henderson and John Jervey of the SCAC; Linda Edwards, Gignilliat Savitz & Bettis LLP; and Van Henson, South Carolina LLR.

A risk management roundtable discussion was also held. Panelists included Linda Edwards; Van Henson; Angela Pinson, Berkeley County; and Linwood Vereen, Horry County.

At the conclusion of the meeting, risk management awards were presented to several counties for significant achievements made in their risk management program. The top award for the Most Improved County was presented to Berkeley County. County governments have long recognized that investment in risk management and safety programs is good stewardship of tax payer dollars.

More information about the recent Insurance Trusts Membership Meeting, including photos, will be published in the spring issue of *County Focus Magazine* (Vol. 28, No. 1), scheduled to be published in May.

2016 Risk Management Award Winners

Best Experience Modifier

Chester County

1st Runner Up—Bamberg County & Marion County (tie)

2nd Runner Up—Oconee County

Outstanding Safety Achievement Awards

Berkeley County

Florence County

Horry County

Kershaw County

Lancaster County

Richland County



The 2017 Annual Insurance Trusts Membership Meeting, Myrtle Beach, Jan. 25

Sustained Excellence in Risk Management Awards

Horry County

Lancaster County

Spartanburg County

Service Awards

Terry Booker—Spartanburg County

Barry Catoe—Kershaw County

Most Improved County

Berkeley County

Workers' Compensation Lag Time Awards for Counties

1st Place—Lancaster County

2nd Place—Marlboro County

3rd Place—Chesterfield County

Non-County Entities – Workers' Compensation Lag Time Awards

1st Place—Horry County Solid Waste Authority

2nd Place—Berkeley County Water & Sanitation

3rd Place—Old Fort Fire District

Property and Liability Lag Time Awards

1st Place—Edgefield County

2nd Place—Lancaster County

3rd Place—Greenwood County





Jasper County Holds Groundbreaking for Ridgeland-Claude Dean Airport Expansion

Jasper County held a ground breaking ceremony on Jan. 17 for the expansion of the Ridgeland-Claude Dean Airport. Established in 1955, the county airport is located at 10 Airport Road off Grays Highway, a mile northwest of the city.

Guest speakers included: Rusty Nealis, Program Manager, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA); and James Stephens, Executive Director, S.C. Aeronautics Commission.

The airport expansion project will include the construction of a new 4,200-foot-long runway. The current runway, which runs parallel to the new one, will be converted to an extended taxiway to permit large airplanes and helicopters to take off and land. The expansion will also include the construction of a 6,000-square-foot terminal building, the paving of the airfield and the installation of lighting and signage, and more.

The expansion will better integrate the airport and air traffic into the FAA airport system, qualifying the facility for general aviation. This will allow commercial aircraft like the Beechcraft King, most widely used by businesses, to use it. However, non-commercial aircraft will be allowed to use the airport as well. The airport will also continue to provide hangars, flight training and fuel, repairs and inspections to home-based aircraft and visiting aircraft.

A study determined in 2004 that a larger airport was needed due to rapid population and commercial growth in the area. In 2013, Jasper County decided to expand the airport.



GROUNDBREAKING—Pitching the first shovel of dirt at Jasper County's grand opening ceremony for the expansion of the Ridgeland-Claude Dean Airport are (left to right): Theodus L. Drayton, Jasper County Council Member; D. Thomas Johnson, Council Vice Chairman; Henry Etheridge, Council Member; Richard Dean; Mrs. Claude Dean; L. Martin Sauls IV, Council Chairman; R. Kennedy (Ken) Holt, Principal, Holt Consulting Company, LLC; Barbara B. Clark, Council Member; Rusty Nealis, Program Manager, FAA; Kevin Morris, design lead for the expansion project, Holt Consulting Company, LLC; James Stephens, Executive Director, S.C. Aeronautics Commission; and Avery Cleland.

The four-phase project, which will cost approximately \$20 million, is scheduled to be completed in 2019 and to become fully operational before the Jasper Port opens in 2025.

Jasper County passed a resolution in 2015 naming the airport in honor of the late Claude Dean, a Ridgeland native and local businessman who served in the U.S. Navy during W.W. II. Probably best known for his 44 years of service with the local airport, he had served as Chairman of the Jasper County Aeronautics Commission since 1970.



Jasper County Hosts Ceremony to Name County Government Building in Honor of the late Sen. Pinckney

Jasper County hosted a dedication ceremony on Feb. 24 to name the county's government building in honor of the late Sen. Clementa C. Pinckney, who represented Senate District 45 (Allendale, Beaufort, Charleston, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper counties). The building is located at 358 Third Ave. in Ridgeland.

Pinckney, who also pastored Emanuel AME in Charleston, was among nine individuals killed in a shooting at the church on June 17, 2015. He grew up off Bees Creek Road in Ridgeland, graduating from Jasper County High School in 1991. He was elected to his first term in the S.C. Legislature in 1996 at the age of 23.

U.S. Rep. James E. Clyburn (6th District, S.C.) spoke at the dedication ceremony.

(Continued on next page)



Ceremony in Ridgeland on Feb. 24 naming Jasper County's government building in honor of the late Sen. Clementa C. Pinckney.



Jasper County Council Chairman L. Martin Sauls IV, among others who also spoke, said the government building was

the most prestigious building in Jasper County, and that it was a significant and respectful way to honor Pinckney and his family. Jasper County Council voted unanimously to name the government building after Pinckney in June 2016.



SCAC'S 2017 WEBCAST CALENDAR

**Thursday, May 18
9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

Planning and Zoning Continuing Education

For more information, please contact Leslie Christy-Jennings, SCAC, at (803) 252-7255 or ljennings@scac.sc. Or visit SCAC's webcast page at: <http://www.sccounties.org/webcast-training>



**U.S. Rep. James E. Clyburn
(6th District, S.C.)**

SCAC's 2017 Conference Calendar

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| July 29–30 July 30–Aug. 2 | Institute of Government Annual Conference Hilton Head Marriott |
| Aug. 15 | Setoff Debt/Gear Embassy Suites, Columbia |
| TBD | Continuing Education Update for Risk Managers TBD |
| Sept. 13–14 | Policy Steering Committee Meetings SCAC Office, Columbia |
| Oct. 18 Oct. 19 | Institute of Government County Council Coalition Embassy Suites, Columbia |
| Nov. 7–8 | Policy Steering Committee Meetings SCAC Office, Columbia |
| Nov. 30–Dec. 2 | Legislative Conference Renaissance Charleston |
| Dec. 8 | S.C. Local Government Attorneys' Institute DoubleTree by Hilton, Columbia |

You can register and pay online for SCAC conferences at www.sccounties.org/meetings.



NACo's 2017 Conference Calendar

July 21–24

**Annual Conference and Exposition
Columbus, Ohio**



Gathering for a photo on the front steps of the newly-named Jasper County Clementa C. Pinckney Government Building after the ceremony on Feb. 24 are: John Pinckney (seated in wheelchair), father of the late Sen. Pinckney; Barbara B. Clark (lower-left), Jasper County Council Member; L. Martin Sauls IV (lower-right) Council Chairman; and U.S. Rep. James E. Clyburn (background, second from right), 6th District, S.C. Also pictured are: Jasper County Council Member Theodus L. Drayton, Council Vice Chairman D. Thomas Johnson, Council Member Henry Etheridge; Beaufort County Council Member Gerald Dawson; and members of Pinckney's family, including Shayla DuPont, cousin; Cathlyn Mervin, stepmother; Mary DuPont, aunt; Brenda Patterson; Donald Stevenson Jr., cousin; Emma Stevenson, aunt; and Donald Stevenson Sr., uncle.

